



Trans Inclusion Equity Guide



About this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide tips and resources for Unifor locals to foster trans inclusion and support bargaining teams in negotiating inclusive language into collective agreements.

With a proactive approach, Unifor local executives and bargaining teams can help to ensure that trans inclusive protections are in place, fostering workplace and union environments that respect and support gender diversity.

Acknowledging the integral role of trans and gender diverse individuals within our union, the guide underscores the collective responsibility to advocate for inclusive collective agreements that uphold the rights of all workers.

About Unifor's Human Rights Department

Human Rights' struggles have historically been part of the union since the early days of organizing.

We are leaders in breaking new grounds and stimulating changes and in achieving equality and eliminating discriminatory attitudes and practices. Unifor is committed to working towards the creation of a society in which all persons are treated with dignity and respect.

The role of the Human Rights Department is to promote a culture of respect for human rights in workplaces and society, to start or support local union and community initiatives, and work on developing policies for the union which will promote human rights.

The department plays a key role in the union's equity work to ensure that Unifor is the union for everyone.

Navigating Trans Workers' Concerns in Bargaining

Trans and gender diverse workers share many common concerns with their colleagues, including wages, benefits, and workplace safety.

However, they often encounter unique obstacles in accessing healthcare, parental benefits, and other rights stipulated in collective agreements, and are disproportionately subjected to exclusion, discrimination, harassment, and violence.

Trans workers may face higher rates of job refusal, limited career advancement, precarious employment, wage disparities, and termination.

As a result, bargaining priorities must encompass specific needs such as coverage for gender-affirming care, robust anti-harassment policies, access to safe facilities, and paid leave for medical transitions.

Bargaining Tips

Connect with trans workers to better understand their needs

- Speak directly with openly trans workers in your workplace to discuss their workplace concerns and ways you can be supportive. Never assume the identity of an individual and always respect their pronouns and gender expression.

Bargain trans-inclusive benefits

- Ensure benefits coverage include gender affirming care. Discuss options with your insurer including drug, device, and procedure coverage not currently covered under provincial health plans.
- Bargain paid leave for workers accessing gender affirming care.

Review policies

- Review anti-harassment policies to ensure they are equitable and effective.
- Ensure that trans workers are included in employment equity language.

Create safer physical spaces

- Create safe washroom and changerooms.
- Proudly display Unifor campaign materials and pro-trans rights materials in your union halls and union bulletin boards. Encourage the employer to do the same.

Bargain inclusive language in collective agreements

- Change gendered language in collective agreements to gender inclusive language (they/ them).
- Change references of wife/husband to partner or spouse.
- Change references of sister/brother to sibling.
- Change references of mother to pregnant employee or birthing parent.

Challenge sexist and gendered uniforms

Challenge workplace sexism and the gender binary by removing language that requires workers to wear specific uniforms based on assigned genders.

Get involved in Unifor's work to support equity

- Participate in queer and trans related Union Education courses including PEL and the Pride Activist Course.
- Send trans and queer members to conferences and union events.
- Participate in union campaigns and share trans related materials, statements, and stories with members.

- Establish a local 2SLGBTQIA+ committee, ensuring representation for Two-Spirit, trans, and non-binary leaders.
- Participate in trans focused Unifor events during Pride season and year-round.
- Engage with and support local activist groups through participation in events, inviting speakers, hiring artists, or sponsoring initiatives.
- Educate yourself on trans workplace issues and promote these learnings to others.

Unions play a pivotal role in supporting members, combating transphobia, and advocating for discrimination-free workplaces.

Through collective bargaining, Unifor locals can effectively address these issues, ensuring that employers uphold inclusive practices and provide environments free from discrimination and harassment.

Questions?

Human Rights Department

Email: pride@unifor.org

Phone: 416-495-3762

1-800-268-5763 ext. 3762