

# Toolkit for Decent Work

Ontario Regional Council



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# Overview

On June 7, 2018, Ontarians headed to the polls. The provincial election resulted in a Conservative majority government under Premier Doug Ford.

Over the summer months, the Ford Government announced it would cancel the minimum wage increase, rolled back the new sexual education curriculum, cancelled the new ward map for Toronto City Council, cancelled the cap and trade program and much more. The Government has come to power with the intention of sending a signal that everything is on the table, that it won't hesitate to override the Canadian Constitution, and that unions should get ready for upcoming attacks on workers' rights.

October 23, 2018, thousands of Ontarians including buses full of Unifor members from across the province descended on the lawn at Queens' Park to demand that the Ford administration keep their hands off health care. On the same day, the government moved a bill that would repeal the most worker-friendly labour law reforms adopted in Ontario in a generation. Unifor immediately kicked into high gear to resist this bill through emergency actions and a member-to-member campaign. However, we knew Bill 47 was just the start, and that the fight against the Ford government would require a sustained, coordinated effort on behalf of our union.

**With a majority government, the Progressive Conservative (PC) Party under Doug Ford's leadership have made it clear that they will serve the interest of big business, not of the working people of Ontario. Unifor members now have three years to come together to protect workers' rights and shape an Ontario for everyone.**

This toolkit aims to provide Unifor local unions and activists with ideas, resources and inspiration to take up the fight against the PC government. It is part of Unifor's sustained campaign over three years to ensure that the Conservative government does not get to decide the fate of working people in this province. Through this campaign, we hope to get Unifor members to engage politically on the ground against the government's regressive agenda, to defend workers' rights and to successfully remove the PC government from power in the next election.

Use this toolkit as your starting point to engage in the broader movement for decent work, both with unionized workers (our members) and non-union working people of Ontario. This work requires tough conversations with some of our members, especially those who may have voted for the Ford government. It is our role as union activists to engage in those tough conversations, and to share our vision of a province where the government is on the side of workers.

Whether you're a local union president, a rank-and-file member, a young worker or a retiree, there's something you can do to fight for a worker-friendly province.

# Budget season: a chance to talk about political priorities

With every new year comes the Ontario government's budget season. While the budget is the exercise that sets financial priorities for the Government of Ontario, we know that financial allocations are entirely linked to political priorities. The stakes are high during budget season: if a government makes funding cuts to public services such as health care and education they do so through the budget process.

The Ontario budget process typically starts in January as the government invites organizations to send in budget submissions outlining their vision. The Government takes these submissions into account, and the Finance Minister is responsible for presenting the budget in the Legislative Assembly. The budget must go to a vote, and must pass in order to become effective. The reality with a majority government is that the governing party already knows it has enough votes to carry the budget. This means that opposition from other parties or from the population of Ontario must be heard outside of the Legislative Assembly.

The content of the budget is always maintained under embargo (hidden) until the day of the budget delivery. While it is hard to predict what main issues will dominate the discussion during the budget cycle we know that 82% of program expenditure is spent in four ministries:

- Health care: 44%
- Education: 21%
- Community & Social Services: 10%
- Advanced Education & Skills Development: 7%

## Unifor's Budget Watch Program

Unifor believes that governments should play an active role to develop strong policies that advance the interest of all people and promote progressive economic development.

### Unifor takes part in the Ontario budget process through various ways:



By drafting a pre-budget submission that focuses on policy priorities and budget investments that will create good jobs, improve Ontario's physical and social infrastructure and create prosperity for workers in Ontario as well as their families and communities.



By issuing a press release stating our response to what is contained within the budget.



By providing our response to the budget to the media.



By attending the budget lock-up where the Finance Minister will reveal details of this year's budget.

## When budget season comes around, here's what you can expect from Unifor's Budget Watch:



A summary of our budget submission.



Brief talking points about what a budget for working people in Ontario looks like.



A call-out for local unions to participate in the pre-budget consultation process. This is a great way to get new people involved and to partner up with coalition allies.



Action items for how to engage and discuss the budget with your members.



Updates on Unifor's response as soon as it is released.

## Starting conversations around budget time

One of the best ways to take advantage of budget season is to create space and time to talk to your members. For this part, you can refer to the next section in this toolkit for ideas on how to have one-on-one conversations with your members.

Here are some basic questions to get you started, and make sure to stay tuned to Unifor's Budget Watch program for timely discussion topics.

### Discussion questions for Budget Watch

- How does the budget affect your sector?
- How does the budget affect your region?
- How does the budget affect members of equity-seeking groups?
- What stories from your membership will help highlight Unifor's vision for Ontario and support our priorities?
- What would be our vision for our sector/region?

## Member outreach

One of the great strengths of our union is that we represent a wide range of working people, from so many different sectors and so many different regions. Very few organizations have the capacity to reach so far and wide within the population. When it comes to a sustained campaign to build opposition to the Ontario Conservative government there are no shortcuts. In other words, Unifor activists need to talk and engage directly with as many members as possible. It's hard work but it's the only way to have meaningful conversations and to plug our members into our broader fight for fair wages and decent work.



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# Recognizing and removing barriers to participation

If you're an elected member of your local union executive you may be asking yourself why more members don't play an active role in the local. The reality is that often times there are barriers that prevent some members from getting more involved. For example, if your meetings are always in the evening and you don't provide childcare parents may not be able to attend. If your workplace operates 24 hours a day, and you always do your membership meetings during the day, night shift workers may have a barrier preventing them from participating.

As union activists it is our role to do our best to identify barriers and to remove them to allow for participation from as many members as possible. Here are some tips to alleviate barriers - for a more comprehensive guide download or order the Unifor *Inclusive Practices Toolkit* from the national website.

- Organize events on different days and at different times
- Offer free food
- Hold events in accessible venues so that physical barriers do not prevent anyone from participating
- Offer child care, or ask people to sign up for child care services in advance
- Go see your members, instead of asking them to come to you
- Engage equity-seeking committees into the work of building your local union
- Invite special guests to your events to share different perspectives, stories and experiences that may connect to portions of your membership

- Ensure that the Unifor anti-harassment statement is read at all events and maintain a harassment-free zone
- Diversify your events so that you're not always doing the same activity
- Put on alcohol-free events so that everyone is welcome

## Creating space

After removing barriers, the next step is to create space so that your members can discuss and exchange on important issues. There are tons of ways to create space, including those suggested below. The most important thing is that you find creative ways of answering this question: "How can we get members gathered so that we can have a conversation with them?" Here are a few ideas that go beyond the usual membership meeting format.

### Worksite visits

If your members don't come to you, go to them! A short worksite visit can happen at shift change, at lunch time, or even on breaks. If you can get 3-4 people together for a quick chat then it's worth it.

#### A few tips for worksite visits:

- Be sure to pre-arrange your visit so people know you're coming
- Bring some swag and campaign materials
- Check Unifor's latest talking points so you know the latest updates to share
- Try to build momentum towards a bigger event (see Lunch & Learn)

## Lunch and learn

Call it what you want: Lunch & Learn, Snack & Yak, or come up with your own format! The idea here is to gather members around a meal. You can provide the food, or you can gather people who have brought their own lunch. Make this a short but punchy session.

### Here are some tips:

- Have one clear subject for discussion.
- Make a short introduction to the subject: 5 minutes max.
- Ask everyone to introduce themselves and share their thoughts on the issue.
- Have a few discussion questions ready in case you need to feed the conversation.
- Wrap-up with a clear ask for people (ie: sign up for updates, sign the petition, etc).
- Keep it short and finish on time.

## Tabling at the workplace

Tabling is a great way to identify workplace activists who are naturally interested in some of the issues you're bringing forward. Have you ever set up a table in one of your workplaces?

### Here's what to keep in mind:

- Make logistical arrangements ahead of time to make sure you have a table and so you don't surprise the employer.
- Bring enough materials to have an impressive table without being overwhelming. You want a good balance of educational materials and free swag.
- Make sure you can engage with people for substantial 5-10 minute conversations. If they come see you on break and want to chat you don't want them to leave because you're out of ideas on what to say!
- This is a great time to get people to sign up for updates or to take action directly.
- Hear them out: what are their concerns? What have they heard about the government's actions?



## Unit or membership meetings

If your local union is planning a unit or membership meeting soon take the opportunity to inform members about this campaign. This is a great way to diversify the content of your meeting: talk to them about what the government is doing and why it matters to them.

### Some tips:

- Announce the content of the meeting ahead of time so any members who are interested can attend – this is a great way to identify new activists.
- With enough notice, see if you can get a guest from the National office to offer a short presentation on the latest government actions.
- Alternatively, check the latest talking points and prepare a 10 minute update for your members.
- Open up the floor for questions and discussion. If there are questions for which you don't have the answer don't make it up! Tell them you will get the answer and get back to them, and do so.
- Invite community partners to the meeting so they can also be part of the discussion.
- Keep it short and finish on time.

## Talking to your members

Once you've removed barriers and created spaces for members to engage and discuss, it's important to work on your one-on-one conversation skills. It's well known that direct individual conversation is one of the most effective ways to engage in a two-way dialogue: you want to listen just as much (if not more) than you speak. One-on-one conversations are used in all sorts of campaigns, from union organizing campaigns to community and political campaigns. If you don't know how to respond to questions or to challenge people on their assumptions practicing your one-on-one skills will help you get there.

### A few tips:

- One-on-one conversations aren't about having a script, since we're humans and not robots. But they are about having a standard approach to collect information and pass on information in a consistent way.
- When engaging with a member listen just as much (if not more) as you speak. Assuming what they think will almost guarantee that you will take the conversation in the wrong direction. If you're listening, and encouraging them to share their opinion, you'll have a better sense of what they believe.
- Be present in the conversation, verbally and non-verbally. If you're checking your phone or looking around the person may not have confidence that you're attentive to the conversation.

- Reformulate: to make sure you've understood and are not putting words into the person's mouth make sure you paraphrase what they are saying and ask for confirmation that you got it right.
- Ask a lot of open-ended questions to get the person to talk and expand on what they think.
- Make sure you've prepared with a few latest updates to share so that you can eventually lead the conversation towards the pressing issue.
- End the conversation by outlining next steps.

## Engaging members from equity-seeking groups

The Unifor structures encourage leadership and involvement for workers from traditionally marginalized communities. Workers who are already engaged in local union Human Rights Committees or additional equity committees are often already politically engaged and ready to take action.

Just consider, who are minimum wage workers in Ontario? Look into the stats and you will see that young workers, recent immigrants, racialized workers and women are over-represented.

## Leaders in equity-seeking groups can further engage in education and activism within the committees with events and conversations



**Host a conversation on the impact** of the conservative agenda on our community.

- How has the repeal of comprehensive sex-ed hurt LGBTQ workers?
- How does privatized medicine affect Indigenous workers and workers of colour?
- How does the gutting of workers comp affect workers with disabilities?



**Build events into your Friday of action or campaign plan** that equity committee members plan and host. Eg. plan a telephone bank specifically on violence against women.



**Ensure that communication, from newsletters to emails, highlights the stories of workers** from equity-seeking groups.

# Organizing Workplace Actions

The term “workplace action” may be different depending on the region, the sector, and your specific workplace. What we mean by “workplace action” is that you use the network and sway you have in a workplace to move your co-workers to action. The action can take many forms - be as creative as you want with a workplace action. What’s important is that you motivate your co-workers to do something they would have not done otherwise, and that you connect it to a bigger goal.

## Here are some examples of workplace actions:

- ❑ Sticker-up: everyone wear a sticker on a given day
- ❑ T-shirt day: everyone wears a Unifor t-shirt or a certain colour on a given day
- ❑ Mini-rally and photo-op: take a group photo at lunchtime or shift change
- ❑ Leafleting/tabling and other actions to engage with co-workers about a certain issue
- ❑ 30 minutes to make a banner for an upcoming rally
- ❑ Friday of protest: every Friday your workplace does something
- ❑ Tools down/walk-out (this requires adequate planning!)
- ❑ Teach-in: bring a guest speaker to talk about an issue at lunch time or after work
- ❑ There are so many great ideas for workplace actions: come up with your own!

## Before your workplace action takes place, make sure to check these items off your list:

- ❑ Gather a small planning committee to come up with an action that can work.
- ❑ Give yourself enough time to plan, implement and conduct the action.
- ❑ Figure out the logistics: timing, location, materials needed, etc.
- ❑ Call the national office to review the details of your action and let them know it’s happening. We can help you make your action the most effective and connect the dots between all workplace actions.
- ❑ Let people know: send an email, a text message, or talk to people in person to let your members know about the action. Make sure to reassure people, answer any questions, and get a sense of how many people will participate.
- ❑ Go time: when the wheels are in motion make sure the energy is high and people feel confident about their action.

## Public relations

How you frame your message helps shape public opinion on your issues - for better or worse! You will want to communicate your issues in language that is as simple and accessible as possible.

Opponents will try to trip you up but remember that almost anyone can be brought on your side with the right conversation.

# Telling your story

Think of a time when you changed your mind recently, or when an argument truly moved you. Chances are that the person you were moved by used a compelling personal story in order to shape their opinion.

- **Everyone has a story to tell.**  
Think of why you're passionate about the issue. How will your life be changed when the union wins pay equity, or four hours of care in long-term care homes? It might not always be obvious but there is often a direct personal connection to be made.
- **Focus on what you know.**  
Stick to your own experiences, instead of speaking on behalf of someone else.
- **Use empathy over stats.**  
Having good data on hand is important in campaigns, as an organizer you'll need to know some of the details about who is affected by cuts to minimum wage, or just how far behind the province is in funding long-term care. But when you're telling your story it's often more powerful to show the human impact instead of the dollars and cents.

# The Message Box

A message box is a tool to help you stick to your talking points. The exercise of coming up with a message box is a good one to do with your local union executive or a group of activists as it ensures everyone is on the same page in terms of what you're saying about your issue or campaign. The National office can always help you come up with your message box and can even provide talking points that are in line with our union's general message box. To make your own use the following guide.

<p><b>Us On Us</b> <b>What do you want to say about the issue?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What are your strongest points?</li><li>▪ Who is your audience?</li></ul>	<p><b>Them On Us</b> <b>What will your opponents say about the issue?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Determine weaknesses in your argument that could be exploited.</li><li>▪ Make a list of their possible remarks.</li></ul>
<p><b>Us On Them</b> <b>What do you want to say about your opponent's position?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Identify the weaknesses in their main arguments.</li><li>▪ Don't be afraid to identify misleading information but avoid getting caught up in too many details and be careful of coming across as overly aggressive.</li></ul>	<p><b>Them On Them</b> <b>What will your opponent say about the issue?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Have they already been speaking about the issue?</li><li>▪ Use this to form counterarguments.</li><li>▪ Check their facts.</li></ul>

# Speaking with media

If you get media attention for your actions be sure to contact the national Communications Department. They can help to practice interviews, give valuable information and promote your coverage. Even union representatives who do media regularly always need to run through a message box before doing interviews. Keep these tips in mind for when you are doing an interview:

## 1 Know your story.

Don't try to wing it. Have a backgrounder or statement and any supporting data on hand. Have a friend ask you anticipated questions. Practice your answers out loud.

## 2 Create sound bites.

Speak in short sentences and stress the main talking points that you practiced beforehand. If you were hoping to convey something that you weren't asked about say it anyway. You're in a conversation and can add to the story.

## 3 Take control.

If you're asked a challenging or off-topic question you don't have to answer immediately. Take your time and if you lack information let them know you'll follow up on that point later in the day. Pivot back to the point you want to make.

## 4 Stay positive.

Keep your cool. The conservative attacks on workers are frustrating but our job is to confidently share our stories and counter those attacks. Staying calm, even when pushed, will get your message across more effectively.

# Online resources

## Online actions

Online engagement allows for your actions to be seen and heard by an even wider audience. When you share your on-the-ground actions online, or plan online actions, then you can get the attention of local politicians, media representatives, bosses and union members.

Online actions should never replace on-the-ground and in-person organizing and should only compliment or highlight those actions. When we do great actions in our workplaces or communities we use online channels to amplify that work.

### Examples of online actions

- Print posters or write messages on a card and take photos of members with that message. Post the pictures tagging your local MPP or the Premier.
- Record a short video on why a current issue matters to you, like public healthcare or \$15 and Fairness. Post the video and ask members to do the same.
- Plan for a day when members of your local all tweet at your MPP with a similar message. Ask for their support. Be sure to use local hashtags so that journalists in your region see the action.

## Do's and Don'ts of social media

Do your local union, executive, and activists have Facebook, Instagram and Twitter? If not, your first step is to get these!

### DO

#### 1 Complete your profile.

Upload a high-quality profile photo, fill in your bio and link to your website or [unifor.org](http://unifor.org)

Members should be able to access information, including information about other platforms through your accounts.

#### 2 Connect with us!

- Follow @UnifortheUnion on Twitter, @UniforCanada on Instagram and like Unifor Canada on Facebook.

- Tag the union in your posts and photos.

#### 3 Make a schedule.

- Plan your posts in advance to ensure your events are well-attended and publicized. This removes the stress of creating content when you are at your busiest.

- Facebook pages and Twitter apps like Hootsuite and Tweetdeck allow you to schedule your posts in advance.

- On Twitter you can post multiple tweets per day. With Facebook and Instagram pages avoid posting more than twice a day unless you have an event.

#### 4 Connect with your friends.

- Include hashtags like #Unifor on every post and take advantage of local trends and conversations to find new audiences and insert worker issues into wider conversations.

- Follow back, tag members in photos and ask for Twitter or Instagram handles when you collect emails or contact info for your members.

#### 5 Control your content.

- Set some guidelines on language and content for posts and comments that everyone who is allowed to post understands and are responsible for enforcing.

#### 6 Remember your personal social media accounts are not off-limits.

- Reporters can quote you and even pull photos from these pages without your permission. When you're posting about the campaign on your own media accounts remember to stay on message.

### DON'T

#### 1 Don't share your password.

Volunteers and organizers should be asked to send photos to the person responsible for posting. This will maintain consistency and reduce confusion.

#### 2 Don't post during work hours.

Your employer is always watching and many have social media policies. Know your social media policy and don't post during work hours.

**3 Don't post anything that you wouldn't want on a billboard (or send to your mother)**

**4 Don't engage in personal attacks.**

You can engage in exchanges with public officials but be respectful.

**5 #Dont #overuse #hashtags or spam your feeds.**

Always ask yourself if your content is relevant.

**6 Don't forget the basics.**

Take your time and always double-check spelling and grammar.

**7 Don't get stuck in a rut.**

Try new things, post at different times and use a different tone. Testing out these differences is the only way to really find out what works. Don't be afraid to try out new platforms or types of content like videos!

## Conversations to join

If you're posting about the great work you're doing locally use the #Unifor hashtag.

### PROVINCIAL POLITICS:

#onpoli, #onlab, #15andFairness, #ONhealth

### LOCAL ISSUES:

Sometimes the shorthand for local affairs is the airport code (where applicable) or some variation of the city name. You have to search or look at local news sources to see what people use. Eg. tweets about municipal affairs in Ottawa are hashtagged #ottnews or #ottawa whereas tweets in Toronto use #yyz more frequently.

### CREATE YOUR OWN HASHTAGS:

If you're having an event or an ongoing issue that multiple people are tweeting about create your own hashtag. Literally anything that follows "#" is a hashtag, so just type it in (no spaces or punctuation).

## What to find on our website:

The best place to get up to date information on Unifor's provincial campaigns is in the Campaigns section of the website.

For current campaigns, the campaigns pages are the one-stop-shop for information and resources. A typical campaign page will have:

- Links to media releases and campaign updates to help you with local messaging
- Factsheets and backgrounders
- Printable outreach materials, from posters to leaflets
- Digital materials like videos, shareables and info-graphics

**Upcoming events and online actions are also posted in the Unifor app. The app is available for download in the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store.**

# Build outwards

## Taking part in coalition building

Our work as union activists does not happen in isolation. In order to build a broad front against the Conservative government, we have to build alliances and coalitions with our community allies. There are so many great groups and organizations that lead the charge on grassroots campaigns in your region. It's your responsibility to reach out, get a sense of what they are working on, and plug your local union into that work. If you don't have any connection with a group that you would like to build an alliance with try inviting them to speak and share updates at your next executive or membership meeting.

**There are many groups that you can connect with. Here are some examples:**

- \$15 and fairness organizing group in your area
- Ontario Health Coalition organizing group in your area
- Anti-poverty organizations.
- Have high school students recently walked out in your area? Try to connect with them and support their work.
- Student unions who are active on a campus in your area.

## Meet with your MPP

Putting pressure on Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) is an important part of making our voices heard. Under a majority government, the MPPs may not feel compelled to meet with unions or groups who present an alternative vision and disagree with their policies. However, MPPs are always under pressure to get re-elected and will always feel the need to meet with constituents when they request a meeting. You can help make Unifor's voice heard by meeting with the MPP who represents you at Queen's Park. Unifor has a comprehensive lobby guide that can help plan and guide you in a lobby meeting.

**Here are some tips to get you started.**

- If you're going to meet with your MPP, try to gather a group of people from your riding so you can go together, support each other, and have a greater presence.
- To get a meeting contact your MPP's constituency office. Announce yourself as someone who lives in the riding and inform them that you would like to schedule a meeting with your legislative representative.
- Before the meeting, call the national office to report your meeting and get the latest set of talking points.
- You don't have to be an expert on issues to lobby a politician. Concentrate more on the affect of the issue on your community. Stick to the community side of the issue as that's the area where you are the expert.

## Lobby Day Checklist

### Before the meeting:

- Read the issue document and backgrounders.
- Bring any materials you'd like the politicians to have to the meeting (these are called leave-behinds).
- Meet 15 minutes before the appointment time at a location near the politician's office.
- Make sure you know who will take the lead and who will write a Lobby Report (take notes).
- Establish when other lobby group members will add comments or answer questions.

### At the meeting:

- Introduce yourself.
- Make a statement of your position.
- Discuss, clarify and respond to questions.
- Make commitments to follow up, if necessary.
- Say thank you and good-bye.

### After the meeting:

- Wait until you're out of the building to debrief or share comments on how the meeting went.
- Draft short lobby notes to remember what happened at the meeting.
- Contact the national office to share the notes and debrief on how the meeting went.

## Organize a successful "know your rights" events

When governments take away workers' rights it becomes even more important to conduct robust education for all workers, union and non-union. As union members, we sometimes forget that the information we get through our union and through collective bargaining is something that non-union workers don't have access to. Part of our work as union members is to extend that knowledge to those workers who might need it most.

The following checklist will help you open the doors of your workplace or local union to invite non-union workers and share with them some of your knowledge. This can help create space to talk about workers' rights and build a common front against the Conservative government. You can adapt this event to the needs of your membership and community - don't hesitate to be creative in organizing a remarkable event.

### Three months before the event

- Decide on the goals of the event.
- Gather a small team to help organize the event.
- Assign an event coordinator.
- Get cost estimates (food, venue, materials, etc.) and decide on what budget/costs are possible for your local.
- Decide on time and date.
- Call the national organizing department to tell them about your plans for the event.
- Make list of guest speakers and topics for the event.
- Create a promotional poster for the event.
- Start developing a plan to outreach to your target audience.

### Two months before the event

- Prepare final copy of the poster or invitation to the event.
- Make a list of locations where posters can be dropped off or posted.
- Order materials and food. What knowledge and expertise can your local share with non-union workers?
- Send out an invitation to guest speaker(s).
- Decide what to include in packages of information for participants.

### One month before the event

- Distribute posters.
- Review and create required signs, such as registration, directional, etc.
- Finalize the plan for the event with the organizing team.
- Review/finalize task sheets and tentative agenda.
- Finalize participants' packages.
- Assign an emcee for the event.

### Two weeks before the event

- Confirm volunteers for registration, facilitators and guest speakers.
- Give an estimate of guests expected for food and materials.
- Make phone calls to any potential guests to maximize participation.

### One week before the event

- Confirm the number of participants attending.
- Distribute additional flyers/posters.
- Confirm that all required materials and equipment are accounted for.
- Put packages together for participants.

### During the event

- Distribute an email sign-up sheet.
- Identify potential participants/activists who would like to keep in touch, continue working on common issues.
- Distribute evaluation forms to get feedback on the event.
- Make sure that new participants have a chance to engage, and that your seasoned activists don't take up all the space.

### After the event

- Compile all of the evaluation forms and document feedback for next time.
- Enter all collected contact information into the central contact database. Do this as soon as possible so that you can follow-up with people/leads as needed.
- Follow-up on any potential organizing leads—set up meetings with individuals, document new target groups of workers.
- Share the results of the event with the national organizing department.
- Celebrate your efforts with your event organizing team.
- Start planning the next event!



# Bargaining workers' rights

## Getting ready for bargaining

Unifor always has a set of bargaining priorities that it aims to present at bargaining tables across the country. Recently, due to the cancellation of many new and improved employment standards in the Conservative's Bill 47 in Ontario, Unifor has encouraged local unions to bargain rights that were lost. This is an ambitious bargaining program that sends a message to employers that when they lobby the government to reduce workers' rights, we turn around and bargain them back. When presenting bold bargaining proposals it's very important to engage your members earlier on in the process. Some proposals may generate questions from your members and the more prepared you are ahead of time the better the process will be. **Be sure to consult Unifor's current bargaining priorities for Ontario well ahead of the start of bargaining.**

### 6 months before bargaining

- Conduct a bargaining survey and equity audit to get feedback from your members.
- Hold a membership meeting to elect a bargaining committee and inform members about Ontario's current bargaining priorities.
- Gather your bargaining team to identify new items that will be presented.
- Start working on your bargaining proposal.
- Identify if there will be a need to lead a public campaign on any bargaining proposals and seek help from the national office to design this campaign.

- Make sure you are connected with your equity committees and have a plan to outreach to your members who belong to equity-seeking groups (women, young workers, LGBTQ workers, workers of colour, workers with disabilities) to ensure their bargaining priorities are reflected.

### 3 months before bargaining

- Hold a membership meeting to share your bargaining proposal with members.
- Set dates with the employer.
- Draft brief explanations for any new item that your members may have questions about.
- Continue engaging your membership in the campaign for decent work.
- Identify methods through which you will keep your members informed of updates during bargaining (newsletter, website, etc.)

### 1 month before bargaining

- Hold workplace lunch and learn events to talk directly with your members.
- Set up an information table in every single workplace.
- Make sure you talk to each member at least once before the start of bargaining.
- Hold a membership meeting to recap your bargaining proposal.

### During bargaining

- Keep your members updated at regular intervals.
- Continue workplace engagement through lunch events or tabling.
- Draft a detailed document outlining bargaining highlights when a tentative agreement is reached. Make sure to engage directly with members about any questions they may have.
- Hold a membership meeting to answer any questions.

# 10 ways to build our union

- 1 Share your story** about being a unionized worker and having a collective agreement to other workers, friends and family members.
- 2 Bring one new person** to your local union's meeting or event.
- 3 When people around you make erroneous statements about unions, correct them** and share your experience.
- 4 Organize a regional social activity** for young workers, union and non-union. Be sure to engage your young workers' committee, or any active young workers from your local in this project.
- 5 Engage your local union into the broader struggle in your community:** access to transit, housing, decent work, fair wages, health care: there's a lot to care about! Activate your local on issues you may not have worked on before, such as anti-racism campaigns, campaigns to combat harassment and violence against women, etc.
- 6 Identify local groups of workers who cannot organize and could benefit** from working together as a union, or as a community chapter.
- 7 Ask a non-union worker** if they have ever considered unionizing.
- 8 Send letters to newspapers** to reflect the worker position in media coverage.
- 9 Participate in solidarity events** for workers in your community who are on strike, locked-out, or who are organizing their workplace.
- 10 Highlight the positive actions that your union and local union are doing every day!**  
Visit [www.unifor.org](http://www.unifor.org) for regular updates.



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