

# **Ontario Regional Director's Recommendations**

Ontario Regional Council Meeting  
December 1 - 2 · Ottawa  
Shaw Centre

# Recommendation No. 1

## Supporting Families of MMIWG2S

In acknowledging the profound challenges and deep injustices faced by Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people in Canada, our commitment remains for a future where safety, healing, and justice can be achieved.

The adversities faced by MMIWG2S in Canada is not merely a statistic; it represents a deeply troubling pattern of violence disproportionately affecting Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit individuals. This situation, embedded in a complex history of colonialism, reflects systemic issues that have long perpetuated socio-economic hardships within Indigenous communities.

For years, the voices of MMIWG2S families, Indigenous communities, dedicated activists, and supportive allies have echoed loudly, calling for increased awareness and decisive action to address this situation. Yet, despite their tireless advocacy, the heartbreaking reality of new cases continue to surface, emphasizing the urgent need for continued attention, resources, and collective action.

Establishing strong foundations to diminish violence, enhance safety, and foster healing is fundamental to achieving truth, reconciliation, and justice.

### **I therefore recommend that the Ontario Regional Council:**

1. Encourage participation of Local Unions and members in the days of action on February 14th (Women's Memorial March) May 5th (Red Dress Day) and October 4th (National Day of Action for MMIWG2S)
2. Work with our National Union to support initiatives that raise awareness of and educates our membership on the realities faced by too many indigenous women, girls and two-spirit persons and their families.
3. Encourage participation and support in the Tears to Hope relay and commit to a monetary donation to the Tears to Hope Society.
4. Encourage members to commit to learning about the 231 distinct Calls for Justice outlined in the Final Report "Reclaiming Power and Place", from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

# Recommendation No. 2

## Improving WSIB

Our current system faces significant challenges that hinder the effective representation and support of our members who suffer from workplace injuries. The complexities of the claims process, coupled with the absence of dedicated Worker Advisors for union members, pose substantial barriers.

There exists a disparity in the level of support received by unionized workers and this uneven distribution of support leads to inconsistencies in claim outcomes. Additionally, the financial and procedural demands of the appeals process can be daunting, particularly for smaller local unions with limited resources.

As a result, workers can face delays in receiving benefits, inadequate compensation, or even complete denial of legitimate claims. This not only impacts the injured worker but also places an undue strain on their families and communities.

By addressing these critical issues, we can move towards a more equitable system where all unionized workers in Ontario, receive adequate support and representation in WSIB matters.

### **I therefore recommend that the Ontario Regional Council:**

1. Support the current work of the Health, Safety and Environment department and Workers Compensation committee in identifying the current level of representation and support for members with workplace injuries.
2. Establish a working group to explore and recommend practical solutions, including streamlined processes for accessing WSIB resources and effective support mechanisms for injured workers.
3. Continue lobbying efforts to demand better rules and legislation from the provincial government regarding workers' compensation. Advocate for policies that facilitate easier access to worker's compensation resources, support, and representation. This includes lobbying for the provision of Worker Advisors to union members.

# Recommendation No. 3

## Housing Policy

Canada is currently facing a significant housing crisis, impacting both renters and homeowners. With housing being the most significant expense for most Canadians, this crisis is exacerbated by wages that struggle to match inflation, resulting in Canadians allocating increasing portions of their income to housing costs.

Homeowners and aspiring homeowners are grappling with rising interest rates that strain their debt capacity. In Ontario, that gap is evident, where the average household in this province would need to spend nearly 60% of their income to afford an average house.

Renters are particularly affected by soaring rental rates and a shortage of available units. For instance, the average cost of a 1-bedroom apartment in Toronto has reached approximately \$2,620, highlighting the severity of the situation.

In 2021, one in ten households were in core housing need, unable to find suitable, adequate, or affordable housing within their community. This issue disproportionately affects members of equity-seeking groups, who are more likely to experience these housing difficulties than others.

The need for targeted and effective housing policies is needed more than ever.

### **I therefore recommend that the Ontario Regional Council:**

1. Endorse the national union's efforts to develop a comprehensive housing policy, ensuring participation and insight from leadership, staff, and local unions.
2. Encourage local unions to support housing advocacy groups, non-profits, and community organizations that are working towards affordable housing solutions.
3. Advocate for policies that not only prioritize affordable housing but also aim to reduce the disparities faced by equity-seeking groups in securing housing.

# Recommendation No. 4

## Mobilizing for Political Change in Ontario

In response to a provincial government that routinely neglects the interests of workers, it is time for us to rise and respond with strength and unity. The government's current approach blatantly challenges our rights and is further worsened by the escalating affordability crisis across the province.

More than ever, our collective voice and action are crucial in shaping a future that respects, protects, and advances the rights and welfare of every worker. It's essential for our government to invest in vital services like healthcare, childcare, and public transit, as such investments are key to improving affordability and the quality of life for all residents in Ontario.

We must push for policies that make transitioning to electric vehicles more feasible and affordable. Additionally, advocate for support mechanisms for workers whose jobs are impacted or transformed in this shift, ensuring they are not left behind.

We must actively resist any efforts to privatize healthcare services in Ontario, emphasizing the importance of keeping these essential services accessible and publicly funded.

We need to call for investments in sectors like transit vehicle manufacturing that can create and sustain good jobs with family-supporting wages.

We must strongly advocate for the introduction of provincial anti-scab legislation to protect workers' rights during strikes and lockouts, ensuring fair labor practices.

### **I therefore recommend that the Ontario Regional Council:**

1. Commit to continuous building and mobilization efforts well ahead of provincial elections. It's crucial to stay actively engaged on key issues, maintaining a strong presence and voice in the political landscape.
2. Consistently challenge and hold the Ford government accountable at every opportunity. Our vigilance is key to preventing backdoor deals and policies that benefit a select few at the expense of the broader public.
3. Actively organize for political change by advocating, campaigning, educating the public, and cultivating a strong, united front against policies that undermine the well-being of workers and residents in Ontario.



**unifor**

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