

# THE ADVOCATE

## Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees


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Dear Members,

Welcome to the Summer edition of "The Advocate." I do hope you had the opportunity to get a break to rest and recharge, and most importantly, enjoy time with family and friends. It has been a busy time for your union and with many developments across various sectors. I would like to provide an update on our activities.



Karen Jackson  
President, UPSE

Standing Committees

Your standing committees have been working diligently to fulfill their goals and mandates.

- 1) The Constitution and Structure Committee is preparing resolutions for this year's annual convention by strengthening our Constitution & By-laws and union policies.
- 2) The Public Relations Committee has delivered numerous activities for members and their families, such as the Family Fun days at Shining Waters, Pride Parade, Golf Tournament, and BBQs.
- 3) The Women's Committee is planning their Fall Conference, which will feature talented speakers.
- 4) The Young Workers Committee continue to engage our youth with events such as trivia and enhancements to bursary programs.
- 5) The Finance Committee just completed its year-end and UPSE's financial stability is looking good for this year.
- 6) The Education Committee had a great year and is looking forward to the new learning season this Fall with trained facilitators and expanded training offerings.

Negotiations

Your Labour Relations Officers and their bargaining teams have been working hard to obtain fair and reasonable agreements for the membership.

- 1) Holland College Administration and Support & ECE – The Union and the Employer met with mediator Frank Demont on July 18, 2025, and were able to establish a framework to develop a merged agreement to present a ratification package to the members in the coming weeks.
- 2) Faculty of ATHI and Holland College – the Union and Employer appear to have a framework for a merged agreement.
- 3) Civil Service/IRAC/WCB – The parties are at an impasse as the UPSE bargaining team was disappointed by the package the Employer presented during the last day of bargaining. It appears most likely; the union will proceed to interest arbitration.
- 4) City of Charlottetown – Discussions appear to be going well, but it will be interesting how the strike with CUPE Local 830 plays out for the direction of negotiations.
- 5) Strait Crossing – the parties appear to have a tentative agreement. Ratification packages are being sent out to the membership.
- 6) Community Inclusions – bargaining discussions went well, and ratification packages have been sent to the membership.
- 7) Tremploy – Negotiations are scheduled August 25 & 26, 2025.

Privatization

Your Union continues to fight the privatization of our public services to private entities. Through a FOIPP request, the union was able to obtain information on the contracting out of snowplow routes from the Department of Transportation. The Union will be coming out publicly on this issue and fighting for plow routes to be maintained within the public sector. Your union continues to battle this government and Health PEI on the privatization of health care services. We came out publicly about the privatization of our home care services, and we are currently in arbitration on the use of Travel LPNs with next scheduled dates for October 6 & 7, 2025.

Flex Hiring Project

Your union had numerous meetings with Health PEI related to the flex hiring project, as based on information provided from their project lead, positions are being filled contrary to our collective agreement, and schedules are being altered without consultation, which we are addressing to ensure the rights of our members are being respected and adhered to. We have filed a policy grievance.

Labour Relations

The labour activity continues to be active and busy. The grievance activity is high with many of our Employers, as there appear to be many investigations taking place. However, we see a trend whereby accountability is only being applied to front-line staff, and there is little to no accountability for management and senior leadership.

Solidarity

Your union has supported our fellow union partners, and most recently, we have been out in support of CUPE Local 830 as they fight for livable wages. We will continue to stand together in solidarity.

Closing

I encourage all the members to take care of themselves and balance their work and personal obligations. Take time to rest and recharge, and enjoy the remainder of the summer with loved ones, family, and friends.

I've conducted several local tours, meeting with members at their worksites and hearing firsthand about the challenges they face. I look forward to continuing these visits and connecting with more members in the near future.

Congratulations to the Department of Social Development and Seniors' Workplace Violence Prevention Committee for Group Homes, co-chaired by Mike Gaudet and Gordon Burhoe, on winning the 2025 Douglas MacMaster Memorial Occupational Health and Safety Award—your dedication to safety is inspiring.

Thanks also to the membership for your continued support and for believing in your union. We will continue to fight to enhance and protect your rights in the workplace.

Karen Jackson,  
UPSE President

UPSE Summer Golf Tournament

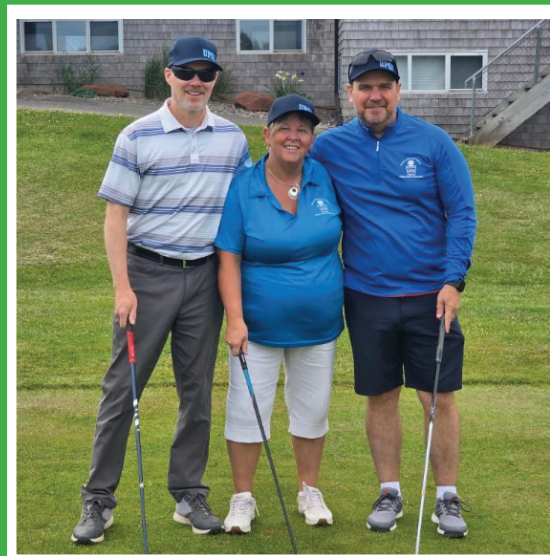
This summer, our Union hosted a golf tournament at Brudenell Golf Course, a stunning public 18-hole championship course known for its beautiful views and exceptional maintenance. Located within the Brudenell River Resort, the course is complemented by various amenities, including on-site accommodations, dining options, and recreational activities.

The layout of Brudenell Golf Course presents a unique mix of challenges and enjoyment, featuring well-kept fairways and thoughtfully placed hazards. Golfers of all abilities can appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds them in PEI's lush landscape. This venue offers a fantastic setting for both leisure and competitive play. UPSE was delighted to hold the tournament at Brudenell, where around fifty-six of our members are employed. UPSE Proud!



The Winning team from left to right: Basil Higginbotham, Sterling Higginbotham, Gladstone Higginbotham and Lyn Higginbotham





## 2025 Douglas MacMaster Memorial Occupational Health and Safety Award

The Douglas MacMaster Memorial Occupational Health and Safety Award is a recognition of outstanding achievements by public sector employees in the promotion and advancement of health and safety within the workplace. This award honours the legacy of Doug MacMaster, a dedicated employee of the Provincial Forestry program and a Forest Safety Supervisor who made significant contributions to improving worker safety in our forest industry before his passing in 2004. In his memory, we celebrate those who similarly strive to create safer work environments here on PEI.

UPSE congratulates the Department of Social Development and Seniors' Workplace Violence Prevention Committee for Group Homes, co-chaired by Mike Gaudet and Gordon Burhoe, as the recipients of this year's award. This committee has demonstrated extraordinary leadership and commitment towards enhancing workplace safety and staff well-being in group homes managed by Child and Family Services.



**Pic L-R:** Mike Gaudet, Wendell MacMaster, Premier Rob Lantz, Lynda MacMaster, and Gordon Burhoe

Since 2023, their collaborative efforts with the Department have led to the establishment of fifty-four new permanent positions, significantly improving job security and staff retention. Additionally, they worked alongside the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to ensure safer maintenance of group homes, benefiting both staff and children. The committee has fostered a culture of open communication and effective incident reporting, which has resulted in enhanced strategic planning and a notable decrease in violence-related incidents. Their initiatives have uplifted staff morale and set a new benchmark for workplace safety in our community. The collaboration with the RCMP and the implementation of enhanced training programs—covering Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, validation, de-escalation techniques, and suicide risk management—are commendable efforts.

Congratulations to the committee for this well-deserved recognition, and thank you for your unwavering dedication to improving occupational health and safety!

Would you like to receive an e-copy of *The Advocate* instead of a paper copy? Please contact UPSE by emailing ([peiupse@peiupse.ca](mailto:peiupse@peiupse.ca)) or call the UPSE office at **902-892-5335**, or toll free at **1-800-897-8773**.

## Pride Parade, 2025

We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our union members who joined the Pride Parade this year — on our float, waving flags, or simply marching alongside us. You brought so much colour, energy, and joy to the day. UPSE celebrates inclusivity, solidarity, and community. We're grateful for every smile, cheer, and wave. Here's to standing proud together — today and every day.



## Public Service Week, 2025

UPSE members gathered in June at the PAB Courtyard in Charlottetown, celebrating National Public Service Week. "This important week is about honouring the incredible commitment and passion of public service workers. From front-line responders to administrative staff, every single person plays a vital role in keeping our communities safe, supported, and thriving. Thank you for your service—every day. Our union is stronger when we work and celebrate together, and embrace the richness of every culture and perspective. Celebrating cultural diversity means listening, learning, and growing together—building a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered.



## Member Profile: Paige Casford, UPSE Youth Worker

Meet Paige, a dedicated Youth Worker who has been serving in the Public Service for the past two and a half years. Since entering the field, Paige has brought her skills and care to several group homes, but Oak has always felt like home base. Her commitment to supporting young people shines through in everything she does.

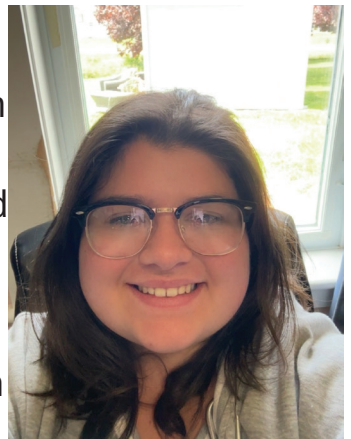
After graduating from Holland College with a diploma in Child and Youth Care in May 2023, Paige started her career working as an Educational Assistant in local schools. Today, she works in residential youth care, where she helps young people navigate their daily lives and long-term goals. Whether it's making meals, getting them to appointments, or helping create personalized care plans, Paige is part of a team that works to support each youth's journey—whether that means reuniting with their families or preparing for life beyond care.

Paige emphasizes the importance of building a safe, stable environment where youth can begin to feel comfortable and supported—especially those who have experienced trauma. "A lot of the youth who come into our homes are used to being in a constant state of fight or flight," she explains.

Helping them adjust to a sense of safety is one of the most meaningful aspects of her work. Like many front-line roles, Paige's work has its challenges. From navigating the ups and downs of group dynamics to working through emotional transitions when youth move in or out of the home, every day brings something new. In times of crisis or conflict, staying calm, collected, and supportive is key—for the youth and the staff alike.

Despite the challenges, it's the good days that stick with her: "When everyone gets where they need to go, meals are on time, and the notes are done before the end of shift—that's a great day," she laughs. Outside of work, Paige has a passion for adventure and storytelling. She's an avid reader who sets a goal of reading over 100 books a year, and she's even traveled across Canada in a camper, enjoying life on the open road. She also shares her home with two beloved dogs who, as she puts it, "own a big piece of my heart."

Paige's compassion, resilience, and sense of purpose make her a valued member of our union and a powerful presence in the lives of the youth she supports. We're proud to celebrate her work and the vital role she plays in our community.



Paige Casford (Local 7), Youth Worker

Bargaining Update

City of Charlottetown  
Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and the City of Charlottetown expired on December 31, 2024. UPSE sent an intent to bargain notice in January 2025 and demand forms have been returned. The bargaining team exchanged packages with the employer on June 5, 2025. Bargaining took place on July 15 and will resume on August 26, 2025.

Grain Elevators  
Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Grain Elevators expired on March 31, 2025. A notice to bargain was mailed out to the employer in January. Proposal forms were sent to the membership for their feedback regarding priorities for the bargaining package. Dates for bargaining to be announced - stay tuned.

Civil Service/IRAC/WCB  
Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Civil Service/IRAC/WCB expired on March 31, 2025. UPSE mailed proposal forms to members and selected the UPSE bargaining team. Bargaining commenced on three dates in May and continued with dates in late June. Further bargaining dates to be announced. Stay tuned for updates.

Strait Crossing  
Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Strait Crossing expired on December 31, 2024. UPSE sent an intent to bargain notice in January and demand forms were returned. Bargaining teams made progress at the table in June 2025 and the parties were able to reach a tentative agreement. Ratification packages have been distributed to the membership and a vote for ratification will take place on August 19, 2025.

Holland College Faculty/  
ATHI  
Bargaining update

The collective agreement between UPSE and Holland College Faculty/ATHI expired on March 31, 2024. Members voted in favour of a merged agreement and the team began negotiations for enhancements (including wages) in February, 2025. Bargaining continued on June 13 and July 21, 2025. Language has been agreed upon and we hope to have ratification package to the membership in the coming weeks.

Tremploy  
Bargaining update

The collective agreement expired on June 30, 2025. The membership submitted their proposal forms and selected their bargaining team on July 23, 2025. Dates for bargaining are scheduled for August 25 and 26, 2025.

Community Inclusions  
Bargaining update

The collective agreement expired on March 31, 2025. A meeting to select the bargaining team took place in February 2025. Member proposal forms were submitted up until March 7, 2025 through the UPSE website.

The bargaining sessions went well, and a tentative deal was struck by the parties. An updated ratification package will be sent out to the membership the week of August 18, 2025.

Holland College Admin /  
Early Learning Centre  
Bargaining update

The collective agreement between Holland College Administrative and Support / ECE, and UPSE expired on March 31, 2024. The bargaining teams met numerous times over the past year to try and find a mutually agreeable resolution at the table.

Both parties agreed to engage a mediator and on July 18, 2025 a framework to a merged negotiated agreement was established.

The Union and the Employer will finalize the tentative agreement which will be sent to the membership for ratification.

Workers make Canada strong: It's time we got the respect we deserve

This Labour Day, as Canadians gather for parades, picnics, and community celebrations, let's not forget what we're really marking: the power of workers. From hospital wards, grocery aisles, classrooms, construction sites, and factory floors, workers power this country. And it's time we got the respect we deserve.

But for too many, the past few years have brought more uncertainty than celebration. A worsening housing crisis, rising costs, and insecure jobs are making life harder for working families. While big corporations post record profits and raise prices, our public services are under attack, and governments are failing to act. In communities across the country, workers are doing everything right yet still falling behind.

That's why now, more than ever, we need a powerful, united movement of workers standing together in our unions. Because when workers come together, we deliver real results. While politicians offer empty promises and CEOs chase profit at any cost, Canada's unions are delivering real results. Together, we've secured wins that benefit all workers: national dental care, a path to Pharmacare, and \$10-a-day child care. When we organize, we don't just win better contracts and safer workplaces – we raise the bar for everyone.



NUPGE 2025 Triennial Convention

As UPSE members, we attended the 2025 National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) Triennial Constitutional Convention—NUPGE's supreme governing body—from June 13 to 15, which took place at the Fredericton Convention Centre in New Brunswick.

At the Convention, we paused to reflect on our shared accomplishments—from defending public services to advancing the rights of workers across Canada. It was also a moment to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to justice, equity, and solidarity for all workers, embodying our collective pursuit of a fairer society. Over the course of those days, delegates—including UPSE members—debated key issues, voted on resolutions, and helped chart the future direction of NUPGE. These discussions and decisions set the stage for the union's strategies and priorities for the next three years.

Following the Convention, UPSE members remain resolute: we strengthened our solidarity with labour allies across the country, standing united to defend and enhance the public services Islanders rely on. Our commitment to justice, equity, and solidarity continues to guide our work—within our province and as part of the broader national labour movement.



UPSE Summer BBQs at Bloomfield Provincial Park and Shining Waters!

Hey UPSE Members!

A massive THANK YOU to everyone who came out to our member BBQs at the Brackley Commons and at Shining Waters! We were thrilled to welcome over 300 members, sharing great food, laughs, conversations—and some warm weather!

Missed these BBQ? No worries—we’re already cooking up more events and gatherings for this summer, and we can’t wait to see everyone again!

See our website and socials for more info!



Bryan Burt, UPSE Education and Organizing Officer

Bryan was a member of the UPSE Civil Service bargaining unit for 22 years and was a member of the Holland College Faculty bargaining unit for one year. He was very active with Local 13, the island-wide Information Technology local, serving as a steward and Chief Steward, as well as the local Director during several challenging decisions made by the province. He took the reins of Local 13 after the 2001 attempt to outsource all IT members in the Civil Service. He represented IT workers in the 2004/2005 Bill 44 arbitration and again in 2006 when the province created ITSS, issuing every IT employee a notice of intent to lay off. Additionally, Bryan supported and participated in numerous UPSE/NUPGE/CLC campaigns while serving on the Board of Directors, including appearing in a Pension Fairness advertisement.

In September 2023, Bryan joined the staff at UPSE as the Education and Organizing Officer. Over the past two years, he has worked on updating and modernizing the curriculum for courses provided to our union members. He has incorporated best practices in adult education techniques to maximize participant engagement. Under the direction of the Board and the Education Committee, Bryan delivered an intensive Train the Trainer workshop that brought together 11 dedicated members, who are now Member-Facilitators assisting in delivering UPSE’s educational content.

Bryan also developed the PEI UPSE Advanced Steward course. This two-day training program covers Records Management, Confidentiality and Privacy, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Gender Identity and Gender Transition, and Common Collective Agreement Issues. The plan is to eventually offer open enrollment for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Gender Identity and Gender Transition courses once most of our stewards have completed their training. Bryan is excited to continue engaging and educating more members as activists!

Bryan and his wife, Kim, live in West Royalty, where they raised three children and are now enjoying their roles as grandparents to a grandson and a soon-to-arrive granddaughter. Bryan loves spending time with his family and traveling. He might also be a bit addicted to cruise vacations, having taken 10 since 2010. Additionally, Bryan enjoys discovering new and upcoming indie artists as well as good alternative oldies to keep his playlist interesting.



Bryan Burt, UPSE Education and Organizing Officer

# PEI FEDERATION OF LABOUR'S 22nd ANNUAL LABOUR DAY PICNIC AND BARBECUE

**When:** MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2025 (1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

**Where:** Victoria Park Pavilion, Charlottetown

**Be sure to stop by and celebrate Labour Day 2025!**

**Bouncy Castle for Kids, Hot Dogs, Corn, French Fries and more will be served.**

For further information contact our office at (902) 368-3068 or [peifed@pei.aibn.com](mailto:peifed@pei.aibn.com)



## Members: Please Update Personal Contact Information

The union encourages all members to take an active role in the union by keeping up-to-date on union news and issues. To ensure you receive the most recent UPSE communication materials, please update your contact information with the union to ensure your current contact information is up-to-date, or to make changes.

Call Norma Jarvis at 902-892-5335 or email her ([njarvis@peiupse.ca](mailto:njarvis@peiupse.ca)).

You can also visit the UPSE website and go to the [update your contact information](https://www.peiupse.ca/members/update/) (<https://www.peiupse.ca/members/update/>) link under the **Members** tab on the homepage where you can update your information on-line.

**Are you missing  
out on key  
information  
from UPSE?**

## UPSE Civil Development and Training Fund (Civil Service Employees)

The Development and Training Fund, a joint initiative of the Government and the PEI UPSE, is designed to provide funding to employees for learning opportunities, encourage employee participation, benefit career development and improve government service delivery to the citizens of this province.

You will find the application and guidelines on the PEI UPSE Website ([www.pei-upse.ca](http://www.pei-upse.ca)). For more information please contact Matt Barlow at (902) 368-6175, or email him at [mbarlow@gov.pe.ca](mailto:mbarlow@gov.pe.ca)



## UPSE Health Development and Training

The UPSE *Health Development and Training* fund is available to PEI UPSE members who are employed with Health PEI and are covered under the Health PEI Collective Agreement. The fund provides employees with monies to improve required skills to better perform current job responsibilities as well as future job opportunities. You will find the application and guidelines on the PEI UPSE Website ([www.peiupse.ca](http://www.peiupse.ca)).

Please ensure that you use the current application form found on the UPSE website for all of your development and training requests. Contact Bryan Burt at [bsburt@peiupse.ca](mailto:bsburt@peiupse.ca) or call (902) 892-5335 for questions and inquiries about the fund.



## Don't Forget to Read Your Collective Agreement!

Have you looked at your collective agreement recently? Your collective agreement is a legal contract negotiated, agreed to, and signed by your employer and your union. Both the employer and the union are bound by law to abide by its terms and conditions. It's like a "rule book" that defines your working conditions and sets out the rights and responsibilities of the employer and the workers.

In your collective agreement you will find provisions outlining your wages, vacation, sick leave, working conditions, rights and benefits. If you run into a problem at work and believe your employer is not following the collective agreement don't hesitate to talk with your Shop Steward or call UPSE to speak with a Labour Relations Officer.

By reading and understanding your collective agreement you will become more aware of the rights and benefits you have in the workplace. You will also be in a better position to protect yourself, if, and when, any problems arise at work. To see your collective agreement visit the UPSE website ([www.peiupse.ca](http://www.peiupse.ca)) and look under the "Collective Bargaining" section.



# Do You Want to Join UPSE?

Do you know a group of non-unionized workers who might be interested in joining UPSE? If so, please contact Bryan Burt, UPSE Education and Organizing Officer, at 902-892-5335, toll free 1-800-897-8773 or e-mail [bsburt@peiupse.ca](mailto:bsburt@peiupse.ca)

UPSE offers a wide range of membership services including professional staff to help you when problems arise in the workplace (full grievance support), experienced negotiators to bargain fair and equitable contracts on your behalf, a wide range of educational opportunities, and a benefit program for members.



*PEI UPSE is proud to represent over 5000 members in the public and private sectors.*

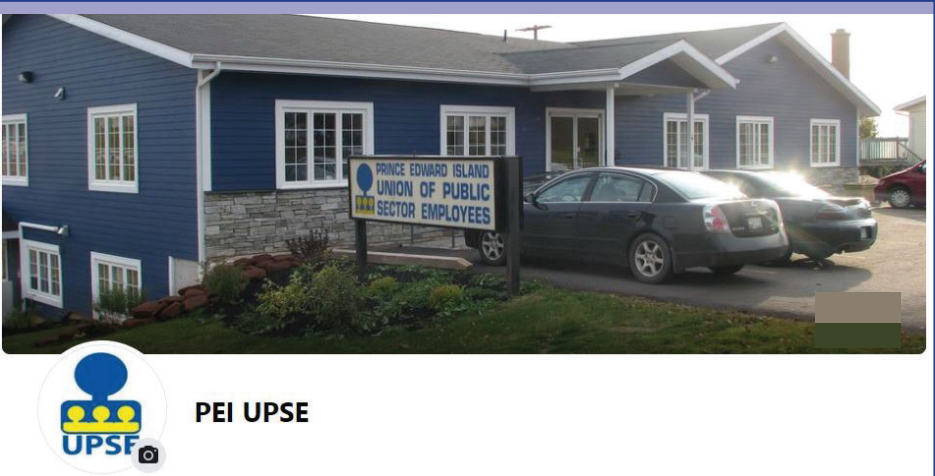
## Attention UPSE Retirees!

### Local 19 (Retiree Local)

If you're retired and haven't signed a retiree membership card and wish to do so can contact the union office at 902-892-5335, toll free 1-800-897-8773 or e-mail [peiupse@peiupse.ca](mailto:peiupse@peiupse.ca)

Dues are \$1 per month. Meetings are held four times a year. To receive Local19 meeting notices you must have an email on file with us.

Those who were with CIVIL / HEALTH / WCB - we will contact the Employee Benefits Division of the Department of Finance to deduct \$1.00 per month from your retirement cheque. All other bargaining unit members (than those noted above), please contact the union office to discuss payment of dues each month by cheque or cash at the union office.

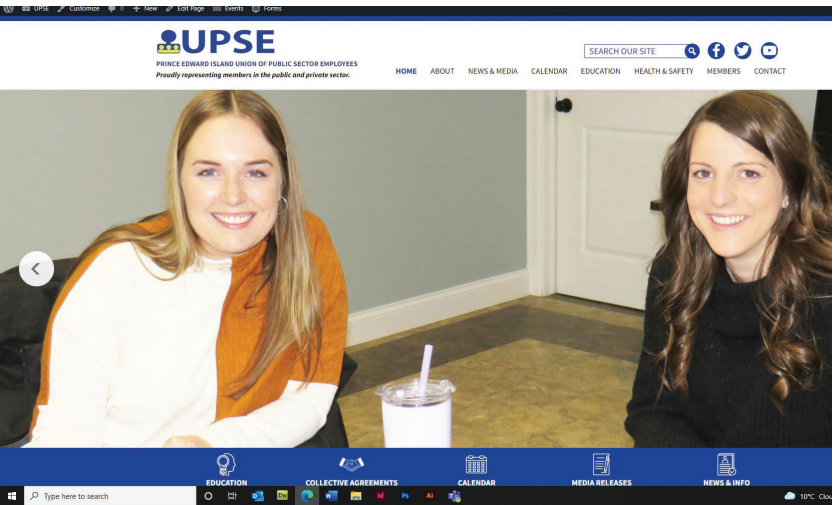


PEI UPSE is now on Facebook!

Search for the "PEI UPSE" page and click on "Like this page."

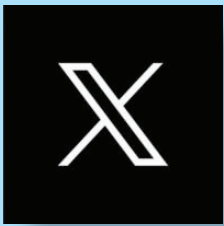
## UPSE Website!

Check it out at [www.peiupse.ca](http://www.peiupse.ca)  
Facebook and X feeds are on the new site as well.



## Follow PEI UPSE on X!

Follow PEI UPSE on X @PeiUpse for the latest on UPSE news, events, labour and social issues.



## Thank Unions for ...

- ✓ Weekends
- ✓ 8 Hour Workdays
- ✓ A Minimum Wage
- ✓ Paid Overtime
- ✓ Breaks During Work
- ✓ Workplace Safety Standards
- ✓ Child Labour Laws



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“UPSE is pleased to work with Cooke Insurance to offer our members preferred rates. The Cooke's Home & Auto Group Plan will help you save money. I value our relationship with Cooke Insurance and the benefits it provides to the membership as a whole.” - **Karen Jackson, President, UPSE**

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Insurance first.**