



CUPE LOCAL 523

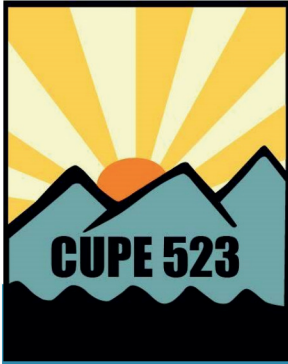
www.cupe523.com

MEMBER

HANDBOOK



WELCOME TO CUPE LOCAL 523



This handbook is an orientation for **CUPE Local 523** members to familiarize themselves with their union and available supports.

CUPE Local 523 Mission Statement: To unite and encourage all members through union solidarity: giving us the power and strength to secure and defend our rights as workers.

Welcome Message

Welcome to CUPE Local 523!

As a CUPE member, you are part of the largest Union in Canada. CUPE represents workers in health care, public schools, municipalities, libraries, universities, social services, public utilities, transportation, emergency services, and airlines.

CUPE Local 523 is a composite local.

That means we have more than one unit (6), employer (6), and Collective Agreement (6).

CUPE 523 has three Community Social Services Units and three School District Units.

- Summerland Community Support (SCS)
- North Okanagan Youth and Family Services Society (NOYFSS)
- Turning Points Collaborative Society (TPCS)

- School District, North Okanagan Shuswap (SD83)
- School District, Okanagan Skaha (SD67)
- School District, Okanagan Similkameen (SD53)

CUPE History

CUPE was founded in 1963 through the merger of two unions representing public sector employees. This year, we are celebrating our 60th anniversary.

Our union has been shaped by decades of work, activism and struggle on a multitude of issues. Our history is rich.

What does CUPE stand for? Canadian Union of Public Employees

Equality Statement

Union solidarity is based on the principle that union members are equal and deserve mutual respect at all levels. Any behaviour that creates conflict prevents us from working together to strengthen our union.

As unionists, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Discriminatory speech or conduct which is racist, sexist, transphobic or homophobic hurts and thereby divides us. So too, does discrimination on the basis of ability, age, class, religion, language and ethnic origin.

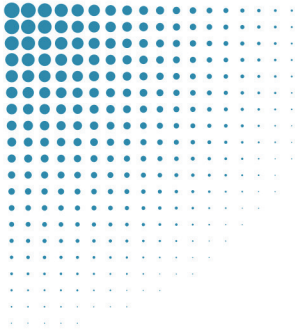
Sometimes discrimination takes the form of harassment. Harassment means using real or perceived power to abuse, devalue or humiliate. Harassment should not be treated as a joke. The uneasiness and resentment that it creates are not feelings that help us grow as a union.

Discrimination and harassment focus on characteristics that make us different; and they reduce our capacity to work together on shared concerns such as decent wages, safe working conditions, and justice in the workplace, society and in our union.

CUPE's policies and practices must reflect our commitment to equality. Members, staff and elected officers must be mindful that all sisters and brothers deserve dignity, equality and respect.

CUPE | Canadian Union
of Public Employees





CUPE Structure

CUPE / *Canadian Union
of Public Employees*

The Canadian Union of Public Employees is Canada's largest union, with 715,000 members across the country. CUPE represents workers in health care, emergency services, education, early learning and child care, municipalities, social services, libraries, utilities, transportation, airlines and more. We have 68 offices across the country, in every province



CUPE BC is the largest union in BC, with more than 100,000 members working in hundreds of occupations that help keep communities strong.. CUPE members can be found in every region of the province, providing important public services that to families, kids and communities.



CUPE LOCAL 523

CUPE 523 has three Community Social Services Units and three School District Units. CUPE Local 523 is overseen by elected Executive Officers that make up our Executive Board. Our Bylaws outline the rules and operations of the local. All CUPE members work under the protection of a contract called a collective agreement. Your local union bargains the terms of the agreement. Elected local union leaders also work with the employer to resolve problems in the workplace.



Local Structure



Local 523 Office, Penticton, BC



EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall consist of the President, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Vice-Presidents, Secretary Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Indigenous Workers' Representative, and one Unit Chair elected from each unit.



UNIT STEWARDS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each Unit elects Shop Stewards to help investigate, write, and file grievances on behalf of members. Help to solve problems outside the grievance procedure. Educate members about the collective agreement, about the union's role in the workplace and about important social issues.

Elected Committee members work on various Committee's in order to address important issues in our Local and engage our members.



MEMBERS

Members and member participation is the foundation of our Union. members democratically decides their priorities for bargaining, when to settle a new contract, and how to manage funds.



UNITS

CUPE LOCAL 523

K-12 School Districts

School District 53 (SD53) - Okanagan Similkameen

School District 53 Okanagan Similkameen is a school district that serves fragments of the southern Okanagan and lower Similkameen regions, which include Cawston, Hedley, Keremeos, Okanagan Falls, Oliver, and Osoyoos, totaling to six communities in the district, all of which are in British Columbia, Canada.

School District 67 (SD67) - Okanagan Skaha

School District No. 67 (Okanagan-Skaha) is located in the South Okanagan region of British Columbia Canada. Located between Okanagan Lake and Skaha Lake. School District No. 67 is home to 11 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 3 secondary schools and 1 alternative learning site. The District serves over 5,500 students and employs approximately 875 staff.

School District 83 (SD83) - North Okanagan-Shuswap

School District 83 North Okanagan-Shuswap is a school district in British Columbia. This includes the major center of Salmon Arm and the area around Shuswap Lake as well as the northern Okanagan communities of Armstrong and Enderby.





UNITS

CUPE LOCAL 523

CSS Community Social Services

North Okanagan Youth and Family Social Services (NOYFSS)

NOYFSS (Vernon area) provides a broad range of social programs reflecting the dynamic needs of our community. Through support programs, education and specialized home services, we strive to strengthen, nurture and protect the healthy development of our children, youth and families.

Turning Points Collaborative Society (TPCS)

TPCS provides outreach, shelter services and various housing options for vulnerable people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness in the Okanagan. We also offer employment programs, addictions recovery programs and affordable housing options. We believe in the inherent dignity of the people we serve and seek to support them as the experts in their own lives.

Summerland Community Support (SCS)

Summerland Community Support is a locally based organization offering programs and meeting needs of people in our community. We help people reach their goals through encouragement, motivation and opportunities. We work hard to build a community that fosters friendship and support. A place where people feel safe, secure and comfortable, in as many aspects of their life as possible.



What is “the Union”?

Unions were formed to advocate for democratic and collective action to improve working conditions and the standard of living for all workers. Members work together to advance security and dignity in the workplace. Members choose to get involved in their union and can become union representatives such as Executive Officers, Stewards and various committee members. They all work towards better working conditions, addressing workplace issues and supporting members to manage their relationship with the employer.



Local 523 Collective Agreements

A Collective Agreement (CA) is an agreement made between the Employer and the Union to outline the rights and responsibilities for each party to guide the working relationship. Request a copy of your Collective Agreement or download it from the website. It is important to be familiar with your rights and responsibilities.



Local 523 Bylaws

Bylaws are the rules set out in conjunction with CUPE National Constitution on how the local will operate. These Bylaws are designed to give proper balance to the administration of the Local Union. To protect the rights of all members, and to provide for responsible governance of CUPE Local 523.



CUPE BC Constitution and Bylaws

CUPE BC has as its objectives: To support the objectives of the Canadian Union of Public Employees as set out in Article II of the CUPE Constitution. The defence and extension of the civil rights and liberties of public employees and the preservation of free democratic trade unionism. The improvement of wages, hours of work, job security and other working conditions affecting public employees.



CUPE National Constitution

The CUPE Constitution accordingly belongs to the members of CUPE. It determines the Union’s objectives and how the Union operates. It forms the basis for the functioning of the more than 2,100 CUPE local unions across Canada.



MEMBERSHIP

There is a distinction between being a dues paying member and being a member in good standing:

Dues paying member:

Everyone under the scope of a CUPE Local 523 Collective Agreement is a dues paying member. Dues are collected off each paycheck. This allows members access to the grievance process, all your rights under the Collective Agreement, and the right to vote in strike and ratification votes.

Member in good standing:

A member in good standing is equally entitled to the rights noted above with the addition of being eligible to run for union positions (executive, steward, committee, etc.) to vote in local elections, budgets, by-laws, and motions made at the general membership meetings.

The process of becoming a member in good standing:

- Member must fill out and sign the Membership Application Form (given when hired by the Employer)
- Member must pay an initiation fee (taken when hired by the Employer)
- Member must take oath of membership

Meetings



General Meetings

General Meetings shall be held a minimum of five (5) times per year (including the General Election Meeting), rotating between Oliver, Penticton, Vernon, Salmon Arm, Kelowna, and online via Teams. Business of the Local must be conducted at a General Meeting.



Unit Meeting

Unit Meetings shall take place a minimum of two (2) times per year, one in the spring and one in the fall. Unit Chairs, Shop Stewards and Unit Committee elections shall take place at a Fall, every 2 years.

Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are held throughout the year (minus summertime). These meetings may take place in person or online via Teams.



Notice of Meetings shall be emailed out to members, and will also be posted on Union boards and our website.



LOCAL 523 EXECUTIVE

The Executive Board consists of 13 elected representatives:

President

Secretary Treasurer

Recording Secretary

1st Vice President

2nd Vice President

3rd Vice President

Indigenous Workers' Representative

SD53 Unit Chairperson

SD67 Unit Chairperson

SD83 Unit Chairperson

SCS Unit Chairperson

TPCS Unit Chairperson

NOYFSS Unit Chairperson



Each Unit also elects representatives
for the following positions:

Shop Stewards

Health and Safety Committee

Communication Committee

Education Committee

Good and Welfare Committee



Local 523 has 3 Elected Trustees positions:

Each term is a 3-year term. The Trustees meet a few times a year to review the finances and are responsible for submitting a report to CUPE National.

Executive Elections:

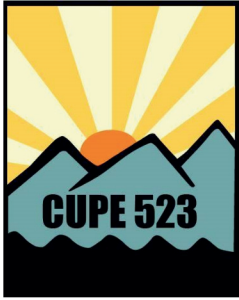
Each Elected Executive position is a 2 year term.
Call for nominations are held each year during the February General meeting, with an Election Meeting to follow in March if required.
Please see our Bylaws for more information.

Unit Elections:

Unit elected positions (including Committees) is a 2 year term.
Unit elections are held every 2 years during a fall Unit meeting.
Please see our Bylaws for more information.

In case of a vacant position, the Executive may appoint a member to fill until the next election meeting or call a Special Meeting. Unit Chairs may also hold elections to fill vacant positions in their Unit.





What is a Shop Steward?

Shop stewards are union members who have received training to represent and defend the interests of other members in the workplace, sometimes through the grievance process. They enforce the provisions of our collective agreement in the workplace and ensure that TRU is in compliance with labour laws. Stewards also share official union news and information and promote union values in the workplace.

Whether you are a new steward or have been doing this work for many years, your role is to watch and listen to what is happening in your workplace. You will do this on behalf of all CUPE members. In fact, often when CUPE members think of their local union, they think of you and the work you do on our behalf.

The union needs you to represent our members and to protect the rights we have won in the collective agreement. Each clause in the collective agreement comes from negotiations with the employer, and every single clause is important.

If you are interested in becoming a Shop Steward, please contact your Unit Chair or our 1VP for more information.

Stay Connected

With Your Union:

CUPE 523



NEW!

STAY CONNECTED with TEXT Messages

from
Local 523



- Our WEBSITE www.cupe523.com which is always up to date with important and current information, such as meeting dates, contact lists, your Collective Agreement, Bylaws, education opportunities, etc.... Here is where you can also sign up to receive our EMAILS, full of important information, alerts, and reminders.

Sign Up Today!

If you are Already on our Email list
but also wish to receive important
TEXT messages from Local 523

Sign up by texting your units name
(exactly as listed below):

scs
tpcs
noyfs
sd53
sd67
sd83

to: (833) 942-4681

If you wish to sign up to receive both
Emails and Text messages from Local 523

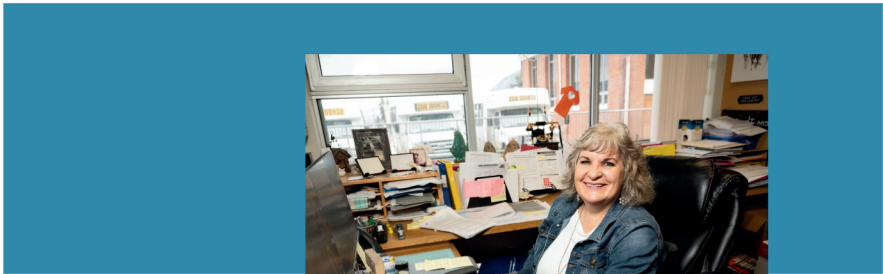
Please go to our website
and fill out the form provided.

www.cupe523.com



- Join Us on Facebook:





My Unit: _____

My Unit Chair: _____

Contact Info: _____

Notes:

CUPE LOCAL 523

WWW.CUPE523.COM

In CUPE the members are in charge. In each CUPE local, the members democratically decides their priorities for bargaining, when to settle a new contract, and how to manage funds.

CUPE's strength comes from individual members working toward common goals. Together we maintain and improve wages and benefits, improve health and safety conditions, and make your workplace better.

