



Your  
home in  
**OPSEU  
SEFPO**

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*A user's guide to the Ontario Public Service Employees Union*

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*Prepared by OPSEU Communications  
2009 Edition*



# Finding your way around your union

*A message to current, new and prospective members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union*

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Dear sisters and brothers:

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this guidebook.

Those of us who have been around OPSEU for a while sometimes forget how much we had to learn when we first got involved in the union. Like any big organization, we have our own way of doing things, our own structures, and our own vocabulary. The whole thing can seem a bit complicated at first.

This book is designed to help you find your way around OPSEU. It explains how you can get involved at the local level. It shows how the sectors and regions of the union support the work of our locals. And it explains how you can get help on workplace issues from our skilled staff and our elected Executive Board Members.

Life at work is constantly changing. Over the years, OPSEU structures and procedures have evolved constantly to help us adapt to changes as they happen. But no matter how much we change, two things do not change: 1) our desire to make our union stronger so it can do more for our members and our communities, and 2) our desire to shape our own destiny by following democratic principles. When you are a member of OPSEU, you and your co-workers are in the driver's seat.

This user's manual can help get you where you want to go. I look forward to working with you.

In solidarity,



Warren (Smokey) Thomas  
President, Ontario Public Service Employees Union



**Warren (Smokey) Thomas**  
President

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# Our union and how we work together

With some 125,000 members in Ontario, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union has the resources to offer:

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**The OPSEU model  
balances local  
autonomy with  
strong regional  
and central  
coordination**

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- 19 fully-staffed regional offices;
- a staff of more than 300 people, including specialists in bargaining, grievance-handling, pensions, benefits, health and safety, human rights, communications, education, and more;
- office space and equipment for OPSEU locals at all regional offices and at 13 stand-alone membership centres;
- meeting space for provincial committees and other member groups at OPSEU Head Office at 100 Lesmill Rd. in Toronto and at 5757 Coopers Ave. in Mississauga;
- tons of experience in mobilizing union members to get what they need; and
- a strong voice at local labour councils and in larger labour bodies.

To pay for all of this, OPSEU members pay union dues at the rate of 1.375 per cent of gross pay. Total dues revenue for the union is approximately \$87 million per year. Of this, five per cent goes directly into the strike fund. The strike fund currently has a very healthy balance of \$41 million to support OPSEU members who are fighting to improve and defend their collective agreements.

## Getting involved in your union

Getting involved in your union means, first of all, getting involved in your local. OPSEU locals hold the keys to power in our union's democratic structures.

OPSEU divisions and sectors help locals with issues in common to coordinate their activities right across the province. OPSEU regions support locals by geographic area, and give locals influence and access at the Executive Board.

The OPSEU model balances local autonomy with strong regional and central coordination.

# The front door: OPSEU locals

*The purpose of establishing Locals of the Union is to encourage participation of all Members in their Union.*

— from the OPSEU Constitution

For OPSEU members, locals are the front door into the life of the union.

Chartered by the Executive Board, locals have the autonomy and the resources to do whatever they think is important for their members. Under the OPSEU constitution and policy, OPSEU locals (and, where applicable, bargaining units within locals) may:

- take part in the negotiation of collective agreements;
- process grievances;
- establish joint labour-management committees on local or unit working conditions;
- spend their own money;
- join local labour councils and other organizations;
- take part in social and community activities;
- elect delegates to the OPSEU Convention, union training, and other important meetings; and
- help craft union policy.

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## Types of locals

OPSEU groups locals into three main types:

- In **single-unit** locals, all members work for the same employer at the same location.
- In **multi-unit** locals, all members work for the same employer but at different locations.
- In **composite** locals, members work for more than one employer at one or more locations.

## OPSEU local structures

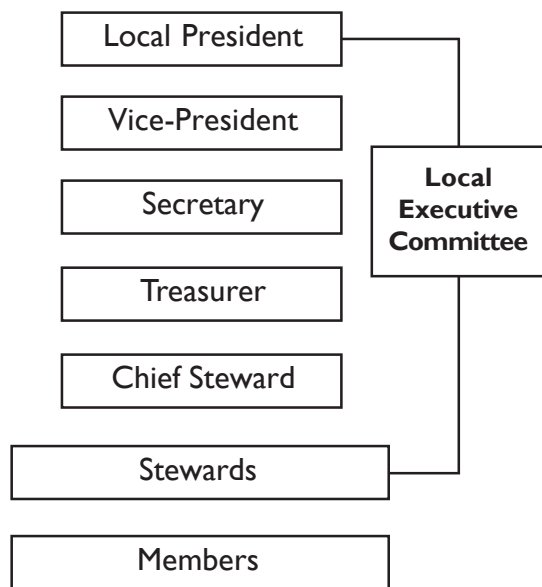
### Definitions:

Single-unit local = one unit and one employer

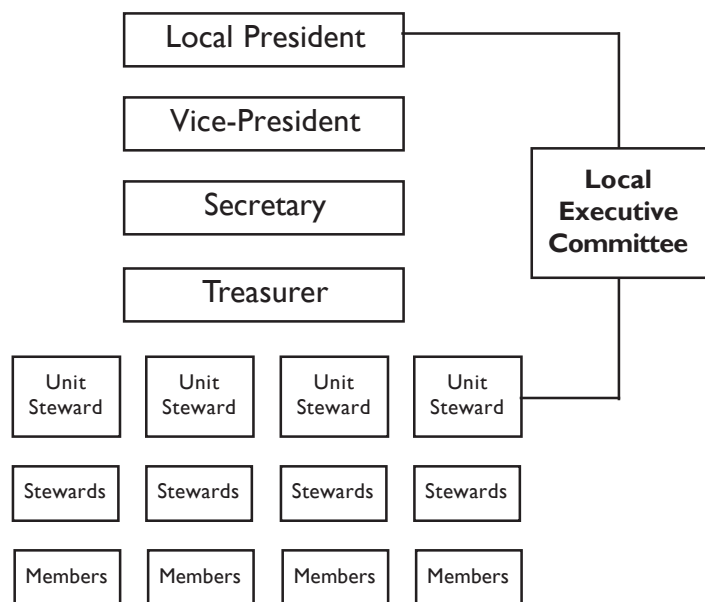
Multi-unit local = more than one unit and one employer

Composite local = more than one unit and more than one employer

### Single-unit local



### Multi-unit or Composite local



## Local elections

Shop stewards are the front-line voice of the union in the workplace. Each local or (in multi-unit or composite locals) each unit decides how many shop stewards it needs. Each shop steward must be elected by a clear majority of members in his or her area.

Members must be shop stewards to be elected to their Local Executive Committee (LEC). Each LEC has a president and at least two other officers (vice-president, secretary, treasurer, secretary-treasurer, chief steward, etc.).

In single-unit locals, all shop stewards are automatic members of the LEC. In multi-unit or composite locals, members in each unit elect one or more unit stewards (from among the shop stewards) to the LEC.

Local elections take place at well-publicized membership meetings. In special cases, the provincial president of OPSEU may authorize polling stations at different locations.



## Local funding

OPSEU locals are funded by a quarterly dues rebate system. Locals receive a rebate cheque each January, April, July and October. As of July 2009, OPSEU Accounting pays each local according to the following formula:

- For the first 50 members, the local gets \$29.09 per member.
- For each member above 50, the local gets \$12.93 per member.

No local gets less than \$549.43 per quarter. Composite locals receive an extra annual allowance of \$161.60 (for locals with up to 50 members) or \$323.20 (for locals with more than 50 members).

Rebate levels are revised each year based on the union's overall revenues.

A typical OPSEU local with 250 members would receive \$16,160 a year in operating funds.

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## Convention delegate entitlements

The OPSEU Convention is the supreme governing body of the union. Held once a year in the spring, Convention debates and decides on constitutional changes, policy matters, and the annual budget. Convention delegates have very important responsibilities. Electing these delegates is one of the most important things OPSEU locals do.

Locals elect delegates to OPSEU Convention, and many other key meetings, according to the following formula:

- Up to 150 members: 1 delegate
- 151 to 300 members: 2 delegates
- 301 to 500 members: 3 delegates
- 501 to 800 members: 4 delegates
- 801 to 1,100 members: 5 delegates
- 1,101 to 1,500 members: 6 delegates
- 1,501 to 1,900 members: 7 delegates
- 1,901 to 2,300 members: 8 delegates
- 2,301 or more members: 9 delegates

Delegate entitlements are based on signed-up members, not the total number of employees in the local.

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## **Local bylaws**

OPSEU locals may pass their own bylaws as long as they do not violate the OPSEU constitution and are approved by the president of OPSEU. Locals that do not pass bylaws are governed by the bylaws in Article 29 of the constitution.

## **Local numbering**

The OPSEU Executive Board assigns local numbers. The first digit in the local number indicates what region the local is in.

# Province-wide coordination: OPSEU's sectors and divisions

Union action is united action. No matter where they work, union members become stronger when they take action together.

## What's a sector? What's a division?

OPSEU's sectors and divisions (the two words mean the same thing) have one purpose: to unite members from across the province who have workplace issues in common.

In some sectors, like the Ontario Public Service, all members work **for the same employer**. The same is true for the Property Assessment Division, the Liquor Board Employees Division, and the two community college divisions (Academic and Support). In some sectors and divisions, members work **for different employers** that provide the same or similar services. The Children's Aid sector, with 21 different employers providing child protection services, is a typical example.

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**OPSEU's divisions and sectors unite members from across the province who have workplace issues in common**

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## The work of sectors and divisions

Like OPSEU locals, OPSEU sectors and divisions have bylaws that set out the rules under which they work, including the way in which sector leaders and committees are elected. The number one job of divisions and sectors is to coordinate the activities of their members. Divisions and sectors may:

- plan pre-bargaining conferences to help members prepare for demand-setting;
- decide on common bargaining issues;
- organize a province-wide strike vote;
- campaign around a public policy issue, e.g., the need to rebuild public services, or to stop privatization; or
- develop an organizing policy to bring union rights to more workers.

These are examples only. There are really very few limits on the activities divisions and sectors can get involved in.

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## **Budget matters**

Budgets for OPSEU divisions and sectors vary widely depending on their activities. All divisions prepare a budget detailing all expenditures they have planned. The OPSEU Executive Board and Convention then allocate funds through the annual budget process.

Some divisions and sectors also collect their own dues that are paid for out of local rebates. This money is used to supplement central funding to send members to conferences, fund scholarships, make donations, and cover other small expenses.

## **Divisional Councils**

In two areas of OPSEU, several divisions and sectors are grouped together to work as Divisional Councils.

The Health Care Divisional Council provides an umbrella for OPSEU's seven health care divisions: Ambulance, Community Health Care Professionals, Health Care Support, Hospital Professionals, Long Term Care Facilities, Mental Health, and Canadian Blood Services & Diagnostics.

The Community Services Divisional Council is the umbrella organization for OPSEU members working in Developmental Services, Children's Aid, Children's Treatment, and (youth) Correctional Centres.

The purpose of the Divisional Councils is to work on issues that go beyond the concerns of individual sectors. The work of the councils includes:

- coordinating the activities of member divisions;
- developing recommendations on policy matters that affect members in more than one division;
- monitoring trends and issues that affect division members;
- working closely with staff; and
- developing recommendations and motions for presentation to the OPSEU Executive Board.

Communication is key to the work of the Divisional Councils. The Health Care Divisional Council publishes a bi-weekly newsletter, *Dialogue*, that is e-mailed to OPSEU members working in health care and posted to the OPSEU web site.

## OPSEU divisions and sectors (2009)

Division or Sector	Bargaining Units	Members
Ambulance	22	2,296
Developmental services	69	7,372
Boards of education	7	1,073
Canadian Blood Services and Diagnostics	5	1,904
Children's aid	21	2,927
Child & family services, child care	14	489
Community agencies, cultural institutions	27	1,315
Correctional centres	24	934
Long term care	28	1,762
Universities	13	1,858
Hospital professionals	85	14,326
Health care support	21	2,837
Legal services	9	212
Municipalities	26	1,668
Private contractors	17	446
Children's treatment	26	1,863
Property assessment	1	1,602
Community health care professionals	28	2,075
Mental health	30	6,672
General	15	1,776
Liquor Board Employees	1	6,695
Ontario Public Service	1	44,964
Community colleges (Academic)	1	8,318
Community colleges (Support)	1	8,591
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>123,975</b>

All figures are current as of mid-August 2009 and include all active workers in OPSEU bargaining units. This does not include those on leave. Full contact information for the elected leaders of each sector and division is available at [www.opseu.org/ContactUs/executivelisting.htm](http://www.opseu.org/ContactUs/executivelisting.htm).

# OPSEU's regions: Making locals stronger together

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**Executive Board  
Members give  
locals a direct link  
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The seven regions of OPSEU play a central role in the day-to-day life of the union.

Perhaps the most important role regions play is in electing Executive Board Members. OPSEU has 21 EBM's (three per region), elected every two years by local delegates to regional meetings. The Executive Board meets every six weeks to guide the union's business. Some two dozen Board sub-committees are responsible for guiding the union in key areas.

EBMs give locals a direct link to the Executive Board, the union's most important decision-making body other than Convention. In addition, many activities of the union, from weekend educationals to province-wide campaigns, are coordinated regionally. Executive Board Members are always available to provide help and advice to locals in their region.

The OPSEU President, First-Vice President/Treasurer, and seven Regional Vice-Presidents make up the Executive Committee (sometimes called "the Officers"), which meets between meetings of the full Executive Board.



# Regional boundaries



Note: Membership Centres are stand-alone offices/meeting spaces for member use. All Regional Offices have meeting and office facilities for member use as well.

## Region 1

- West: Canada-U.S. Border
- North: From Lake Huron shoreline at Clark Point, southeast along Hwy. 86 to Dorking
- East: Dorking south on a line to Clear Creek at Lake Erie
- South: Lake Erie shoreline, west to Canada-U.S. border

## Region 2

- West: North and east boundaries of Region 1
- North: Lake Huron shoreline east to but not including Collingwood
- East: Collingwood on a line to Hwy. 7 at and including Bramalea, west along Hwy. 7 to Hwy. 10, and including Brampton, south along Hwy. 10 to but not including Port Credit
- South: Port Credit along Lake Ontario shoreline to Canada-U.S. border; west along Lake Erie shoreline to Region 1 boundary

## Region 3

- West: East boundary of Region 5
- North: Georgian Bay shoreline including Collingwood, to and including Parry Sound, east to the junction of Hwys. 60 and 127
- East: Junction of Hwys 60 and 127, southeast to and including Bancroft, south to Presqu'île Point on Lake Ontario
- South: Shoreline west to east and north boundaries of Region 5

## Region 4

- West: East boundary of Region 3
- North: Junction of Hwys. 60 and 127 east to Ontario-Quebec border at and including Pembroke
- East: Ontario-Quebec border
- South: Ontario-U.S. border west to Region 3 east boundary

## Region 5

- West: Port Credit north along Hwy. 10 to Hwy. 7 but not including Brampton
- North: East along Hwy. 7 to Hwy. 12 but not including Brooklin
- East: South along Hwy. 12 to Lake Ontario but not including Whitby
- South: Shoreline west to Port Credit

## Region 6

- West: Canada-U.S. border at Sault Ste. Marie, north along Lake Superior shoreline to but not including Marathon
- North: A line from Marathon northeast through and including Manitouwadge to James Bay, shoreline southeast to Ontario-Quebec border
- East: Ontario-Quebec border south to north boundary of Region 4
- South: West along north boundaries of Regions 4 and 3 to Canada-U.S. border at Sault Ste. Marie and including Manitoulin Island

## Region 7

- West: Canada-U.S. border north along Ontario-Manitoba border to Hudson Bay
- North: Hudson and James Bay shorelines east and south to north boundary of Region 6
- East: Southwest along north boundary of Region 6 to Lake Superior and including Marathon
- South: West along Lake Superior shoreline and Canada-U.S. border to Ontario-Manitoba border





# Region I

**Number of members:** 12,700

**Number of locals:** 61

**Regional offices:** London

1100 Dearness Dr., Unit 27 London N6E 1N9  
1-800-268-7376  
(519) 649-2786 (fax)  
London@opseu.org

**Windsor**

3005 Marentette Avenue, Suite 130 Windsor N8X 4G1  
1-800-268-7376  
(519) 977-7553 (fax)  
Windsor@opseu.org

**Membership centres:**

**Chatham**

740 Richmond Street, Unit A, Chatham, ON, N7M 5J5  
(519) 380-9301  
(519) 380-9302 (fax)

**Goderich**

37 West St., Goderich N7A 2K5  
(519) 440-0999  
(519) 440-0333 (fax)

**Sarnia**

900 Devine St., Sarnia N7T 1X5  
(519) 383-0061

**Exec. Board Members:**

**Gino Franche, Regional Vice-President**

(519) 359-9197 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5811 (OPSEUdirect)  
(519) 352-9241 (fax)  
gino\_f@bell.net

**Ron Elliot**

(519) 646-3252 (w); (519) 438-4117 (h)  
1-800-268-7376 ext. 5813 (OPSEUdirect)  
relliot@sympatico.ca

**Laurie Nancekivell**

1-888-661-6167 ext. 468 (w)  
(519) 280-2151 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5812 (OPSEUdirect)  
LNancekivell@sympatico.ca



Note: "Number of members" means all active workers in OPSEU bargaining units. This does not include workers on leave or those who have not yet been assigned to a local.

# Region 2

**Number of members:** 21,000

**Number of locals:** 81

**Regional offices:** **Guelph**

400 Speedvale Ave. W., Unit A, Guelph N1H 8H3  
1-800-268-7376  
(519) 837-9187 (fax)  
Guelph@opseu.org

**Hamilton**

55 Frid St., Suite 1, Hamilton L8P 4M3  
1-800-268-7376  
(905) 525-2377 (fax)  
Hamilton@opseu.org

**Niagara**

2285 Highway 20 E., Fonthill L0S 1E6  
1-800-268-7376  
(905) 892-7662 (fax)  
Niagara@opseu.org

**Owen Sound**

100-1717 2nd Ave. E., Owen Sound N4K 6V4  
1-800-929-3680  
(519) 371-4967 (fax)

**Membership centres:**

**Milton**

42 Bronte St. S., Unit A10, Milton L9T 5A8  
(905) 693-9329

**Simcoe**

64 Pond St., Simcoe N3Y 2T4  
(519) 429-0237  
(519) 429-3752 (fax)

**Exec. Board Members:**

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Please visit the Region 2 web site  
at [www.opseuregion2.com](http://www.opseuregion2.com).

**Michael Grimaldi, Regional Vice-President**

(905) 704-3037 (w); (905) 701-8007 (h)  
(289) 213-3088 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5822 (OPSEUdirect)  
(905) 701-8303 (fax)  
chegrim@sympatico.ca

**Eduardo (Eddy) Almeida**

(905) 574-5943 (h)  
(289) 439-2135 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5823 (OPSEUdirect)  
(905) 574-5704 (fax)  
eddiea@sympatico.ca

**Debbie Tungatt**

(289) 260-6156 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5821 (OPSEUdirect)  
dtungatt@gmail.com



Note: "Number of members" means all active workers in OPSEU bargaining units. This does not include workers on leave or those who have not yet been assigned to a local.

# Region 3

**Number of members:** 17,500

**Number of locals:** 68

**Regional offices:** Orillia

76 Coldwater Street, Orillia L3V 1W5

1-800-268-7376

(705) 325-0821 (fax)

Orillia@opseu.org

**Oshawa/Whitby**

1800 Dundas St. E., Unit 8, Whitby L1N 2L4

1-800-268-7376

(905) 720-2974 (fax)

Oshawa@opseu.org

**Peterborough**

1789 Stenson Blvd., Unit 4/5, Peterborough K9K 2H4

1-800-268-7376

(705) 741-5362 (fax)

Peterborough@opseu.org

**Membership centres:** Huntsville

104 Main St. E., Huntsville P1H 1K6

(705) 789-0516

**Midland**

93 Woodland Dr., Midland L4R 4V3

(705) 527-7613

(705) 527-7613 (fax)

**Port Hope**

74 Queen St., Suite B, Port Hope L1A 2Y9

(905) 885-1810

**Exec. Board Members:**

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Please visit the Region 3 web site  
at [www.opseuregion3.org](http://www.opseuregion3.org).

**Claire Rowett, Regional Vice-President**

(705) 755-2459 (w); (905) 797-3173 (h)

(905) 375-7368 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5833 (OPSEUdirect)

claireEBMR3@sympatico.ca

**Patty Rout, Ist Vice-President/Treasurer**

(416) 443-8888 x 8303 (w)

(905) 439-8044 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 8304 (OPSEUdirect)

(416) 443-0017 (fax)

prout@opseu.org

**Peter Wright**

(705) 328-6000 ext. 2319 (w)

(705) 741-8349 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5832 (OPSEUdirect)

pwright6@cogeco.ca



Note: "Number of members" means all active workers in OPSEU bargaining units. This does not include workers on leave or those who have not yet been assigned to a local.

# Region 4

**Number of members:** 18,100

**Number of locals:** 90

**Regional offices:** Brockville

333 California Ave., Unit 15, P.O. Box 37, Brockville K6V 5T7  
1-800-268-7376  
(fax) (613) 498-3088  
Brockville@opseu.org

**Kingston**

920 Princess St., Suite 102, Kingston K7L 1H1  
1-800-268-7376  
(fax) (613) 546-1325  
Kingston@opseu.org

**Ottawa**

2525 St. Laurent Blvd., Suite 103 Ottawa K1H 8P5  
1-800-268-7376  
(fax) (613) 737-0753  
Ottawa@opseu.org

**Membership centres:**

**Belleville**

191 Dundas St. E., #3, Belleville K8N 1E2  
(613) 968-7483; 1-888-651-9809  
(613) 968-6912 (fax)

**Cornwall**

902 Second St. W., Cornwall K6J 1H7  
(613) 932-8939  
(613) 932-3083 (fax)

**Exec. Board Members:**

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Please visit the Region 4 web site  
at [www.opseuregion4.org](http://www.opseuregion4.org).

**David Lundy, Regional Vice-President**

(613) 213-1953 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5842 (OPSEUdirect)  
(613) 269-3045 (fax)  
davidlundy@sympatico.ca

**Warren (Smokey) Thomas, President**

(416) 443-8888 x 8300 (w)  
1-866-264-4982 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 8301 (OPSEUdirect)  
(416) 443-8713 (fax)  
wthomas@opseu.org

**Lynn Orzel**

(613) 747-7800 ext. 2389 (w)  
(613) 371-7970 (c); (OPSEUdirect) 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5843  
lynn.orzal@rogers.com



Note: "Number of members" means all active workers in OPSEU bargaining units. This does not include workers on leave or those who have not yet been assigned to a local.

# Region 5

**Number of members:** 31,000

**Number of locals:** 98

**Regional Offices:** Toronto

31 Wellesley St. E., Toronto M4Y 1G7  
1-800-268-7376  
(416) 944-0288 (fax)  
Toronto@opseu.org

**Membership centres:** Toronto North

620 Wilson Ave., Suite 130, Toronto M3K 1Z3  
(416) 398-1183

**Exec. Board Members:** Nancy Pridham, Regional Vice-President

(416) 407-4594 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5852 (OPSEUdirect)  
(416) 532-3354 (fax)  
nancypridham@sympatico.ca

**Ted Montgomery**

(416) 495-1599 (w); (416) 492-9717 (h)  
1-800-268-7376 ext. 5853 (OPSEUdirect)  
ted@opseu560.org

**Derek Miller**

(416) 524-1668 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5851 (OPSEUdirect)  
al.mil@bell.blackberry.net



Note: "Number of members" means all active workers in OPSEU bargaining units. This does not include workers on leave or those who have not yet been assigned to a local.

# Region 6

**Number of members:** 10,600

**Number of locals:** 73

**Regional offices:** North Bay

579 Fraser St., North Bay P1B 3X3

1-800-268-7376

(705) 474-3571 (fax)

NorthBay@opseu.org

**Sault Ste. Marie**

773 Great Northern Road, Suite 5, Sault Ste. Marie P6A 5K7

1-800-268-7376

(705) 949-0326 (fax)

SaultSteMarie@opseu.org

**Sudbury**

866 Newgate Ave., Newgate Square, Sudbury P3A 5J9

1-800-268-7376

(705) 560-2873 (fax)

Sudbury@opseu.org

**Timmins**

414 Algonquin Blvd. E., Unit 1, Timmins P4N 1B6

1-800-268-7376

(705) 268-8639 (fax)

Timmins@opseu.org

**Exec. Board Members:**

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Please visit the Region 6 web site  
at [www.opseuregion6.com](http://www.opseuregion6.com).

**Sue Brown, Regional Vice-President**

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brownsue@sympatico.ca

**Peter Wall**

(705) 372-2212 (w); (705) 362-0282 (h)

(705) 372-3310 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5863 (OPSEUdirect)

(705) 372-2245 (fax)

peterw@ntl.sympatico.ca

**Jennifer Giroux**

(705) 690-4386 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5862 (OPSEUdirect)

jengirouxreg6@bell.blackberry.net; jen\_giroux@hotmail.com



Note: "Number of members"  
means all active workers in  
OPSEU bargaining units. This  
does not include workers on  
leave or those who have not  
yet been assigned to a local.

# Region 7

**Number of members:** 6,100

**Number of locals:** 37

**Regional Offices:** Dryden

102 Queen St., Dryden P8N 1A7  
1-800-268-7376  
(807) 223-4592 (fax)  
Dryden@opseu.org

**Thunder Bay**

1201 Amber Dr., Thunder Bay P7B 6M4  
1-800-268-7376  
(807) 343-0130 (fax)  
ThunderBay@opseu.org

**Membership centres:**

**Fort Frances**

255A Scott St., Fort Frances P9A 1G8  
(807) 274-1577  
(807) 274-0761 (fax)

**Kenora**

202-115 Chipman St., Kenora P9N 1V7  
(807) 467-2591  
(807) 468-6062 (fax)

**Exec. Board Members:**

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Please visit the Region 7 web site  
at [www.opseuregion7.org](http://www.opseuregion7.org).

**James Tocker, Regional Vice-President**

(807) 627-0625 (c); 1-800-268-7376 ext. 5871 (OPSEUdirect)  
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**Sandra Snider**

(807) 343-7462 (w); (807) 345-7904 (h)  
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**Carl Thibodeau**

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Note: "Number of members"  
means all active workers in  
OPSEU bargaining units. This  
does not include workers on  
leave or those who have not  
yet been assigned to a local.

# Committees, caucuses, and other ways to be involved

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**OPSEU has been a pioneer in the struggle for workers who face discrimination based on gender, age, race, sexual orientation, disability and other factors unrelated to their work**

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OPSEU locals, sectors and regions are central to the work of the union, but other elected and volunteer groups play a major part as well. More information on all the groups listed here is readily available on the OPSEU web site.

## **Equity groups**

OPSEU has been a pioneer in the struggle for workers who face discrimination based on gender, age, race, sexual orientation, disability and other factors unrelated to their work. The union is always trying to strengthen its capacity to represent, organize and protect members of *all* groups – at work, in the union, and in society at large.

Members oversee the union's equity work through three provincial committees and four caucuses.

The work of the **Provincial Human Rights Committee**, the **Provincial Women's Committee**, and the **Provincial Young Workers Committee** is mandated by the OPSEU constitution. Each of these committees has one member elected from each OPSEU region.

The union also funds meetings and activities of the **Aboriginal Circle**, the **Disability Rights Caucus**, the **Workers of Colour Caucus**, and the **Rainbow Alliance** (which represents lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and transgendered, and queer members).

The activities of the three provincial committees and four caucuses are supported by staff of the OPSEU Equity Unit.

## **The Francophone caucus**

Many OPSEU workplaces operate exclusively in French, and many more function in both English and French. The Francophone caucus is an effective advocate for French speakers in OPSEU.



## Solidarity Funds

In a globalized world, OPSEU members have a strong desire to take action on issues beyond the borders of Ontario and Canada. To this end, the union administers two international solidarity funds. The **Social Justice Fund** sponsors solidarity exchanges and funds development projects in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America. The **Live and Let Live Fund** provides funding to organizations battling HIV/AIDS in Africa and in Ontario. Both funds are overseen by a Board consisting of the President of OPSEU, three Executive Board Members, and one member from each of the Provincial Human Rights Committee, Provincial Women's Committee, and Provincial Young Workers Committee.

## Retired Members' Division

OPSEU's Retired Members' Division is mandated by the constitution to provide a forum for retired members to meet and make recommendations for action to the union. The Division publishes its own newsletter, *Autumn View*.

## *In Solidarity* and Informed Newsletters for OPSEU (INFO)

Published four times a year, *In Solidarity* is the official newsletter for OPSEU stewards and activists, written and designed by elected members. The five-member committee, assisted by an Executive Board Member and assigned staff, also operates Informed Newsletters for OPSEU (INFO) to help OPSEU locals publish their own newsletters. INFO sponsors the Editors' Weekend, a conference held each October to provide communications training to local activists.

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**OPSEU members  
have a strong desire  
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and Canada**

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## OPSEU Enterprises

OPSEU Enterprises sells union-made clothing, travel mugs, pins, pens, keychains and other items for anyone who wants to wave the OPSEU flag at home, at work, or anywhere else. OPSEU Enterprises also offers negotiated discounts to members on cell phone plans, home and auto insurance, travel, and legal services. Visit <http://www.opseu.org/merchandise/merchandise.htm> to find out more.

# Getting information fast: OPSEUdirect

OPSEU's internal structures are designed to bring our members together. We believe that the best form of communication is face to face, and we spend a sizeable portion of our overall budget to bring members together at the local, divisional, and regional levels.

That being said, the telephone and the Internet are powerful tools that can give our members the information they need – fast.

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**OPSEUdirect is a union resource centre providing one-stop access to information**

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## About the OPSEUdirect Resource Centre

Based on a model pioneered by the Manitoba Government Employees Union, OPSEUdirect is a fast and easy way for OPSEU members to get information on just about any matter related to the union.

OPSEUdirect is a union resource centre providing one-stop access to information. OPSEUdirect Resource Centre representatives are trained to answer questions on a wide variety of labour topics and emergencies, and know how to contact OPSEU staff to provide expert help when necessary. Our representatives also have access to OPSEU databases and collective agreements, and know how to dig up the answers.

Want to know the name of the OPSEU steward in your workplace? Call OPSEUdirect.

Want to know what's happening with your grievance? Call OPSEUdirect.

Got a question of any kind? Call OPSEUdirect.

OPSEUdirect is staffed during regular office hours, Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Eastern Time. Just call 1-800-268-7376 anywhere in Ontario or (416) 443-8888 in the Greater Toronto Area.

→ **1-800-268-7376**

→ **(416) 443-8888** (Toronto)

# OPSEU on the web:

## **www.opseu.org** ←



OPSEU's web site at [www.opseu.org](http://www.opseu.org) is easy to find, easy to use, and chock full of information. All you need is a computer and a web hook-up. Once you're online, you can connect to over 9,000 pages of information, over 20,000 documents and photos, and an entire database of grievance awards.

The site provides information on current campaigns, OPSEU committees, health and safety, pensions and benefits, wage settlements and the Consumer Price Index, discounts available to OPSEU members, job opportunities, and much, much more. The current OPSEU Constitution, for example, may be downloaded at <http://www.opseu.org/constitution/index.htm>.

Our web site contains information dating back to 1996, but more importantly, it is always up to date. The site is updated five days a week (and sometimes seven!). Site visitors can also subscribe to *OPSEU This Week*. Published every Friday, *OPSEU This Week* is an e-mail summary of everything new on the site, with links to new articles.

Visit [www.opseu.org](http://www.opseu.org) and make it your home page!

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**The OPSEU web  
site is updated five  
days a week (and  
sometimes seven!)**

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## A selection of common abbreviations used in OPSEU

ACL	Association for Community Living	LHIN	Local Health Integration Network
ASU	Administrative Staff Union	LMC	Labour-Management Committee
AGM	Annual General Meeting	LTIP	Long Term Income Protection
BPL	Building Powerful Locals	MDT	Membership Development Trainee
BPS	Broader Public Service	MERC	Ministry Enforcement and Renewal Committee
CAS	Children's Aid Society	MPAC	Municipal Property Assessment Corporation
CAAT	College of Applied Arts and Technology	NUPGE	National Union of Public and General Employees
CCAC	Community Care Access Centre	OFL	Ontario Federation of Labour
CCBA	<i>Colleges Collective Bargaining Act</i>	OHRC	Ontario Human Rights Code
CECBA	<i>Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act</i>	OHSA	<i>Occupational Health and Safety Act</i>
CERC	Central Enforcement and Renewal Committee	OLBEU	Ontario Liquor Boards Employees Union
CFSA	<i>Child and Family Services Act</i>	OLRA	<i>Ontario Labour Relations Act</i>
CBS	Canadian Blood Services	OLRB	Ontario Labour Relations Board
CLC	Canadian Labour Congress	OJTBF	OPSEU Joint Trusteed Benefit Fund
COLA	Cost of Living Allowance	OPS	Ontario Public Service
CSAO	Civil Service Association of Ontario	OPSEU	Ontario Public Service Employees Union
CSC	Community Services Council	OPSSU	Ontario Public Service Staff Union
CTC	Children's Treatment Centre	OPT	OPSEU Pension Trust
CWWA	Compressed Work Week Agreement	PHRC	Provincial Human Rights Committee
DivEx	Divisional Executive Committee	PSLRTA	<i>Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act (Bill 136)</i>
EBM	Executive Board Member	PWC	Provincial Women's Committee
(E)ERC	Employer/Employee Relations Committee (also Enforcement and Renewal Committee)	PYC	Provincial Young Workers' Committee
EI	Employment Insurance	PSA	<i>Public Service Act</i>
ESA	<i>Employment Standards Act</i>	RVP	Regional Vice-President
GSB	Grievance Settlement Board	SAROC	Systemic and anti-racism organization change program
HCDC	Health Care Divisional Council	SEFPO	Syndicat des employés de la fonction publique de l'Ontario
HLDA	<i>Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act</i>	SUB	Supplementary Unemployment Benefit
HOODIP	Hospitals of Ontario Disability Income Plan	TQM	Total Quality Management
HOOPP	Hospitals of Ontario Pension Plan	UMC	Union-Management Committee
HPD	Hospital Professionals Division	VEO	Voluntary Exit Option
HRC	Human Rights Committee	WSIA	<i>Workplace Safety and Insurance Act</i>
HSTAP	Hospital Sector Training and Adjustment Program	WSIB	Workplace Safety and Insurance Board
LBED	Liquor Board Employees Division		
LEC	Local Executive Committee		
LERC	Local Enforcement and Renewal Committee		

## My contacts

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Name	Phone number(s)	E-mail
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Name	Phone number(s)	E-mail
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