

# CUPE National Sector Council Guidelines

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## 1. Purpose

Sector work happens in many ways within CUPE, but formal sector structures have not had a consistent national forum to provide for increased solidarity and effective communications. The purpose of the CUPE National Sector Council is to provide an ongoing national vehicle for CUPE's main sectors to communicate and discuss strategies to strengthen CUPE, members' power at the bargaining table and in the community, and better represent all CUPE members. To achieve this, we have broken down the purpose into three main areas:

- To develop strength in our sectors to better support local and regional bargaining by sharing information and strategies for coordination and common approaches.
- To develop common approaches to local, provincial and federal governments for improved legislative protection for workers.
- To provide a two-way flow of information between sector activists and the national union about the successes and challenges of moving our workers' agenda forward.

## 2. Composition

The CUPE National Sector Council is a venue to bring activists together, discuss sector trends and challenges, and improve ongoing communication within sectors on a national basis. It is not a constitutional body. The National Sector Council will be made up of co-chairs from each of the 11 sectors listed in the resolution passed by the 2013 National Convention. The 22 co-chairs shall be appointed to a two-year term by the National President and ratified by the National Executive Board.

The National Sector Council is not a decision-making body. Rather, the National Sector Council is the title of the collective representatives (the 22 co-chairs from each sector) who will, working with a staff advisor, convene the meetings for each of the sectors. The co-chairs and staff advisor shall be referred to as the Sector Steering Committee.

### 3. Sectors

Below is a description of each of the 11 sectors listed in Resolution 904, passed at the 2013 National Convention. There are, of course, overlaps with many locals who will find they may fit into more than one sector. University library workers, for example, could work in either the library sector or the post-secondary sector. The same is true of municipal child care and municipal library workers. So, the best fit for each local will depend on the nature of the local and composition of its membership. There will be flexibility in allowing locals to choose the best fit for them.

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| <p><b>Health Care</b></p> <p>The Health Care Sector Council will include members from hospitals (acute care), long-term care facilities, home care, public health and community health services.</p>   |
| <p><b>Education</b></p> <p>The Education Sector Council will include members working in the school board sector, providing services in institutions serving children from junior kindergarten through high school.</p>   |
| <p><b>Post Secondary</b></p> <p>The Post-Secondary Sector Council will include members working for universities and colleges in both teaching and non-teaching jobs.</p>   |
| <p><b>Child Care</b></p> <p>The Child Care Sector Council will include members working in public and private child care centres serving pre-school children, and in before- and after-school programs.</p>   |
| <p><b>Municipal</b></p> <p>The Municipal Sector Council will include members working for municipal governments in “inside” and “outside” bargaining units in services such as planning, solid waste, water, recreation, transit, roads, as well as other services which bargain with municipal boards such as housing corporations and municipal animal shelters. This sector will also include locals and members who provide municipal services but bargain with the private sector.</p> |

**Library**

The Library Sector Council will include members working in libraries and related library services who bargain with municipalities, public library boards, and provincial governments.

**Emergency Service Workers**

The Emergency Service Workers Sector Council will include members working in emergency medical paramedic services, police or fire services.

**Energy**

The Energy Sector Council will include members working for electrical utilities.

**Social Services**

The Social Services Sector Council will include members working in community agencies offering social and community services, such as those working with homeless individuals, with victims of violence, with children and adults with developmental disabilities, in child protection agencies, offering employment counselling or more. It will also include members working in social assistance services.

**Airlines (and other federally regulated groups)**

The Airlines Sector Council will include members working for airlines as well as other members working in federally regulated sectors such as transportation, airports, broadcasting, cable and internet companies and telecommunications.

**Provincial Government and Crown Corporations**

The Provincial Government and Crown Corporations Sector Council will include members who bargain with provincial governments, working in corrections facilities, casinos, provincial highways departments, workers' compensation systems.

#### **4. Method**

The CUPE National Sector Council will have three distinct methods of operation:

- i) A biennial CUPE National Sector Council Conference held each fall in the non-convention year, beginning with our founding conference, from October 6 to 9, 2014, in Toronto.
- ii) The day prior to each National Convention, the CUPE National Sector Council will meet with a one-half day meeting for each of the sectors as has taken place the last number of years. However, beginning in 2015, the Sunday meetings will align with the sectors listed in the resolution passed at the 2013 National Convention. This will not apply to airlines who will continue with their all-day convention the day prior to National Convention.

iii) National Sector Council Steering Committees:

Each sector group will have a Steering Committee, made up of two co-chairs and the staff advisor. These three individuals will be responsible for:

- Preparing all sector meeting agendas.
- Conducting two telephone town hall calls of the sector group.
- Disseminating written and electronic information to the sector members.
- Each sector shall establish a contact list made up of key members/staff, including:
  - Local presidents and leaders from within the sector.
  - All provincial division sector committee members.
  - Staff co-ordinators from each region, plus key specialist staff and other staff who work within the sector.
  - The sector list will be compiled and maintained by CUPE National staff.

#### **5. Shared Responsibility and Operational Support**

CUPE National will:

- Budget for biennial National Sector Conference and pre-National Convention sector meetings.
- Assign staff advisors to each sector group.
- Budget for each sector group to hold two telephone town hall meetings annually.
- Hold one national meeting of sector co-chairs and staff advisors in Ottawa, within three months of the co-chairs appointment by the NEB.

Local unions will:

- Assume responsibilities for sending members to National Sector Council meetings/conferences.
- Share contact information to ensure town hall meetings are well attended by all regions of the country.
- Commit to supporting the sector initiatives.

## **6. Agenda**

Each sector group will determine its own priorities from among the issues and challenges within each sector. Content for the meeting agendas may include:

- CUPE's presence in the sector, number of members and number of collective agreements.
- A political overview of the sector group, including the level of support, funding issues, and current state of the particular service.
- Review of other unions within the sector and our relations with same.
- Review of collective bargaining within the sector group, in particular the different bargaining systems across regions.
- Review of previous 12 months strike/lockout experiences within the sector
- Review of coalition partners within the sector group and CUPE's relationship with our partners.
- Review of business think tanks pressing for restructuring or privatization within the sector group (i.e. CFIB, Manning Institute, etc.).
- Review of contracting out/privatization/P3 trends within the sector.
- Review of legal issues particular to the sector (i.e. challenges to medicare by private medical interests).
- Each sector group to discuss and establish talking points for rank and file leaders to defend public services (i.e. brief history of public education and what it means for Canada).

The above list is by no means a sample agenda but offered as a sampling of ideas to get activists thinking about the value of the sector committees for their sector. Activists, led by the co-chairs, will identify the issues they want to explore which may or may not be captured in the above list. By sharing this type of information, locals will be able to learn from one another, identify best practices and winning strategies, as well as strengthen the sector by way of increased knowledge and ideas amongst our local activists. It will not be within the scope of the sector committee to plan campaigns.

## **7. Global Justice**

Public sector workers around the world are under attack. Strengthening workers' power means looking beyond the borders of Canada, whether it is by promoting increased awareness of our global justice mandate, plugging into international campaigns, supporting worker-to-worker projects or supporting global union structures. Each sector group will consider their role in international solidarity.

## **8. Equality**

Each sector group will address how to advance equality in order to meet the needs of our increasingly diverse membership and build solidarity for successful bargaining. Sector groups will consider the demographics of our membership in the sector, the bargaining interests of marginalized groups (persons with disabilities and women, LGBTTI, racialized and Aboriginal members), and how to advance those interests through internal and coalition strategies.

## **9. Resolution 904**

Appended to the guidelines is a copy of Resolution 904, adopted at the 2013 National Convention.