

2019-2021 PSAC-NCR Education Plan

This plan was developed by the PSAC-NCR Education Committee, in consultation with PSAC-NCR leaders and staff. It reflects the wishes and needs expressed by members in terms of union education.

Introduction and objectives

What is the purpose of an education plan for the largest union in the Ottawa and Gatineau region? It is used to set the overall objectives and means to support the approximately 47,000 PSAC members in the National Capital Region to get to know their union better.

First, it aims to **strengthen the union's role and presence in the workplace**, in order to better protect members' rights. By taking the courses offered, members learn not only how their union works, but how they can improve it from within, while using the strength of these thousands of members to improve their working conditions, but also their community.

This plan is also intended to **equip members to participate in all aspects of their union's work**. Better local union officers improve workplaces. Better trained stewards are better able to help members who are struggling with their employers. More committed members contribute to improving not only their workplaces, but also their neighbourhoods, cities and governments.

Finally, the purpose of this plan is to **foster members' engagement within their union and community** and to **build alliances with our social and union allies**. We do not live in a vacuum. Every gain we make in our workplaces can help improve working conditions in other places, whether unionized or not. Our allies are fighting struggles that help make our lives better and they count on our support.



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Measures we propose to meet these goals

- Attending an education course often provides participants an entry point into the life of their union. While we continue to train our more experienced members so that they are even better able to intervene in their locals, we want to recruit more "new" participants

to our training sessions. We also want to improve our communications so that all members are informed of the scope and quality of the courses offered.

- Integrate more alternative (non-classroom, online, personalized) education activities and methods.
- While all members are welcome on our courses, we wish to specifically recruit from the following groups:
 - NCR Locals who have elected a new executive
 - Members that are not active in the union
 - Stewards and Leaders at all level
 - Activists
 - Francophones
 - Younger members

Some of the challenges we took into consideration

- The classroom experience is not a complete experience in preparing members for their union roles. Members should be encouraged to follow up their classroom experience with hands-on union involvement.
- The Education Program must be able to combine classroom theory training with other training models (online training, courses adapted to the new needs of local chapters, mentoring, etc.).
- Both seasoned and newer members benefit when they are together in a learning environment. Separating these two groups may deny newer members the experience of more seasoned activists and deny seasoned activists the opportunity to foster their leadership and mentoring skills. Members should have the prerequisites to attend advanced programming.
- Members should not attend a course more than once in a three-year cycle (for basic courses) and six years (for advanced courses).
- Although a form of union education progression (basic to advance) makes senses, there is a need to ensure we can also fast track members to advanced courses when they have the demonstrated ability and experience.

Our union education communications strategy

- We will continue to prepare and advertise three semester schedules yearly.
- We will announce course titles for each year at fall. This yearly overview will provide upcoming course titles, descriptions, provide web links (if applicable) to PSAC materials related to the course topic and also list related e-courses from the PSAC e-learning campus.
- We will continue the practice of e-mailing monthly reminders about upcoming courses to PSAC NCR Locals.

A word on the presentation model of our training courses

- Our two-day training sessions are usually offered on Fridays and Saturdays to reduce salary expenses. Our union ABC training is presented in English and French. It may also sometimes be presented in a bilingual format (without interpretation).
- Evening modules are presented during the week.
- Activities presented with other unions are usually presented on Saturdays.
- The training sessions presented in the workplace are presented during lunch.
- Advanced training ends on a Saturday or a Sunday and lasts three or four days. These training sessions are usually presented with simultaneous interpretation.

Courses presented every semester:

- Talking Union Basics
- Core Grievance Handling
- Evening Steward Module
- Health and Safety course
- Human rights related course

Courses presented yearly:

- New Local Officers' Conference
- Building Solidarity with Aboriginal Peoples



Advanced Courses to offer this cycle:

1. A four-day Union school that will bring together the region's activist forces. It will be offered at the beginning of the cycle.
2. Advanced Duty to Accommodate
3. Two-day course on violence prevention in the workplace.
4. Two-day course on the impacts of family violence in the workplace.
5. The two-day NAPC course (for Aboriginal members who want to learn more about their union and how it supports the concerns of its Aboriginal members).
6. We will also offer an array of courses on these topics and more:
 - a) Strike preparation course
 - b) Congress preparation and resolution writing
 - c) Duty of fair representation
 - d) Women at work
 - e) Mental health
 - f) Labour relations
 - g) Retirement planning

We will continue the practice of supporting our members' participation in the following:

- *Délégué social* courses offered by the Conseil régional de la FTQ
- The Progress Summit offered by the Broadbent Institute

In addition, the PSAC offers scholarships to members for their participation in the following training courses

- Training provided to union members and officers by the Canadian Labour Congress at the Labour College of Canada.
- Training offered to union members and officers by the Collège de la Fédération des travailleuses et travailleurs du Québec (FTQ) - Fonds de solidarité (in French).



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Budget

- The 2019-2021 PSAC-NCR Education Program has a budget of \$802,360. The cost of the training presented in this plan is \$725,412 if we have full participation (20 members for training presented in English and 10 members for training presented in French for two-day courses).
- An amount of \$10,000 has been set aside for the scholarships we will offer during this cycle.
- A contingency fund of 2.5% has been calculated.
- An amount of \$46,500 will allow us to support special projects such as the mentoring program and to ensure the printing of documents and the purchase of supplies.
- We will evaluate participation in training and the accumulated surplus will be reallocated and additional training will be presented.