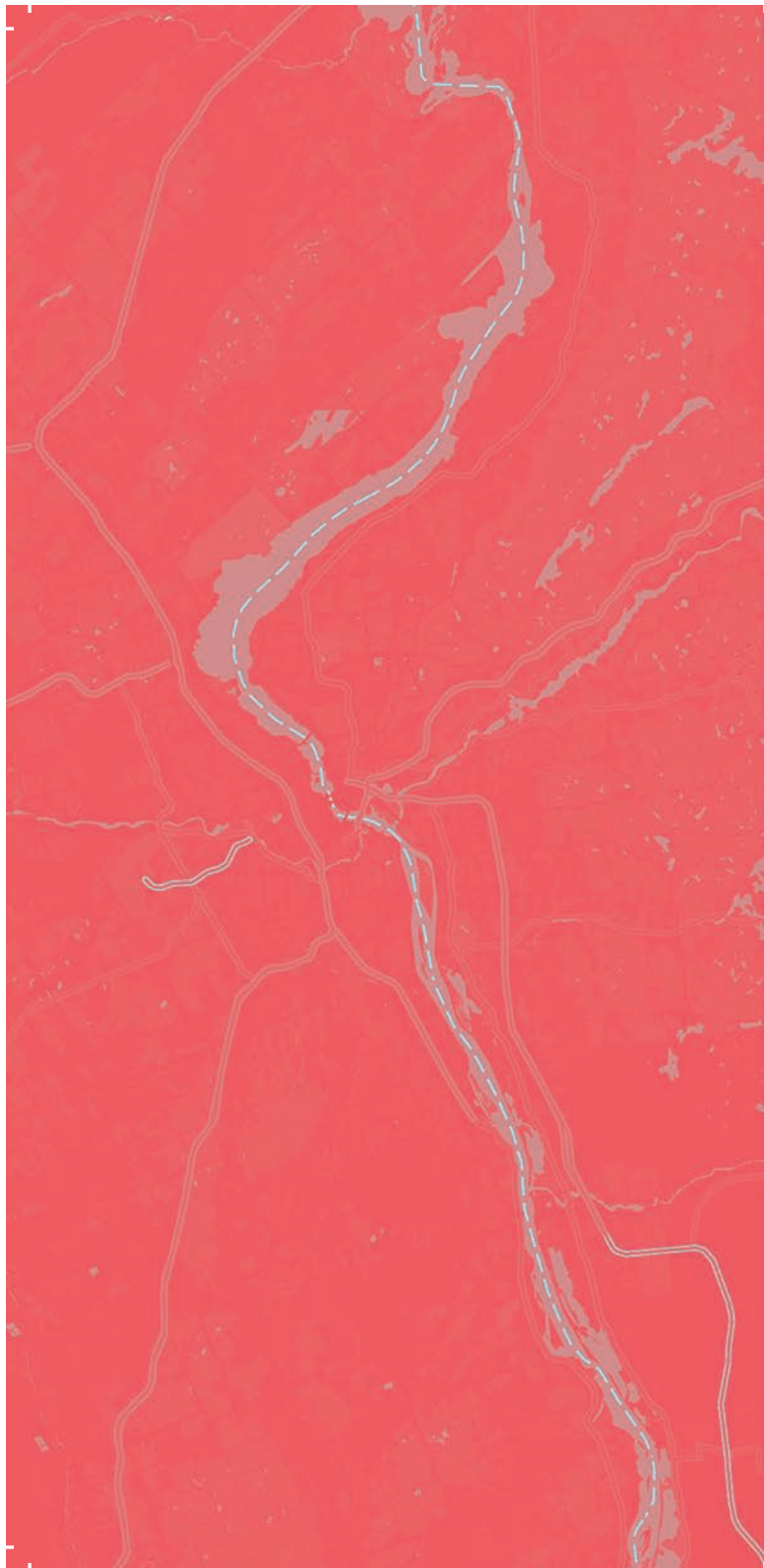




**Your Union:
Let's talk!**



What We Want and What We Do

Fairness.

This is our key value. Fairness applies not just to our own members but to everyone. We work for our members, but also with other unions and advocacy groups at home and abroad to achieve it. Together, all of us have a stronger voice.

Workplace rights.

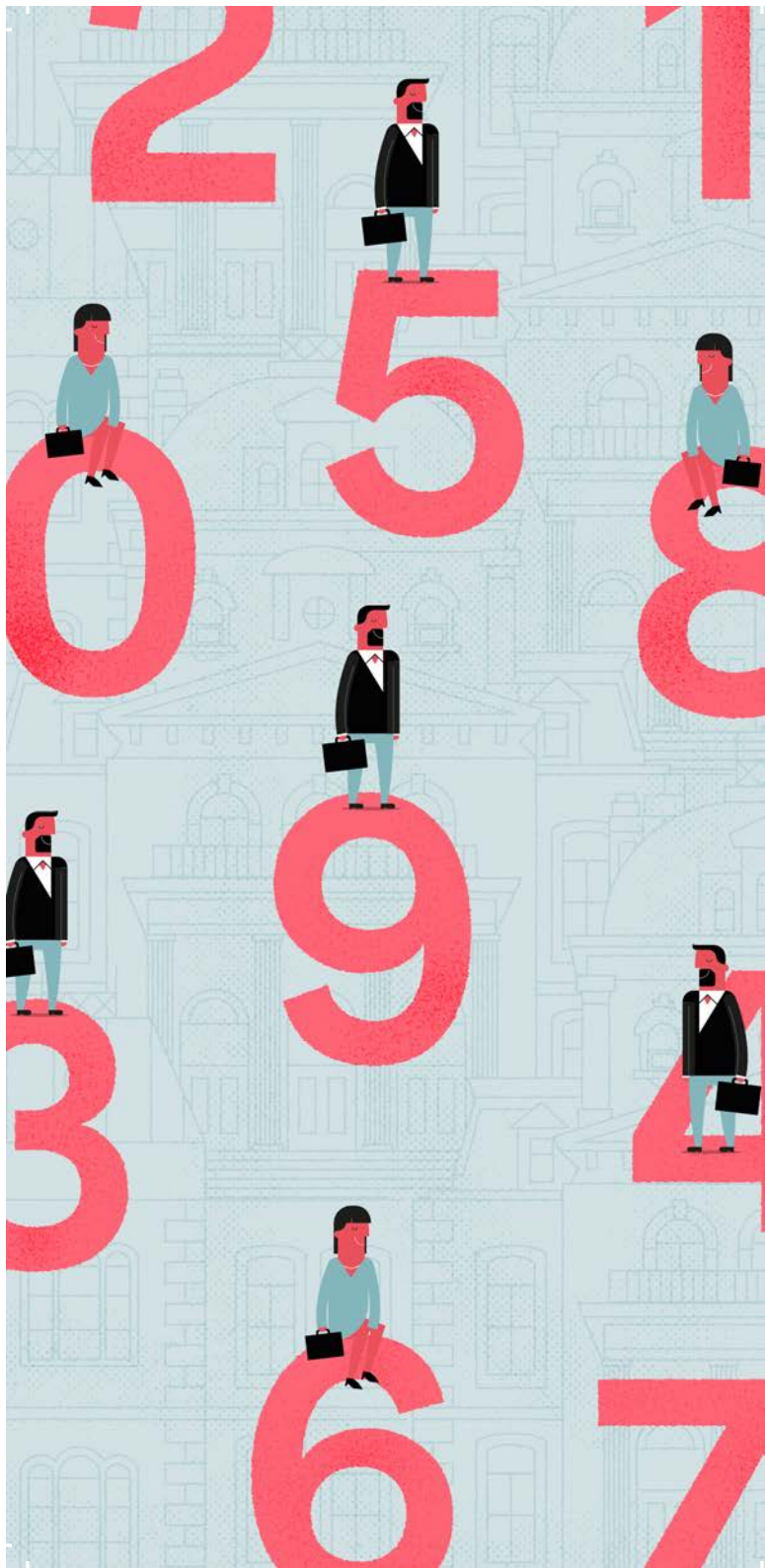
Rights on paper need life to be breathed into them. A network of union stewards in your workplace defends your rights under the collective agreement. Your Local union regularly consults with the Employer on behalf of you and your co-workers. Union staff may assist if the need arises.

Safe and healthy workplaces.

Every worker has the right to be safe and secure at work. Through negotiating contracts with employers, consultation, lobbying, the courts, and workplace action, the PSAC tackles workplace stress, bullying, harassment, discrimination, and physically unsafe working conditions. Over the years we have won many major victories.

Free negotiations for union-employer contracts.

We bargain wages, benefits, and conditions of employment, but too often we've had to lobby politicians and go to court to fight even for the basic right to bargain. It's an on-going challenge.



Fast Facts



MORE THAN
200 000
MEMBERS

47 000
members
in the NCR

49

Number of collective
agreements covering
NCR members

33

NCR employers of PSAC
members (public and
private sector)

On the ground and in the courts, we won the largest pay equity settlement in Canadian history--\$3.2 billion for present and former PSAC members. It was a victory for basic fairness.



— Nycole Turmel
Past-National President, PSAC

My Supreme Court case made the Employer responsible for keeping workplaces harassment-free. It was a victory for everyone.



— Bonnie Robichaud
Former PSAC member and activist

Have something to say? Your union is listening.

Almost every Canadian occupation you can think of is represented in the PSAC. Both general and specific workplace issues have to be addressed at the bargaining table and elsewhere too, and that's no simple task. So it's a big union, with many moving parts.

That can make communications—in both directions—a continuing challenge.

If you know your Local steward or a member of your Local Executive, you can often get answers to any questions you might have, and assistance if you need it. Your Local also has membership gatherings, and other PSAC meetings take place in the region. But maybe you've never even thought about approaching "the union," for whatever reason.

We don't bite.

The PSAC of which members (like you!) are the most essential part has a major say in your working conditions, pay and benefits, and maintaining fairness in the workplace and elsewhere. Tens of thousands of members like you provide the essential input that sets the course of the union as a whole.

The groundwork for good two-way communication is already in place. Even if you aren't able to talk to a Local union official, conversation is just a click (or a phone call) away.

Almost every member has ideas or concerns to share. Maybe you need information, or assistance with a workplace problem. Maybe you have a gripe, or even a compliment. Maybe you have constructive suggestions to make. But one way or another, you need to be heard.

Let's talk.

The Good Workplace

All of us know what kind of workplace we want.

One that is free of harassment, bullying or discrimination. A safe place—workers shouldn't be at undue risk of injury, or of violence on the job. One without unhealthy stress, where we can work in a positive atmosphere, find real balance between our daily duties and our lives outside the job. Where we have the opportunity to grow and develop. Where we are equipped with the tools to get the job done, and are respected for the work that we do.

Your union is on-side.

Over the years, the PSAC—members and specialized staff—has overcome a number of workplace hazards and barriers, helping to move toward a better working environment.

RESPECT.

You work hard, and you deserve appropriate pay, benefits and terms and conditions of employment. Members like you sit on bargaining teams to negotiate contracts with employers that reflect the value of the work that you do.

WORK/LIFE BALANCE.

Childcare centres in or near federal workplaces (sadly, still a very few) were a PSAC initiative. Family leave entitlements have been successfully negotiated and expanded. Members have mandated the PSAC to launch an extensive advocacy campaign in support of childcare and many members are playing a lead role in this campaign.

EQUITABLE TREATMENT.

It's all about fairness. The PSAC has worked to ensure equal rights for everyone by fighting discrimination. Local members have played a major role in advancing

pay equity, employment equity, equal benefits for same-sex couples, and the duty to accommodate members with disabilities, and those with various family requirements.

HARASSMENT-FREE WORKPLACES.

In 1987, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in the Robichaud case that employers are responsible for maintaining workplaces free of personal and sexual harassment. Members of the PSAC have played a major role in breathing life into this ruling ever since.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTECTION.

The union helped to draft legislation that established union-employer health and safety committees in workplaces, to deal with problems as they arise. We won the right to refuse dangerous work, and we have also tackled workplace violence and bullying.

WORKPLACE STRESS.

With cutback implemented by successive governments, federal government employees have been expected to cope with increasingly heavy workloads, and this has taken its toll. Almost half of all disability claims are now related to mental illness. The PSAC and Treasury Board established a Task Force on Mental Health in 2015, which led to founding of the Centre of Expertise on Mental Health in the Workplace.

Take another look at that far-from-complete list of aims and accomplishments. None of this could happen without members actively participating in their union, informing themselves, speaking out, getting involved.

We spend much of our lives at work. Why not take the opportunity to help make your working life better?



Working Together

A union is basically employees working together to improve their situation: people helping people. As the saying goes, “Many hands make light work,” and unions are most effective when members participate.

Participation can take any number of forms. Making your voice heard is a key form of participation, even if you are being critical or expressing frustration with, for example, the slow pace of contract negotiations.

Every member has a unique life experience and skills to share. The union gains its strength from that sharing.

Your Local

As a union member, you are part of a Local union that brings members together in one or more workplaces. Locals are built by local members. Each Local has a democratically-elected Executive and a network of union stewards who handle workplace problems and concerns. Locals have joint union-management Health and Safety committees (required by law), joint consultation with management representatives to bring members' concerns to their attention, and other committees of members who carry out various tasks and duties for the Local membership.

The Executive, made up of member volunteers, is elected at annual general meetings of the Local. These and other membership gatherings are open to every Local member. They are an opportunity to learn how the union is run, ask tough questions, speak out, and maybe get more involved. If you don't know the time and place of your Local meetings, check the union notice board in your workplace, or just ask!

What your Local does

As one of the building blocks of the PSAC as a whole, your Local, one of more than 1200 PSAC Locals across the country, plays a vital role in helping to choose where the union goes and what it does. The Local Executive helps to ensure representation for members in the workplace through a stewards' network. It regularly provides information to the membership about union activities, upcoming get-togethers, and educational opportunities in the region.

Locals are represented at union conventions. Many convention resolutions are debated and passed at Local assemblies before being sent on to help set union policy.

At Conventions, your dues rate and union budgets are democratically decided by the delegates.

I remember returning from maternity leave and having to deal with all sorts of issues from my team leader and manager. Everyday I felt helpless and defeated. One day I asked a co-worker for advice and they referred me to the union. The union spoke up for me and made sure my rights were respected. I felt so empowered that I wanted to do the same for others. Now I speak up for others while focusing on the bigger picture of justice and fairness. I want to change the world.



— Rhea Sandy
PSAC Activist

I wasn't asking for preferential treatment. I was willing to take the least desirable shift, which is the overnight shift. I just needed it to be predictable so I could arrange child care.



— Fiona Johnstone
Border security worker and proud FB member

Political rights? We weren't even allowed to put an election sign on our lawns. My union fought this up to the Supreme Court of Canada—and we won!



— Heather Stevens
National Archives worker and PSAC activist

Everyone counts

There are no second-class union members—we are a community of equals. Discrimination is not a union value. The PSAC has fought and won some important victories for equality in front of human rights tribunals and the courts.

Whether it's pay equity, same-sex spousal rights, family rights, the employer's duty to accommodate employees with disabilities, fostering workplace inclusion, challenging precarious work and unsafe working conditions, the union has been there for the members.

All that PSAC member Fiona Johnstone wanted, for example, was a fixed shift at the Pearson International Airport so she could care for her child—but her employer, the Canada Border Security Agency, refused. It took years, but a Federal Appeal Court finally ruled in her favour.

It may be hard for some to believe, but it was once illegal for any member of the Public Service to exercise the political rights that other citizens took for granted—put up a lawn sign, work for a candidate, or make a financial contribution to a political campaign. Four PSAC members took this to court, and won at the Supreme Court.

Another union member, Dale Akerstrom, won a historic human rights case for same-sex spousal rights. His victory benefited members of the entire federal public sector, as well as pensioners with federal medical insurance.

Through these and many other landmark cases, the PSAC has stood by its members every step of the way.



Members take action

Whether it's a member stepping forward with a problem, workplace action by co-workers to defend a fellow member, or even strike action as a last resort when an employer will not agree to basic fairness, union activity is member activity. The union is there to provide the needed resources and expertise, but members themselves decide whether or not to act.

A union begins and ends with its members—members like you.

The gains PSAC has made over the years—decent contracts with employers, human rights victories, improved workplaces—have all been due to members willing to take action, working with other members.

But it doesn't stop there. We all have a stake in the world our children will inherit. It is no surprise that union members, like other citizens, are alarmed by climate change, and deeply concerned that the next generation is facing a future of temporary, low-paid jobs with no benefits. So unions, and individual members, work with each other and with ecology groups, anti-poverty organizations, students facing huge debt loads, and national childcare advocates.



Together we get things done.

Union values have no borders

*What we want for ourselves, we seek for all.
So unions like the PSAC are getting involved
with like-minded groups in other countries.*

Free trade agreements have brought the world closer together, but not necessarily in a way that benefits working people.

How do we turn free trade into fair trade, where labour rights, human rights and the environment are protected? To be honest, it's a long, hard road. As a public service union, the PSAC has a particular interest in preserving and defending quality public services against privatization. People in other countries face the same threat. Why not reach out, join forces and learn from each other?

One of many stories: the PSAC, along with several other Canadian public service unions, joined forces with Colombian public sector workers in 2004 to push back against privatization, and has been working with them ever since. The pressure from government and corporations has accelerated since the 2011 Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Our initiative is called "Defending Public Services: Canadian and Colombian Workers on the Front Lines."

At home and abroad, the union supports anti-poverty projects, disaster relief, and other initiatives, often in partnership with the people directly involved. That way we build bridges and we build communities.

This may seem some distance away from the concerns of a PSAC Local here in the National Capital Region. And yet—is it, really?





Conversations

You are not alone.

If the workplace is not all that you would like it to be, you can make a difference.

Perhaps you would like to learn more about the union of which you are a part. Maybe you would like to develop some new skills that would help you and others deal with problems in your workplace.

The union provides a safe space for you to get advice and help if you need it. It also offers a wide variety of courses to members who might want to become more informed and involved. From starting courses like Talking Union Basics to advanced leadership training (Union Development Program), our union education program is one of the best in the country. You can check out what's being offered in the region at the PSAC-NCR website.

The important thing to realize is that your voice is important. Your views and your questions matter. Your participation, at whatever level of activity you choose, helps to set the union's direction and shape its mandate.

Well, maybe we've said maybe too little or too much, but that's how conversations get started.

Now it's your turn!

HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS WE DO IN THE NCR

- Quarterly REVP bulletin sent to 15,000 people to update you on PSAC and other news
- Education courses offered to PSAC-NCR members to help grow your knowledge and skills on workplace and other issues
- Regular membership conferences for PSAC-NCR members
- Regional Committees to discuss issues and strategize for change
- Information distributed outside our core workplaces during peak bargaining or key campaigns
- Meetings with MPs and MPPs
- Projects and actions with other unions and community organizations
- We organize the unorganized

KNOW MORE

Ottawa Regional Office
233 Gilmour, 6th floor
613 560-2560

Gatineau Regional Office
200, Promenade du Portage
819 777-4647



PSAC-NCR website
psac-ncr.com/



PSAC National website
psacunion.ca



/PSACNCR



/PSACNCR



/PSACNCR

A large crowd of people, many wearing winter hats and coats, is gathered in what appears to be a hallway or a large indoor space. In the center of the crowd, a man wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and a white hard hat stands out. He is looking directly at the camera. The crowd is dense, and many people are looking towards the camera. Some people are holding flags, and one person in the foreground is holding a sign that says "100% POSS". The overall scene suggests a large-scale protest or demonstration.

**PROBLEMS IN YOUR WORKPLACE?
NOT SURE OF YOUR RIGHTS?
WANT TO KNOW MORE?
LET'S TALK!**