



unifor

Ontario Regional Council
Conseil régional de l'Ontario

EXECUTIVE AND STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS



ORC 2024

ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Samia Hashi
Ontario Regional Director

Shinade Alder, Local 6005
Chairperson

Brian Chapman, Local 27
Vice-Chairperson

Balkar Bains, Local 4457
Secretary-Treasurer

Marc Brennan, Local 707
Carleen Finch, Local 87-M
Cindy Hasler, Local 504
Ayan Holland, Local 2458
Dana-Anne James, Local 6006
Jordan Lennox, Local 199
Debbie Montgomery, Local 4268
Alicia Rivera, Local 1106
Members at Large

Greetings!

How exciting it is to welcome everyone to Unifor's 2024 Ontario Regional Council!

Since last December, not only has our Union seen substantial tests to our commitment, dedication, and solidarity, but we have also seen significant shifts in the Canadian labour movement.

We have siblings that have been on the receiving end of the most outrageous and egregious displays of anti-labour practices that we have witnessed in the last decade since inception. Employers have always tried to skirt the rules and push the boundaries, but what we are witnessing is a complete disregard for our rights and stature.

What makes Unifor unique is how we respond when pushed. Consistently, our members have come out to rallies, solidarity actions and picket lines, standing side by side to say "That's Enough!". Standing side by side as a reminder to employers that Unifor is not just a Union – but a family.

Our family has also seen much growth this year. From coast-to-coast, we have welcomed thousands of new members. In Ontario, we concluded a major warehouse organizing campaign that resulted in victory as the first warehouse for a multinational chain of

supercenters to be unionized in Canada. Welcome home to those members as well as all our newer members in Ontario!

As we look forward to 2025, we thank you for entrusting us as your Ontario Regional Council Executive. We are elected by you, our siblings, and are proud to amplify your voices. While we are of different regions and sectors, our collective dedication to the rights of our members is what makes us whole.

As we gather this week, our focus will be on top priorities for you, the Ontario members. Only by working together are we able to change our communities and set the landscape for a more just and equal future.

In solidarity,

Your Ontario Regional Council Executive

ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

2SLGBTQIA+ STANDING COMMITTEE

Denise Keefe, Local 222
Deanne Smith, Local 25
Paige Maylott, Local 5555
Committee Members

Sarah McCue
Billy O'Neill
National Staff Liaison

Standing Together: Advancing 2SLGBTQIA+ Rights Within Unifor in 2024 and Beyond

Dear Unifor Siblings,

Our unity is our strongest asset against adversity, and your UNIFOR Ontario 2SLGBTQIA+ Standing Committee along with our National colleagues have been unwavering in our mission to champion the rights, well-being, and visibility of our 2SLGBTQIA+ members. Our recent endeavors have not only fortified our internal community but have also extended our reach, impacting broader societal change.

Celebrating Pride: Unifor at Toronto and London Pride Events

This year marked a significant milestone as Unifor members proudly participated in both Pride Toronto and London PRIDE in the Park. Marching together under the Unifor banner, we showcased our solidarity and commitment to fostering an inclusive environment for all. These celebrations were more than festive gatherings; they were affirmations of our dedication to equality, visibility, and the celebration of diversity within our union and communities.

Our vibrant presence sent a powerful message: Unifor stands firmly with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, advocating for acceptance and equal rights. The energy, camaraderie, and shared joy experienced during these events have invigorated our collective spirit and reinforced our resolve to continue this vital work.

Building Bridges: Collaborations with The 519, Sherbourne Health Centre, and APAA

Recognizing the profound impact of community partnerships, we have actively collaborated with organizations like The 519 Community Centre, Sherbourne Health Centre, and the Africans in Partnership Against AIDS (APAA). These alliances are

instrumental in supporting Unifor 2SLGBTQIA+ members who utilize their services and in amplifying our advocacy efforts.

Supporting Members Through The 519 and Sherbourne Health Centre

The 519 Community Centre, located in the heart of Toronto's Church-Wellesley Village, is a beacon for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, offering a wide array of programs and services. Our partnership has facilitated workshops, support groups, and events that directly benefit our members, providing safe spaces for connection and empowerment.

Sherbourne Health Centre is renowned for its inclusive health services, catering specifically to the needs of 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals. Through our collaboration, we have promoted access to comprehensive health care, mental health support, and wellness programs, ensuring our members receive the care and respect they deserve.

Advocating for 2SLGBTQIA+ Refugees with APAA

Our work with Africans in Partnership Against AIDS (APAA) has highlighted the unique challenges faced by 2SLGBTQIA+ refugees and newcomers, particularly those from African and Caribbean backgrounds. Together, we have engaged in rallies and advocacy initiatives to raise awareness about their struggles, combat stigma, and push for policy reforms that protect their rights.

By supporting APAA's programs, we have helped provide crucial services such as housing assistance, legal support, and community integration resources. These efforts are vital in creating a welcoming environment where 2SLGBTQIA+ refugees can thrive and contribute to our society.

Championing Legislative Change: Support for Ontario's Bill 42

A cornerstone of our advocacy has been the support for Ontario's Bill 42, the *Gender Affirming Health Care Advisory Committee Act, 2023*. Introduced by MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam, this bill aimed to establish an advisory committee to examine and improve gender-affirming health care services across the province.

The Importance of Bill 42

- **Enhancing Access:** The bill sought to identify and dismantle barriers preventing transgender, non-binary, and gender-diverse individuals from accessing necessary health care.
- **Inclusive Recommendations:** It aimed to develop recommendations to make health care services more inclusive and responsive to the needs of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
- **Positive Impact:** Improved access to gender-affirming care is crucial for the mental and physical well-being of many individuals within our community.

Setback and Resolve

Despite the bill's potential to create meaningful change, it was defeated in the legislature when the Progressive Conservative majority voted against it during Pride Month. This decision was a significant disappointment to advocates and community members alike. However, it has only strengthened our resolve to continue fighting for equitable health care access.

Rainbow Week of Action: Unity Against Hate

In collaboration with Momentum, we spearheaded the Rainbow Week of Action from May 11 to May 17. This initiative was a proactive response to the rising tide of anti-2SLGBTQIA+ sentiment. Our objectives were clear:

- **Engagement:** Encouraged members to participate in events and discussions promoting inclusion.
- **Solidarity:** Fostered a united front against hate, emphasizing that discrimination has no place in our union or society.

Observing the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia

On May 17, we joined the global community in observing the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia. This day served as a poignant reminder of the challenges still faced by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community worldwide.

Unifor's Commitment:

- **Awareness:** Highlighted the ongoing issues of discrimination and violence against 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals.
- **Action:** Called upon our members to actively oppose bigotry in all its forms.
- **Advocacy:** Reinforced our dedication to creating safe, inclusive environments within workplaces and communities for all of our siblings.

Unifor Local 4304's Second Annual Drag Show: Celebrating Diversity and Supporting Community

Building on the momentum of our Pride celebrations, Unifor Local 4304 hosted its second annual drag show on September 30 at the Lancaster Smokehouse in Kitchener, Ontario. The event was a resounding success, drawing over 100 attendees and raising \$1,200 in support of Spectrum, Waterloo Region's LGBTQIA+ community space.

Unifor Local 5555's Pride & Petals: A Family Garden Tea Social

Continuing our celebration of diversity and fostering inclusive spaces, Unifor Local 5555's Pride Committee hosted the enchanting "Pride & Petals: A Family Garden Tea Social" on July 28th. This vibrant event welcomed members and their families to a joyful afternoon filled with community spirit, creativity, and pride. A highlight of the afternoon was the captivating Drag Queen Storytime featuring Hamilton's own HeXe Noire. Through

engaging storytelling and performance, HeXe Noire enthralled the audience, promoting messages of acceptance, self-expression, and the importance of embracing one's true self.

Looking Ahead: Mobilizing for the Federal and Provincial Election

As a provincial election looms, the stakes for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community are high. Political leadership will shape the policies that affect our rights, health care access, and societal acceptance.

Our Call to Action:

- **Stay Informed:** Educate yourself on the platforms and policies of all candidates, particularly concerning 2SLGBTQIA+ issues.
- **Engage in Dialogue:** Participate in discussions, forums, and debates to voice our community's needs and concerns.
- **Vote:** Exercise your democratic right to vote for candidates who embody the values of equality, inclusivity, and justice.

We have observed troubling policy changes in other regions, such as those under Premier Blaine Higgs in New Brunswick, which underscore the importance of vigilance and proactive engagement in our own province—and, like New Brunswick, we can mobilize and vote out hate where we find it.

Your Support Makes a Difference

Our journey toward equality and inclusivity is ongoing, and we cannot do it alone. We invite all Unifor members and allies to join us in supporting the 2SLGBTQIA+ Standing Committee. Your participation strengthens our collective voice and amplifies our impact.

How You Can Get Involved:

- **Attend Events:** Join us at rallies, workshops, and community events.
- **Volunteer:** Offer your time and skills to support our initiatives.
- **Advocate:** Speak out against discrimination in your workplace and support policies that promote equality.
- **Educate:** Share information and resources within your networks to raise awareness.

Together, we can create a future where every individual is respected, valued, and free to live authentically without fear of discrimination or prejudice. Let us stand united, not just as members of Unifor but as champions for human rights and dignity.

In solidarity,

Chairs, UNIFOR ORC LGBT Standing Committee

Join the Movement—Support the UNIFOR 2SLGBTQIA+ Committee Today!

Your engagement is the catalyst for change. By supporting our committee, you're not only standing up for 2SLGBTQIA+ rights but also enriching our union with the values of diversity and inclusion. Reach out to us to learn more about how you can make a difference.

BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND WORKERS OF COLOUR STANDING COMMITTEE

Carrie Moffitt, Local 229
Donovan Nezbeth, Local 26
Dina Roushanroz, Local 2458
Committee Members

Gloria Hendricks
Saira Chhibber
National Staff Liaisons

The Ontario Regional BIWOC Committee Carrie Moffitt (Local 229), Dina Roushanroz (Local 2458) and Donovan Nezbeth (Local 26) continue to dismantle systemic barriers and promote equity within the BIWOC community.

We started off our 2024 BIWOC projects with the Windsor locals 2458, 195, 240 and 200 hosting an event to celebrate and recognize Black History Month. Several speakers enlightened the members with their firsthand knowledge and rich history of our Black communities and the historical Freedom Museum in Amherstburg. The event was attended by many members who had the opportunity to enjoy culturally appropriate cuisine and to have discussions about what equity means to them.

The BIWOC committee hosted an event in London, Ontario on March 23, 2024, recognizing and acknowledging International Day to Combat Islamophobia and International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The event was well attended by members and National staff, some who travelled in from Toronto. Vanessa's catering served a wonderful meal, there was an amazing panel of speakers representing Muslim, Black and Indigenous communities.

On June 23rd the BIWOC committee attended Woodland Cultural Centre for their National Indigenous Peoples Day in Brantford. Woodland Cultural Centre is on site of the former Mohawk Institute Residential School with the focus on preserving and promoting Indigenous history and culture. We supported a refreshment table, giving out snacks and enjoying the cultural dances.

September 30th the BIWOC committee participated in the Honour Our Children Run in Thunder Bay to commemorate the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This is an annual community run held to honour the Indigenous children who were lost and the ongoing healing journey of residential school survivors and their families. This year the run had over 1,100 participants and 300 volunteers. We had National staff and members from Local 229, Local 5025 and Local 1075 participating in various roles.

Throughout the year, the BIWOC committee has also been actively involved in advocacy and awareness campaigns. The committee has supported picket lines, rallies, Tears for

Hope Relay in support of the families of missing or murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirited relations, also in the planning of the 2024 BIWOC conference.

We are continuing to grow our Facebook page and WhatsApp BIWOC groups and attract new members, post important dates, and engage with members on the current issues and events happening throughout Ontario. The committee is dedicated to amplifying the voices of BIWOC and creating a safe and inclusive space.

Moving forward, the committee plans to expand their outreach efforts and establish partnerships within our Union and standing committees. By fostering collaboration and collective action, we aim to create lasting change and empower BIWOC individuals throughout Ontario while we continue to increase representation from our community.

EMPLOYEE AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM/ ADDICTIONS STANDING COMMITTEE

Mike Kemp, Local 200
Yolanda Cornwall, Local 2002
Paulo Duarte, Local 26
Jessica Ridgwell, Local 1285
Committee Members

Mike Byrne
National Staff Liaison

Greetings from your ORC EFAP Committee

This past May 10-12, 2024, we hosted the Biennial EFAP Conference at the Unifor Education Centre in Port Elgin, Ontario. The theme was "Making the Connection on Mental Health and Addiction."

This conference focused on providing the delegates with the tools to make effective referrals, providing the appropriate support and how to advocate for our members and their families struggling with Mental Health and Addictions.

This year's conference was the biggest that the EFAP Committee has seen, with over one hundred delegates from all over the country.

To open, we had Shirley Eagan from the Saugeen First Nation bless our conference. We then kicked off our conference with our Canadian Council 2023 ORC skit on suicide awareness. Welcome remarks from Unifor National President Lana Payne, greeting delegates via video, speaking about the importance of Mental Health across our sectors. ORC Director Samia Hashi was able to attend the conference and took the stage to speak to members about Mental Health and the strides that Unifor is taking, and the need to create a safe space for solidarity on Mental Health Awareness.

First on the agenda was an Improv Workshop "IMPROVISING HOPE: MAKING IT UP AS WE GO" by *Dean Anderson*, Addiction Counselor. Dean Anderson is a certified addiction counselor and a seasoned improv instructor. The session offered a unique way to support individuals struggling with addiction. We focused on active listening non-verbal communication and the therapeutic essence of laughter. Through the experience of improv, we had people engaged and really listening, laughing and it really helped set the tone for the weekend. Creating a welcoming, forgiving place for all to feel connected.

Delegates were then invited to join around the Fire with marshmallows, smores and hot dogs to end the night. Union station was open to host an amazing lineup of Mocktails (Alcohol free weekends)

Saturday morning, we held nothing back from the delegates. Knowing the importance of making connections with Mental Health and Addiction. Our guest speaker Dean Anderson

joined us again to present “The Emotional, Who Don’t Like Emotions.” Based on understanding maladaptive coping and its perpetuation, shame, and the stigma within the recovery process. Dean helped shed light on how society misconceptions hinder individuals’ path to healing.

Later in the morning delegates heard from *Laird Bush* Executive Director of Westover Treatment Centre. Laird presented information on “What is addiction”, and then went on to explain what is the 12-step Program and the worldwide use of the model. Discussion of the integration with professional treatment and what the future of the 12-step model looks like moving forward. Laird helped dispel the myths about the religious element of the 12 step program allowing delegates to ask questions.

Afternoon session breakout rooms provided delegates with an understanding of how to make effective referral for members in crisis, including suicide, building active listening skills and the importance of non-judgement, confidentiality and cultural consideration when making a referral.

To end our day, we heard from guest speaker *Paula DeLeon*, Social Service Worker/Life Celebrant speaking to delegates on “Understanding and Assessing Grief and Loss in the Workplace” Understanding grief and loss, recognizing grief in the workplace, communicating with cultural humility, explaining that language matters, what are helpful and unhelpful ways of communication. How to support members through grief and loss and how to build a compassionate workplace culture. Call of action for a commitment to foster a supportive workplace environment.

During the evening delegates had the opportunity to attend an Open AA/NA/ALANON meeting. Many delegates stood up and shared their stories of recovery. Bingo was held in union station.

Throughout the conference, Art as therapy was an option, a paint room was set up with canvases and rocks to paint and write on. Creating words of affirmation, encouragement and love, delegates could choose to leave the rocks at the centre or to take with them.

These rocks are now beautifully displayed at the Unifor education Centre, in a sign garden. Be sure to visit and read all the messages next time you are there.

Sunday morning we heard. “Stores of Recovery Follow-up and Self Care” speakers’ lived experience took the stage to share. Our very own Mike Kemp shared his journey to recovery and fellow co-worker Pam Slieman, shared her own story of success. Both of them touched the hearts of all the delegates.

In our closing ceremony we brought back Shirley John from Saugeen First Nations and her daughter, to help close off the conference in a positive light.. We felt that after a weekend of story sharing and dealing with tough conversations delegates would benefit from cleansing themselves and connecting to the spirit and the creator through an indigenous

ceremony of Smudging. This was an optional smudge, and the turnout was well received; most delegates attended. Creating a huge circle around the firepit.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the ORC Executive Board for their continued support in helping the committee bring awareness of Mental Health and Addictions to the forefront.

As a committee we continued to talk about mental health across the country, delivering the Mental health matters course, attending other regional councils as guests, attended WRAP education, and assisted other ORC committees with webinars and information sharing.

Our current chair, Jessica Ridgwell, has left the committee to become a National Coordinator with the organizing dept.

Sadly on July 29, 2024, we lost our brother Mike Kemp.....

“One Kind word can change someone’s entire day.”

In Solidarity Yolanda Cornwall, Jessica Ridgwell, Mike Kemp, Paulo Duarte, Mike Byrne

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE/ CANADA PENSION PLAN STANDING COMMITTEE

Dan Cushenan, Local 504
Stephan Cronin, Local 88
Dwayne Gunness, Local 40
Committee Members

Lisa Contini
Erin Harrison
National Staff Liaisons

This has been an interesting year as the Committee shifted its focus from Education (still a vital tool) to Making Our Issues Political. We supported the National Campaign for a Fairer EI which saw an administrative change with the introduction of the tripartite appeal system. Regretfully though, we did not see any other fundamental changes such as a return to the 1970/80's benefits rate or a return to claims based on hours not weeks or removing the regional differences.

As part of our campaign this past spring, we conducted a member-to-member texting campaign where we reached out to over 43,000 siblings within Ontario. Highlighting the need for a fair EI system, we got a response rate of over 20 percent, which is a very good response rate. We learned that it caused some members to contact their MP to push for changes and EI Reform. The campaign was so successful that two other regions talked about doing a similar campaign.

The ORC Standing Committee is comprised of Dan Cushman, Local 504 as Chair, Stephan Cronin, Local 88 as Vice Chair and Dwayne Gunness, Local 40 as Recording Secretary. We also have Marc Brennan, Local 707, as our Executive Liaison and Lisa Contini as our National Liaison. We would be remiss if we did not mention our former National Liaison, Erin Harrison, who remains a continuing resource to the Committee and a valuable friend. We have an expanded committee to help with our national conference and campaigns. This expanded committee includes John Burnett, Local 1459, Paul Ivey, Local 707, Ken Kwiatkowski, Local 444, Jeanine Noseworthy, Local 1285 and Mike Rafuse, Local 222. From outside Ontario, we also have Della Rogers, Local 651 from the Prairie Region and Hugo Desgagné, National Rep from Quebec. We thank them all for their continued help and participation.

EI UPDATE

The Federal Government's recent announcement to institute the Board of Appeals into the Employment Insurance Act is a welcome return to the appeal system that will offer not only fairness but also assistance to all working people who contribute to the system. The Board of Appeals (formally known as the Board of Referees) is a Tripartite Board that was reinstated due to extensive lobbying over the years from groups such as Unifor. After the announcement of its return, the need for continued

consultation to have its inner workings accurately reflect the required fairness to administer the appeals process was largely driven by Unifor.

Recently, Unifor has put out a request to Locals to put forward and support members who may be interested in applying for these positions. The window for applications is now closed. There was a large contingent of members who took the opportunity to apply thus we hope to make a difference in assisting all working people in dealing with the EI System.

On a Local level, we have seen many Units continue to deal with tremendous layoffs. Some Units with a third of their members or more being on continuous layoff for extensive periods. One Unit for example, an e-commerce business, is going through this experience due largely to economic factors that are being felt throughout the Country. These factors include high inflation, high interest rates and decisions of individuals regarding how disposable income is currently being spent on items of necessity. As most of these members (currently 100), are nearing the end of their EI benefits, the Local will be aspiring to offer any assistance that may be available to them.

CPP UPDATE

Over the past few years, you may have noticed changes that have happened to those contributing to the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP). Starting in January 2019, most Canadian employees, employers, and self-employed individuals began making additional contributions to the CPP as part of the CPP enhancements. New this past year is the "Second Additional CPP contributions" (CPP2), which commenced at the beginning of this year. These contributions will apply to workers earning higher wages and will be in addition to both the base CPP and the first additional CPP contributions. After this date, those contributing to the CPP will receive increased amounts for their retirement pension, post-retirement benefit, disability pension, and survivor's pension.

Overall, CPP2 contributes to improving the financial security of Canadians in retirement. We are committed to continue advocating for stronger benefits and protections from the Canadian government. It's crucial that we keep engaging with our MPs and pushing for a robust CPP that serves the needs of all Canadians. With a Federal Election looming next year, we need to make sure we are politically engaged and educate our members on why the election is so important for the future. We will not forget the Conservatives attempt to raise the OAS to age 67 and need to be vigilant to protect our social programs.

SAVE THE DATE

The EI-CPP Committee is excited to announce that the next EI-CPP conference will take place at the Unifor Family Education Centre in Port Elgin from Thursday, June 5 to Sunday, June 8 of 2025. In the meantime, you will hear often from the committee as we continue campaigning for a fairer, more equitable EI and CPP system for all

workers. Reach out to an ORC EI-CPP committee member to join our contact list today!

HEALTH SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

Paul McKee, Local 4268
Bonnie Nantais, Local 195
Cheri Deguire, Local 598
Committee Members

Emil Mesic
National Staff Liaison

The Ontario Regional Council Health and Safety committee has been focusing on a Back-to-Basics approach this year, with a special focus on the fundamental right to refuse unsafe work.



We have helped design and had a supplier make T-shirts that relay this message about the Right to Refuse Unsafe Work and the corresponding specific legislation both provincially and federally.

These T-shirts, while raising awareness about unsafe working conditions, are also raising funds for the Threads of Life Charity which is dedicated to supporting families after a workplace fatality, life-altering injury or occupational disease.



Their network of family members and sponsoring partners believe, like we do, that traumatic workplace injuries, occupational diseases and deaths are preventable and their mission is to help families heal through a community of support and to promote the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.

We believe that everyone should go home from work at the end of their shift in at least the same condition that they arrived in.



We also know that we need to ensure we have strong Health and Safety language within our Collective agreements that protect our fundamental rights because the minimum standards found in safety legislation are not enough to protect us.

We have seen that the right to refuse, despite its importance is not as simple to use as one might think and is often complicated due to the power dynamics in the workplace and circumstances especially our places of work such as Health Care.



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Health care conference builds momentum for health and safety improvements

Health care conference builds momentum for health and safety improvements



Healthcare workers generally have the same right to refuse as other workers however they must be aware that their decision to refuse to work must not endanger anyone else as a result. These limitations exist in both the federal and provincial legislation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Canada Labour Code.

For example, from an infection control perspective we have the right to refuse where unsafe conditions exist and adequately protections are not in place, or where the actual or real threat of violence exists. Unfortunately, there are situations in health care where a resident's right to care may limit us and there are specific legal protections that residents have that may limit our actions. We must ensure that proper channels are followed and still, situations can get complex. We must use the tools that are available to us including the filling out of Hazard Recognition Forms and completing Risk Assessments. This process leaves a paper trail and also forces our employers to respond with corrective actions from the recommendations made jointly with management and our Joint Health and Safety committees. Our committees must have a seat at the table through participating, reviewing and developing policies to ensure a safe work environment.

<p>National Office 115 Gordon Baker Road Toronto, ON M2H 0A8</p> <p>Len Poirier National Secretary / Président Secrétaire nationale / Président</p>	 <p>Bureau National 115 chemin Gordon Baker Toronto (Ontario) M2H 0A8</p> <p>Lana Payne National Treasurer Trésorière nationale</p>	<p>Daniel Cloutier General Director Directeur général</p>
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Unifor Procedures for Reporting Critical Injuries or Fatalities in the Workplace

If any person, whether a worker/Unifor member or not, has been made ill, critically injured, or killed at the workplace, the employer and the constructor, if any, must immediately notify the appropriate government Occupational Health and Safety Board or Ministry, the Joint Health and Safety Committee (or health and safety representative) and the Union.

The Unifor National office requests that you notify all of the following within 24 hours of such an occurrence:

- The local National Representative,
- The National Health and Safety Department, and
- The Assistant to the President responsible for the sector,

In Quebec, please notify the National Representative and Quebec Director.

The notification should include the name of the person or persons killed, made ill or critically injured, the circumstances of the occurrence, and any other relevant information. The Local Union/Workplace Representative should be in communications with the worker or their family.

We remind you that Unifor's definition of a critical injury is as follows:

A critical injury is any injury of a serious nature that:

- places life in jeopardy
- produces unconsciousness
- results in substantial loss of blood
- involves the fracture of a leg or arm, foot or hand, or a finger or toe
- involves the amputation of a leg or arm, foot or hand, or a finger or toe
- consists of burns to a major portion of the body
- causes the loss of sight in an eye

Please contact the National Health and Safety Department at 1 800-268-5763 or at healthandsafety@unifor.org for more information on this or any other topic related to this matter

Some key points to consider when dealing with a fatality, critical injury or occupational disease:

1. Has the ill/injured worker been given treatment to alleviate the pain or other symptoms?
2. Has the relevant Ministry of Labour been notified?

We also have been working with Unifor National Health and safety department about the need for local Unions to report all critical injuries, fatalities, industrial disease and Ministry of Labour and Employment and Development Services visits and reports.

According to Unifor's definition of a Critical injury is as follows.

- places life in jeopardy
- produces unconsciousness
- results in a substantial loss of blood
- involves a fracture of a leg or arm foot or hand or a finger or toe
- involves the amputation of a leg or arm, foot or hand, or a finger or toe
- consist of burns to a major portion of the body
- cause the loss of sight in an eye

We invite all of you to review the policy and continue to work with the National Health, Safety and Environment department regarding information sharing and potential help with critical injuries and other workplace health and safety tragedies or government visits. For further information feel free to contact the department at healthandsafety@unifor.org



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Unifor walks alongside families who lost loved ones in workplace tragedies on the Day of Mourning

Unifor walks alongside families who lost loved ones in workplace tragedies on the Day of Mourning



APRIL 28, 2024

So, wrapping it all up as we said at the beginning of our report, the proceeds from the sale of the right to refuse shirt sales will be going to the Threads of Life. We welcome all of you to participate in the annual Steps for Life walks in April and May throughout Ontario and certainly hope you buy or order a T-shirt with the important message about the right to

refuse unsafe work – these shirts are available at the Health, Safety and Environment Table outside the hall and the message on them may save a life!

Thank you!

POLITICAL ACTION STANDING COMMITTEE

Melissa Holden, Local 636
Maria Chinelli, Local 222
Jamie Gilbert, Local 2027
Committee Members

Josh Coles
National Staff Liaison

The 2024 Member to Member Political Action Committee, Jamie Gilbert, Local 2027; Maria Chinelly, Local 222; Brian Chapman, Local 27; and I, Melissa Holden, Local 636, with the unwavering leadership of Josh Coles, had a productive year, providing opportunities for change and advocating for our members' voices to be heard.

Ontario is always a busy and convoluted place to transcend the line between advocacy and anarchy. Advocacy involves the promotion of a particular cause or idea in a peaceful and organized manner, often through lobbying, education, and awareness campaigns. Unifor Political action advocates work within the existing legal framework and democratic processes to bring about positive change and advance their goals.

On the other hand, anarchy is a state of disorder and confusion, often characterized by the absence of authority and rules. Anarchists typically seek to undermine or overthrow existing social and political systems through disruptive means, which is precisely what our provincial government is doing to remove the social structure and foundation on which our community is built.

While both advocacy and anarchy involve challenging the status quo and pushing for change, the approaches and principles guiding each method are fundamentally different. Unifor advocates for the constructive and orderly protection and preservation of our rights, whereas anarchy seeks to disrupt and dismantle existing structures through chaotic and often harmful tactics. It is essential to recognize and respect the boundaries between these two approaches to effectively promote positive change while upholding principles of democracy and social construct.

More specifically, it is an attack on our publicly accessible healthcare system. The Ford government has made numerous unyielding policy changes to implement cuts to funding, consolidation, and closures of hospital services. He has also offered these systems to his corporate allies to profit from people when they are in their greatest need of support. To be clear, publicly funded healthcare that is transferred to private organizations still receives funds to sustain their financial operations.

Unifor has launched an extensive Stop Privatization Campaign led by Kelly-Anne Orr, Assistant to the National Officers, and Kellee Janzen, Director of Healthcare. We are working with other labour unions to promote our demands and expectations and preserve

our rights and access. We are also building capacity through solidarity and a united front of cohesion and passion for members and all Ontarians.

In May 2024, our committee and many other members actively participated in a significant protest opposing the privatization of our healthcare system. This demonstration was a powerful expression of our collective commitment to preserving public health care. Our strong presence, ten buses in total, alongside other union members and community allies, highlighted our dedication to defending the rights of all Ontarians to accessible and equitable health care. Our committee's involvement in this event underscored our role as advocates for social justice and our continued fight against policies that threaten the well-being of our community.

The concern around a two-tier healthcare system has devolved into a significant crisis, with many parts of the province, with emphasis on the northern and rural parts, unable to access healthcare services.

This situation is further exacerbated by the need for more specialists and advanced medical technology in these areas, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatments that all too often can lead to poor outcomes. We will continue the fight.

Many significant gains were made at the bargaining table, which have helped provide our members with benefits, income protection, and increases that have yet to be seen in a very long time.

We have also successfully secured improvements in employment insurance and Federal Anti-Scab legislation. Still, we are aware of many challenges, such as the attack on local media, the significant losses, and the simple decimation of this vital information conduit, which we are prepared to face, contest, and overcome.

This next year will prove challenging as we may face two elections, Federal and provincial. We must demand our voices be heard and our rights be respected. This will mean collective action and solidarity among all members and the community to ensure our rights are addressed and our working-class concerns are respected.

For Ontario, when will the election be? We do not know, but very soon, likely spring, but it could be this October. We must prepare now because with this Premier, who knows what his Bay Street lobbyists are telling him to do.

Ontario Regional Director Samia Hashi's leadership and Ontario Regional Council have devoted many hours of leadership, guidance, and unyielding drive to campaign, lobby, and demand respect for workers with policies that support and assist in better working and living conditions. Our boots are hitting the ground, meeting with M.P.P.s, attending lobbying, protests, picket lines, and lockouts. We are constantly aware that the members rely on us to fight for their rights and protect their interests in the face of adversity in an

ever-evolving political climate. We will remain steadfast in our dedication to achieve success.

In solidarity,
Unifor Ontario Regional Council
Political Action Committee

WOMEN'S STANDING COMMITTEE

Sarah-Kai Antanaitis, Local 5555
Emily Coulter, Local 1106
Melissa Wood, Local 598
Committee Members

Kat Leonard
Margaret Olal
National Staff Liaison

The ORC Women's Standing Committee has had a busy year since our last ORC meeting. As you will read, we have been focused on our local committees and even presented a project Nationally! We have had the amazing opportunity to spend some quality time with our union siblings, keeping the equity activist spirit alive. Here are some of the activities the committee has been up to since we last met.

In December, we recognized Intimate Partner Violence in our presentation, reflecting on the lives lost and the gaps in the system to help vulnerable people escape dangerous situations. That conversation has continued into 2024 and is the focus of our presentation again this year. Intimate Partner Violence is as prevalent as ever and getting help from community organizations has become more difficult without an affordable housing structure to support survivors on the other side.

We had a busy week in recognition of IWD 2024. On March 4th, Emily and Sarah-Kai attended an IWD event hosted by All Women L.E.A.D. with keynote speaker Jully Black in London, ON. Jully spoke and sang with such elegance and grace. Her messages and her voice were powerful.

On March 5 members of Mine Mill 598 attended the annual Tampon Tuesday event to donate products for those in need. Learning about pelvic physical therapy and the long-lasting benefits of such therapy was a bonus. A bit of our goal this year was to take it to the fun side. So, we organized a hockey date night out, we had some dinner and howled at our Sudbury Wolves! A fabulous time was had by all.

On March 6 Sarah-Kai and the HDLC Women's workgroup held a Comedy night in Hamilton at Collective Arts Brewing Co. This event raised money and feminine hygiene products for local Women and Girls' programs funded by the United Way of Halton and Hamilton. It was a well attended event with many labour siblings from the area joining together in laughter and fundraising!

March 7th Sarah-Kai was invited to attend local 1106's IWD event. Emily Coulter and the 1106 Women's Committee put on a great event. Tracey Ramsey and Lana Payne addressed the audience. They collected menstrual hygiene products to donate to a community organization. Local 1106 social justice events are always a great time for a great cause.

Finally, in honour of IWD 2024, Sarah-Kai and the Local 5555 Women's Committee held a menstrual product drive at the Union Hall on March 16th. The committee collected menstrual hygiene products to be distributed to the Native Women's Centre and the YWCA Transitional Housing program in Hamilton.

Sarah-Kai and Emily Heikoop, President of Local 5555 drove down to Windsor on to visit the Greenshield Picket Line offering our support and a donation. They spent the day hanging out at various pickets around the property and spoke with the gracious and fierce sisters on the line.

April 10 Sarah-Kai, Samia Hashi, Tracey Ramsey and Gwen Campbell visited Queen's Park to support NDP Lisa Gretzky and other MPP's sponsoring Bill 173 – to declare IPV an epidemic in the province of Ontario for the second reading. The house passed Bill 173 at the second reading however, the conservative government referred the Bill to the Standing committee on Justice Policy for further review and research on the matter. The decision to refer the Bill to committee was not supported by the opposition or the supporters in the room as there has already been extensive research on intimate partner violence in Ontario. For example, the 86 Recommendations of the Renfrew County Inquest that resulted from the deaths of Carol Cullerton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam.

In May in recognition of Mother's Day, Emily and the local 1106 Women's Committee hosted a high tea with guest speaker Kate Davis who addressed the audience on the importance of healing and self-care.

On June 19, Sarah-Kai, Tracey Ramsey, Ayan Holland, and Jodi Nesbitt attended a Bill 173 Roundtable with Lisa Gretzky and Marit Styles. This event was mostly attended by community organizations who support women facing intimate partner violence. Each organization shared the obstacles and shortfalls of the current structure of support for women seeking help from Intimate partner violence.

On June 24, Sarah-Kai attended her local Women's Strike at Hamilton City Hall in recognition of the 2-year anniversary of the overturning of Roe v. Wade in the US.

In July, Emily's local Women's Committee (1106) participated in the Send them off Smiling initiative by purchasing 30 backpacks and back to school items for children in the community. Local 5555 also participated in a backpack drive, where members of local 5555 and the Women's Committee donated 25 filled back packs and boxes of miscellaneous school supplies to the Children's Aid Society and the Eva Rothwell Community Centre to be distributed to children in the community.

In July, the ORC Women's Committee joined forces with the ORC EFAP Committee to plan a webinar on the topic of Women's Mental Health and Addictions. This event took place on October 9th via zoom at 7pm EST. It was made available to all Unifor Members from coast to coast to coast to register and participate. The creativity and hard work that went into this presentation resulted in the telling of two moving stories and an interactive Q&A.

Special thanks to all of you who helped us along the way. We really enjoyed working on this project with Yolanda Cornwall. Thank you!

In August, Sarah-Kai attended the 2024 Unifor National Women's Conference. This year's conference was heavy at times with discussions around IPV, MMIWG, Climate change, etc. however, the heavy themes were well balanced with joyful dancing and singing at BINGO and a dance party. On the opening night, we heard from Jill Andrew, NDP MPP for Toronto St. Paul's. She shared her story and inspired the conference attendees to get involved in politics. We also heard from a Women in skilled trades panel as well as from the CREVAWC study on Sexual Harassment in the Hospitality, Gaming and Airline Sectors. A shining light at this conference was the lovable Fae Johnstone who shared her life's work. In her talk, she spoke about the use of care and compassion when faced with anti-trans and anti-lgbtq2IAS+ hate messages which was a really interesting way to look at it.

On September 19th, Emily and Sarah-Kai attended their local Take back the night marches. In Hamilton, we gathered in the forecourt of city hall with many local community organizations who brought resources and swag, listened to and watched entertainment and then marched in the streets chanting. This march is always so invigorating and revives our activist spirit. The Hamilton event was organized by the sexual assault centre of Hamilton to which the Unifor Local 5555 Women's Committee donated \$1k in support of the event. In Kitchener, take back the night was hosted by the Sexual Assault Support Center of Waterloo Region. Their event had guest speakers, indigenous performances and ended in a walk.

Along with Ayan Corrado and Tracey Ramsey, Sarah-Kai began working on the Intimate Partner Violence Symposium, sponsored by the ORC that is scheduled for November 25 in Windsor. The goal of this event is to hear from experts and survivors to educate the participants and to place pressure on the provincial government to declare Intimate Partner Violence an epidemic.

In October, Emily was a Discussion Leader for a 40-hour Women's Activist Course for Women's Week at the Family Education Centre. During that same week, there is a new and exciting course being offered, "Electoral Candidate Development".

In October, Sarah-Kai attended the new "Electoral Candidate Development" PEL course in Port Elgin. It was an amazing course for anyone interested in the electoral process.

In November, Emily along with a group of women from Local 1106 attended "The Greatest Show on Earth" fundraising Gala for the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region. The aim of this fundraiser was to raise \$60k for their counselling program which will provide 1.2k counselling sessions for survivors of sexual violence in the Waterloo region.

Solidarity!

WORKERS COMPENSATION STANDING COMMITTEE

Rob Gallace, Local 88
Ashok Venkatarangam, Local 100
Committee Members

Ryan Rodrigues
National Staff Liaison

The Worker's Compensation committee is working towards the goal of ensuring representation through the bargaining process for elected WSIB representatives, as well as lobbying to have representation through the Office of the worker advisor for those that do not have full time WSIB representatives.

The Worker's Compensation Committee is forging ties with Injured workers groups in Ontario to provide support, lobby and fight for injured workers. The Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups is currently lobbying to **"SCRAP THE AGE GAP ON WORKER'S COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR OLDER INJURED WORKERS"**. According to the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA)*, injured or ill workers only have access to WSIB LOE benefits until Age 65 or for a maximum of two years if they experience injury or illness at age 63 or older. This section of the WSIA is a clear example of age discrimination.

A new study has demonstrated that workers who previously experience a work-related injury had higher likelihood of opioid related harms when compared with the general public. This journal article is available on the research findings page of the website along with a plain language summary and infographic here: <https://opioidsandwork.ca/research-findings>

Injured worker's groups are discussing the information on recent research from the University of Waterloo on Retirement pension poverty among injured workers with long-term worker's compensation claims. This study can be found at: <http://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-economic-and-labour-relations-review/article/retirement-pension-poverty-among-injured-workers-with-longterm-workers-compensation-claims/2EF00B2F686147ACE7ACE75BB22A7A8C710B>

The Worker's Compensation Committee will be supporting Injured worker's groups in campaigning for the **"injured workers bill of rights"**. This is a bill of rights that outlines the minimum rights that the provincial government must guarantee to ensure just, fair, and non-discriminatory treatment for injured workers. The summary is as follows:

- Universal worker's compensation coverage in every sector and every workplace.
- Unimpeded access to the health care that injured workers need, with full coverage for related travel costs.
- A worker's compensation system that recognizes mental health workplace injuries.
- Make "deeming" illegal by enacting Bill 57, Respecting Injured Workers Act.

- Recognize that an injured worker's treating healthcare team is the primary and most reliable source of medical information
- 'Pre-existing condition' should not cause benefit cuts.
- Injured workers who attain the age of 65 should not experience limits or Loss of Earnings on their benefits.
- Enact a bill to recognize June 1 as Injured Worker's Day in the province of Ontario.

Bill 118, Injured Workers Day Act, 2024 Status: Second reading ordered referred to standing committee. The Bill once passed would proclaim June 1st in each year as injured worker's day.

The recent WSIAT decision on Traumatic Mental stress would now broaden the criteria for Chronic Mental stress claims by closing the gap and ensuring the same standard benefit entitlement principles that apply to physical injuries. The decision can be found in Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal Decision No. 1741/21.

The Workers Compensation Committee has looked at the survey that was done and is working to identify gaps and problems that the committee can work towards fixing such as online or in-person 1 day or ½ day training for small locals that do not have WSIB representation, build a network with current WSIB representatives, retiree groups and others and have a full time national or Ontario WSIB representative.

Worker's Compensation Committee would like to reiterate the following:

A WORKER'S GUIDE

TO REPORTING A WORKPLACE INJURY/ILLNESS

REPORT IMMEDIATELY

Report all workplace injuries/illness to your employer

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION

ie: First Aid, Family Doctor, Hospital, Emergency Dept., Clinic

SEEK ASSISTANCE

Consult your Unit/Local WSIB or Union representative with the WSIB

Form 6 – Workers Report

DOCUMENTATION

Obtain copies of all WSIB documentation (Form 7) – Employer's Report (Form 6) –

Worker's Report (Form 8) – Doctor's report

CO-OPERATE IN A EARLY & SAFE RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

SEEK ASSISTANCE FROM YOUR UNIT/LOCAL WSIB OR UNION REPRESENTATIVE

We had the privilege of working with brother Mike Kisch on the workers compensation committee. We would like to thank Brother Mike Kisch for his knowledge, dedication and professionalism in the Workers Compensation committee as well as with injured workers. We wish to congratulate him on his position as the secretary treasurer for Local 2458.

WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES STANDING COMMITTEE

Jacqueline McIntosh, Local 79-M
Andrea Henry, Local 112
Melanie Forget, Local 5025
Committee Members

Derek MacLeod
National Staff Liaison

In our ongoing commitment to enhancing workplace inclusivity for individuals with disabilities, the Workers with DisABILITIES ORC has undertaken several key initiatives in recent months.

This report summarizes our recent accomplishments, projects currently underway, and our future goals in supporting accessible and inclusive work environments for our members. In addition to enhancing practical resources, we introduced the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) to members and began developing educational materials to promote understanding of this legislation.

As part of our goal to assist Joint Health and Safety members, we are creating a quick-reference checklist that will outline best practices. This tool aims to streamline the adoption of accessible work standards and simplify the process for members advocating for inclusivity in their workplaces.

To foster collaboration and encourage the exchange of ideas, we created a WhatsApp group that connects WWD (Workers with Disabilities) Committees across Canadian regions. This platform allows members to stay connected, share successes, discuss challenges, and work collectively toward shared goals. The virtual space has quickly become a valuable resource for real-time collaboration and support.

Looking ahead, we are actively working on a resolution aimed at improving accessibility in workplaces and locals for workers with disabilities. This resolution will include recommendations to enhance workplace infrastructure, policies, and support mechanisms. We are also exploring bargaining language for inclusion in collective agreements, focusing on contract terms that better reflect and support the needs of workers with disabilities.

In alignment with our commitment to showcasing the talents of individuals with disabilities, we are working on an engagement with a Toronto-based Paralympian to join our caucus this year. This Paralympian's story is a testament to the strength, resilience, and dedication of individuals with disabilities, and we are honored to provide a platform for him to share his journey with us.

Another area we are addressing is accessible name badges. A member who attended the Women's Conference in Port Elgin highlighted that the lanyards typically used for name tags can be uncomfortable or impractical for some individuals. In response, we are exploring alternatives that accommodate a wider range of needs and sensitivities, ensuring that all members feel welcomed and considered.

In the spirit of collaboration, we are working on forming partnerships with other equity-seeking groups within the ORC. This initiative is aimed at exchanging ideas on best practices for hiring and supporting workers with disabilities and exploring strategies to reduce stigma. These partnerships will enable us to broaden our advocacy efforts and create a stronger, united front in advancing inclusivity within the workplace. Furthermore, we are urging all local unions to establish a Workers with Disabilities Committee, as outlined in our constitution.

These committees serve as a cornerstone for advocacy and awareness at the local level, ensuring that workers with disabilities have a dedicated voice and support system.

As we move forward, our goals remain centered on finalizing the Inclusive Practices Toolkit and AODA checklist, strengthening partnerships with equity-seeking groups, and continuing our advocacy for policies that support workers with disabilities.

Through these efforts, we are dedicated to building a workplace environment where all individuals are empowered and valued.

We thank everyone involved for their ongoing support and look forward to furthering our mission of inclusivity.

Workers with DisAbilities Committee:
Jackie McIntosh, Andrea Henry, Melanie Forget

YOUNG WORKERS STANDING COMMITTEE

James Chilcott, Local 88
Angelyn Francis, Local 87-M
Committee Members

Laura Sullivan
Ryan Rodrigues
National Staff Liaison

A Year of Building: Regaining Momentum on Young Worker Organizing

We have seen yet another year of inflation, high cost of living and fighting for fair wages. New to the workforce, young workers are entering into workplaces at lower wages, tiered wage systems with some long-term grow-ins and are more likely to face layoffs due to being low in seniority. This affects our ability to make ends meet, enter into the housing market, start families and advance in our careers. Coming out of a pandemic, it became clear that the labour movement broadly had stalled on engaging its young workers. It is our duty to advocate with our young, more precarious members in mind and to empower them to stand alongside the generations that preceded them. This year, we look back with pride on initiatives that have put energy toward building our young workers within Unifor and in the wider labour movement.

At ORC 2023, our standing committee called on Ontario local presidents to form Young Workers Committees and to save a seat on their executive boards for a young worker. At Canada Council, we were pleased to hear from several locals that have started Young Workers Committees and have been met with attentive and enterprising young people. This year we have made movement in young member engagement; efforts that are much needed as young members face specific challenges in our workplaces and our movement. They need to know their issues and voices matter.

A 2021 survey of unionized young workers in the Quebec public service found that one of the key barriers that limited young workers' union commitment was a lack of information and organizational socialization such as, a "process to welcome new young members, communicate with them and socialize them at the local level." The survey goes on to say its qualitative data showed young workers were going without insight into how their unions operated and the goals they pursued. Respondents also "emphasized the importance of unions reviewing their image, practices and orientations so as to stimulate greater interest among young members" and "make participation in union bodies more accessible."¹

We are aware of this gap and this year, in an attempt to remedy this, Unifor hosted its first Young Workers' Conference since 2016 this November 8 to 10 at the Hyatt Regency Toronto. Registration showed the appetite for the opportunity to learn, get involved and build, with 97 members from locals across the country signing up to attend. We are sharing this note before the conference is held, but we hope it proves to be a successful opportunity

¹ <https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/ri/2021-v76-n2-ri06136/1078507ar/>

for young members to learn organizing skills, meet one another and think up ways to build our movement. Our plans include workshops on getting to know your union, workplace tragedies, workplace harassment, health and safety, pensions and social media.

In April, young workers attended Unifor National's Equity Training Summit where they got to partake in knowledge and skills building activities, as well as strategic planning to create a road map for supporting Young Worker Committees within the regions and structures of Unifor.

We've been leading a campaign so we can see more of our young workers. After filming testimonials at ORC 2023 and throughout the year, we have an updated video of a handful of us speaking to our issues and about why we got involved in the union. We'd like to thank Unifor's communications team, with a special thanks to Jenny Yuen, our videographer Dave and the rest of the team for their work coordinating and editing this video.

Last year, we had many of you pose for a photo holding up a sign that proudly declared, "I was a Young Worker." Many of you have been in our position. You were new on the job. You started in the union as young workers, looking to learn and make our union stronger.

Young workers are the future of our union. It is time to start including them in the difficult conversations, mentor them and show them the ins and outs so that we can continue Unifor's legacy of fighting for its members. The Ontario Federation of Labour passed a resolution that said we need to create a strong multi-racial young workers force. A saying that we consistently use on the Young Workers Standing Committee, our future is worth the fight! Unifor's future is worth the fight.