



June 28, 2024

PEI UPSE Occupation Health and Safety Committee - Terms of Reference

Background:

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee was created for the union to address the needs and concerns related to the workplace psychological and physical safety of the membership. Reports and injuries related to violence, harassment, psychological and physical harm have increased over the past years for PEI UPSE members.

COVID-19 highlighted the importance of occupational health and safety, but also identified deficiencies in government providing adequate PPE and safe working conditions. The ongoing labour shortage has resulted in understaffing which has resulted in risk of injury and safety for the members, burnout and fatigue, and mental health conditions. Many PEI UPSE members are being approached and asked to work outside of the scope of practice due to the staffing shortages.

The membership has highlighted deficiencies in Occupational Health Safety legislation, policies and procedures which need to be reviewed, updated and amended.

Purpose:

The Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees (PEI UPSE) Occupational Health and Safety Committee plays an important role in guiding and supporting the union actions and initiatives on workplace safety. The committee promotes awareness about occupational health and safety at all levels of the union, acts as a resource for the union and its members, assists in identifying problem areas needing priority attention relating to OHS, plays a significant role in providing recommendations for amendments to relevant OHS legislation for the union to lobby government bodies. The Committee will be responsible to review and action all approved occupational health and safety resolutions from the annual convention.

Composition:

Executive Member

Chair

- The Chair shall:
 - o Call meetings of the committee
 - o Chair meetings of the committee

- Designate another member of the committee to chair the committee in the Chair's absence.
- Report to the Board on the work of the committee.

Executive Members

- Two (2) Representative from Prince County (cannot be from same Local)
 - Two (2) Representative from Queens County (cannot be from same Local)
 - Two (2) Representative from Kings County (cannot be from same Local)
 - One (1) Representative from WCB (Local 18)
- Pursuant to Article 15.3 of the PEI Constitution, the Chairperson may recommend to the Board for ratification that additional members be added.

A Committee member who does not uphold their responsibilities or misses 3 meetings without reasonable explanation will be asked by the chair to resign from the committee. If the member refuses to resign, a vote shall be taken on the removal of the member from the committee.

Term:

- The term for appointees to this committee will be two (2) years.

Responsibilities:

- To review and monitor all Occupational Health and Safety committees in locations where UPSE members are employed; to ensure minutes are obtained and reviewed; and to ensure that UPSE members have equal representation elected by UPSE members.
- To review and action all OHS resolutions approved by the voting delegates at the annual UPSE convention.
- To review the *Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations* and the *Workers Compensation Act and Regulations* to provide appropriate recommendations and amendment proposals for PEI UPSE to submit to WCB to ensure the legislation is modern, current, and aligned with the needs of the members.
- To work with the Research and Policy Analyst to review, develop, and recommend union policy in Occupational Health and Safety. May make recommendations concerning Occupational Health and Safety training needs for union.
- To work with the Research and Policy Analyst by providing information for the preparation of submissions and briefs to government bodies on issues relevant to Occupational Health and Safety.
- To generate a report on the committee's activities for the Board of Directors and for the Annual Convention.

- To work with the Communication and Campaign Officer to bring awareness of Health and Safety issues through various communication venues (ie. Advocate, Accent, publications, social media platforms, etc.).
- To operate, plan and work within the budget parameters established and approved by the Board of Directors. Comply with Policy A-2017-50-3 (Appendix A)
- To undertake and report on projects assigned as required from the Board of Directors.
- To hold at least four (4) meetings annually with members identified for this OHS committee.
- Collaboration with other identified approved PEI UPSE Standing Committees.

Meetings:

- There shall be at least four (4) meetings annually. A meeting shall be held in each county with the fourth meeting at the discretion of the Chair.
- If a member is not able to participate in a meeting, the member can speak to the Chair in advance so that the Chair can share the member's perspective at the meeting. That member may also submit written comments or documentation in advance of the meeting. Submissions required for a meeting that are made after said meeting will not be considered for decision making.
- Quorum shall be simple majority (50% +1) of the voting committee members present at a meeting.

Decision Making Process:

- The Committee will strive for consensus when making decisions. If consensus cannot be achieved, the Committee members must agree on how to deal with the outstanding issue, ie. Vote, continue discussion, table the issue to another meeting or take the issue to the Board of Directors.
- When voting, majority (50%+1) rules with quorum present. There shall be no proxy or email voting unless explicitly determined by the committee in advance of a vote.

Minutes:

- A committee member shall be delegated at the beginning of each fiscal year to support the committee to record and take minutes at each of the four (4) meetings. The Minutes shall be approved at subsequent meetings. The minutes will be forwarded promptly to the PEI UPSE office after approval and kept and stored in accordance with the organization's Record Information Management program.

Accountability:

- The **Occupational Health and Safety Committee** will be accountable to the Board of Directors through the Chair of the committee.