

Atlantic Region Basic and Advanced Education Course Descriptions and Prerequisites

Talking Union Basics (TUB) (2 days) or Virtual TUB (2.5 days)

This is the union's key "introductory" course. If you have wondered what it means to be a union member, how the PSAC works, and what happens to your dues dollars, then Talking Union Basics provides answers to these questions. The course also introduces the collective agreement, your employee rights and your rights as a member of the PSAC. You will learn about the many opportunities to be active in the union and ways you can make a contribution to building strong locals in the Atlantic region. **It is recommended that members take Talking Union Basics first, as it provides the basic knowledge you need to get the most from other PSAC courses.**

Grievance Handling (GH) (2 days) or Virtual GH (2.5 days)

This training is a must for stewards and other workplace representatives, or members who want to use the acquired knowledge and skills to solve problems in the workplace. You will find out what the law says about grievances, grievors and their representatives, and the protections built in for those who choose to use the grievance procedure to solve problems. You will develop grievance-handling and problem-solving skills through "hands-on" exercises on gathering facts, analyzing a problem, drafting grievance wording, building a complete file, framing the arguments and presenting the case to the employer. You will work on case studies based on actual grievances and, in the process, improve your knowledge of case law. Normally this is a 2-day course. **Prerequisite: Members must have the TUB or its equivalent.**

Local Officers Training (LOT) (2 days) or Virtual LOT (3 days)

This is an introductory course for new Local Officers who need to know how to run a Local. Sessions cover the role of the Local Executive; Local administration, including by-laws and budgets; effective communications and Local meetings; and how the Local can access the wider resources of the PSAC. A major theme throughout the course is the organizing model of unionism and how to put it into practice so as to build a strong union presence at the workplace. **Prerequisite: Members must have the TUB or its equivalent.**

Health and Safety – Canada Labour Code Pt II (CLC II) (2 days)

This course, designed for Local health and safety activists, will provide participants with hands-on application of The Canada Labour Code Part II. Participants will practice interpretation and analysis of various parts of the act as they pertain to the workplace. There is a strong focus on key amendments to the act and how these changes should be applied and monitored. Learning activities cover such things as; changes to the Canada Labour Code Part II; duties and responsibilities of the parties; committee roles; and mobilization around occupational health and safety. **No prerequisites required.**

Introduction to Employment Equity (2 days)

The purpose of this course is to give learners tools to help promote workplace cultures that proactively support employment equity. By the end of the course participants will better understand the principles behind employment equity and understand how employment equity works. They will also be able to defend employment equity and address commonly held myths about employment equity. Finally, participants will understand the union's role in employment equity and be able to take action to support it. **No prerequisites required.**

Introduction to Duty to Accommodate (1 day)

This one-day introduction course will familiarize participants with the duty to accommodate, how it applies to the workplace, who has a role to play in workplace accommodations. **No prerequisites required.**

Building Solidarity with Indigenous Communities (3 days)

This course will provide education to PSAC members on the history and struggles of Métis, Inuit and First Nations' (FNMI) People and Peoples across Turtle Island. We will discuss the history and legacy of Residential Schools, Indian Hospitals, the Indian Act, colonialism, human rights, anti-racism, and oppression.

We will examine the 94 Calls to Action and the 10 Principles of Reconciliation and discuss how they can apply to the work we do in the union.

Another main theme of the course is showing solidarity with FNMI communities. How we can do that as a union and how we can do that as individuals. Using little known but deeply important acts of solidarity, we can help members find creative and modern ways to help advance the issues of justice and human rights for FNMI members, their families and their communities.

When we talk about Reconciliation, what we mean is reconiciliACTION. And before any reconciliation there must be truth. When we learn the truth, it makes it abundantly easier for the union to walk the path of reconciliation. This course is a first step on that path.

This course was designed specifically for non-Indigenous members of the union; however, it is likely that a number of Indigenous members will register to participate. All are welcome in this course.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course.

PSAC Respectful Workplace – Anti-Harassment Course (2 Days)

On day one, participants will; look at power relationships and how they affect the workplace, identify ways of effectively working across diversity, identify elements that make up a respectful workplace, discuss what is needed in order to establish and maintain a more respectful workplace, and identify and practice skills and methods for dealing effectively with workplace conflict. On day two, participants will; define harassment and bullying and the impact they have at work, look at policies, processes and the legal framework that governs harassment in the workplace, identify measures for preventing workplace harassment as well as formal and informal recourse routes, outline the roles and responsibilities of the parties in dealing with workplace harassment, be able to identify when harassment occurs and work through some effective strategies for dealing with workplace harassment when it occurs. **No prerequisites required.**

Young workers

In this course, participants will meet other young workers to share experiences, discuss and analyze the issues they face at work, in the union, and in society. You will also share and learn about global issues and the role of young workers in the dynamic movement for social justice. The course is a participatory, action-oriented course for PSAC members 35 years of age and under. **No prerequisites required.**

Facing management

To have participants develop basic knowledge, skills and techniques for being effective in their day-to-day dealings with management, as representatives of their Local. **No prerequisites required.**

Politics for Everyone (2 days)

Did you ever wonder why Unions are involved in politics? Did you ever hear people say that you should be involved in politics? Did you ever wonder if politics is really as important as many people says it is?

Politics for Everyone is a great course for you!

We are affected by decisions of many levels of government as workers, voters and consumers. Politics for Everyone provides an opportunity to think about all those issues and for you to think seriously about the kind of government we want and the kind of society we want to build together. **No prerequisites required.**

Public Speaking for Trade Unionists (1 day)

One of the biggest fears people have is speaking in public. As trade union activists you will have many opportunities to do so, especially as we approach our conventions. Learn how to do it effectively and with the minimum amount of anxiety. The course will provide you with some hints to help you overcome your fears and assist you to learn how to speak in public effectively. **No prerequisites required.**

Resolutions 101 (1 day) – virtual or in person

Do you want to write an effective resolution for submission to a conference or convention? This course sets out the “rules” around resolutions and will strengthen your ability to write effective resolutions. **No prerequisites required.**

By the end of this course, participants will:

- Have considered multiple ways to make change at PSAC
- Be familiar with the process for submitting resolutions
- Understand the criteria of an effective resolution
- Have practiced drafting resolutions and identified information needed to support a resolution
- Have shared strategies for obtaining support for resolutions in the lead-up to events

Convention Procedures (1 or 2 days)

By the end of the course, participants will understand the purpose of conventions, become familiar with convention procedures such as voting, elections, reports and become more skilled at using Rules of Order. We will examine the roles of convention committees, committee chairpersons, convention chairpersons, and gain some understanding of the dynamics of conventions. **No prerequisites required.**

Convention Preparation (1 day)

This workshop will introduce new activists to the purpose and mechanics of a union convention. The “why, what, and how” of conventions are introduced. This workshop is intended for members looking forward to their first participation as delegates or observers to the PSAC Regional conventions or component conventions. **No prerequisites required.**

**** NEW**** Why Fascism, Tyranny and Authoritarianism are Union Issues (1 day)

This workshop was developed to action resolution (22/GEN-009) adopted at the 2022 PSAC National Triennial Convention, which called for PSAC to provide education to the membership to raise awareness about fascism and white supremacy.

This workshop covers the issues of fascism, authoritarianism and tyranny.

This course is increasingly necessary because fascism and tyranny are on the rise across the globe. This has a devastating impact on unions, Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized peoples, persons with disabilities, non-Christians, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, other groups of people that are targeted, and society in general. Under the guise of the “right” to “free speech,” fascism and tyrannical ideologies, white supremacy, and hate speech are more prevalent in Canadian society. **No prerequisites required.**

This one-day course will give participants the opportunity to:

- Define and identify political ideologies and specifically those that are contrary to democratic principles
- Identify steps that can lead to tyrannical and fascist outcomes
- Learn how to take strong action to reject fascism and other tyrannical ideologies
- Discuss how to build a more equitable society

Advanced Duty to Accommodate: Accommodating Members with Disabilities (ADTA) (2.5 Days)

The goal of the Advanced Duty to Accommodate course is to develop our union's ability to provide effective representation on the duty to accommodate members with disabilities, at the Local level. **This course is for PSAC union representatives (stewards, local officers, etc.) who have either:**

- training on and experience with representing members with disabilities and/or with the duty to accommodate; and/or
- some union training (or equivalent experience) directly related to representing members in the workplace.

By the end of the course, participants will:

Know when the duty to accommodate becomes applicable; the different processes involving workplace accommodation for members with disabilities i.e. Disability benefits, return to work (RTW), Workers' Compensation and injury on duty (IOD), health and safety provisions, and medical assessment;

Feel more confident when dealing with some of the challenges and key issues related to duty to accommodate members with disabilities (i.e.; mental health disabilities, multiple disabilities and other oppressions and harassment); they have the tools and information needed to effectively represent members requiring accommodation in the workplace;

Be Able To apply the legal definition of discrimination and accommodation in the workplace; identify proactive accommodation measures for the workplace; name various recourse mechanisms for members requiring accommodation.

Prerequisites:

- *PSAC members in good standing who have completed a Talking Union Basics (TUB) or Introduction to the PSAC for Indigenous Members (IUIM) course or equivalent.*
- *Preference will be given to applicants who have also completed a Grievance Handling (GH) course and/or a Duty to Accommodate (DTA) course or their equivalents and who have experience representing members in the workplace.*

Advanced Local Officers Training (ALOT) (4 days)

The ALOT is open to Stewards and Local Officers.

Are you a Local Officer and/or Steward? Are you interested in finding new ways to make your local executive function more efficiently? Do you want to gain tools and knowledge that will help you develop leadership, problem-solving and mobilization skills? Do you want to meet and network with other members from across the region and share skills and experiences? Then the Advanced Local Officers Training (ALOT) is the course for you!

“Strong and effective Locals are the building blocks of our Union. They are essential to having a mobilized membership. Education is critical to the development of strong and effective Locals.” National Board of Directors (NBoD)

The ALOT is an advanced, in-residence course that is geared specifically towards Local Officers and Stewards. The ALOT will provide you with an in-depth understanding of the tools necessary to run effective locals and provide you with the skills needed to be a successful union activist.

Course content includes the role of the local executive, strategic planning, local activities, local committees and terms of reference, communicating and recruiting, building an inclusive union, representation issues, local meetings, improving the rights and protections of union representatives and many other topics. Participants will also learn about social activism and how to involve members in the broader labour movement!

Prerequisites:

- *Talking Union Basics (TUB) or Introduction to the PSAC for Indigenous Members (IUIM) course or equivalent,*
- *Local Officer Training (introductory course), or*
- *equivalent experience*

Advanced Representation Training for Stewards (ARTS) (4 days)

If you are a PSAC Steward with some experience representing members with management and you want to improve and practice your representational skills, then this course is for you.

The PSAC Advanced Representation Training for Stewards is a four-day, advanced course, with a focus on representation. You will look at various routes for engaging members in helping them to resolve workplace issues. You will deepen your knowledge of the processes and legal framework of grievance handling and what is needed from you to support the PSAC's representation of members at all levels of the grievance process, up to arbitration/adjudication. Using case studies based on grievances that have been to arbitration, you will practice steps in the grievance process including; interviewing a member, fact-finding, meeting with management for initial problem-solving, drafting a grievance, preparing for a grievance hearing and representing a member at a grievance hearing.

Prerequisites:

- *Talking Union Basics (TUB) or Introduction to the PSAC for Indigenous Members (IUM) course or equivalent, **and***
- *The PSAC Grievance Handling (GH) course, **and***
- *Experience representing members with management.*

Advocacy and Representation on Workplace Racism (offered by national)

Participants will examine how to identify workplace racial discrimination and to advocate and represent when dealing with these situations; how to support racialized members and Indigenous members who are victims of racism and identify appropriate means of resolving workplace racial discrimination. Members should have some knowledge of grievance representation or human rights advocacy. (Two-day course)

Advocacy and Representation on Workplace Racism is a course that will equip you with the skills and competencies you need to represent, advocate for and recognize the intersecting realities of Indigenous, Black, Asian and other racialized PSAC members.

By applying a trauma-informed approach to representation, stewards, local officers, and union representatives will be better able to intervene effectively in workplace racial discrimination cases and better recognize racism in the workplace to support members.

Prerequisites:

- Have taken the two-day core Grievance Handling course or have equivalent grievance handling experience/training (e.g., Talking Union Basics).

- This course assumes that participants understand basic human rights concepts, grievance handling and the PSAC structure.
- This is not an entry level/basic level course

Unionism on Turtle Island (5 days)

Are you wanting to build meaningful, long-term relationships with and among Indigenous Peoples' inside and outside of our workplaces, with the aim of supporting decolonization of Indigenous Peoples' and increasing Indigenous Peoples' representation at work and in the union? Then we invite you to apply for the Unionism on Turtle Island 5-day course. This course is open to all PSAC members but is designed for non-Indigenous members who want to learn more about Indigenous issues and who want to work in solidarity with their Indigenous Peoples' in their locals, workplaces, and communities. This course begins the process of providing a basic awareness of Indigenous Peoples' history and culture as well as contemporary issues.

Prerequisites:

- *Talking Union Basics (TUB) or Introduction to the PSAC for Indigenous Members (IUM) course or equivalent*

Unions Work for Women (UWW) (4 Days)

60% of PSAC members are women and the numbers of women in leadership positions are increasing every year. This course will help participants continue the momentum of building real equality in our Union and in our communities. Participants will explore our herstory and understand the importance of a feminist analysis in ensuring our collective agreements, our union structures and our communities reflect our principles and our goals. We will also develop strategies to advance women's issues, both locally and globally.

This course is open to PSAC members who self-identify as a woman.

Prerequisites:

- *Talking Union Basics (TUB) or Introduction to the PSAC for Indigenous Members (IUM) course or equivalent,*
- *Proven activism within the women's community*

Union Leadership Development Program (ULDP) (offered once every three years)

- Are you an elected union leader or an informal leader who has the trust and respect of fellow union members?
- Are you committed to fighting for workers' rights, human rights and social justice?
- Do you want to develop a sustainable, collaborative leadership practice?
- Do you want to know how to lead from an anti-oppressive perspective?
- Do you want to learn skills that will help transform PSAC into a stronger, more effective, inclusive, better-organized, membership-based union?
- Can you to commit to a year-long, intensive education program and to applying what you learn to your union leadership in the years to come?

The PSAC's Union Leadership Development Program (ULDP) is an advanced, year-long leadership course for members who are ready to expand their leadership roles within the union.

For more than 35 years, the ULDP has been recognized as among the best comprehensive union leadership training programs in Canada. Many current national and regional PSAC leaders are graduates of the ULDP and can attest to the learning opportunities the program provides.

This program provides training for both formal union leaders in elected positions as well as informal union leaders who are respected in the workplace. Ideal candidates for the ULDP are leaders who demonstrate that they are in a position to work with others in our union and make meaningful change, and those who have the respect and trust of members.

The ULDP provides leaders at PSAC with training, tools and shared space to develop their individual and collective capacity to transform PSAC into a stronger, more effective, inclusive, better-organized, membership-based union.

The ULDP is delivered once every three years in each of the 7 PSAC Regions. The program has six **mandatory** steps which include three face-to-face gatherings and three remote steps.

Prerequisites:

- *Talking Union Basics (TUB), or*
- *Introduction to PSAC for Indigenous Members, or*
- *Equivalent experience through activism within PSAC and/or their community*

PSAC is committed to ensuring that participants in the ULDP represent the diversity of our union membership. We encourage applications from members who are Indigenous, racialized members, members with disabilities, women, 2SLGBTQIA+ members and members under the age of 36.