

January 18, 2018

Frequently Asked Questions- Part-Time Support Staff Certification

Q: I understand OPSEU has been certified by the Ontario Labour Relations Board as the bargaining agent for part-time support staff; what does this mean?

A: This means OPSEU has the exclusive right to represent all part-time support staff including student employees at Ontario's 24 colleges when it comes to negotiating working conditions for these employees.

Q: What happens now that OPSEU is certified to represent part-time support staff?

A: Following certification, the union gives written notice to negotiate the first collective agreement to the College Employer Council, which represents all 24 Ontario colleges. A collective agreement is a contract that outlines the working conditions of all the employees.

Q: How are we connected to the full time support staff who are already unionized by OPSEU?

A: The existing full-time support staff collective agreement does not apply to the part-time support staff, so a separate collective agreement must be negotiated.

Q: When is the first contract/collective agreement being negotiated?

A: OPSEU will provide written notice to negotiate the first contract/agreement to the College Employer Council, which represents all 24 Ontario Colleges. The parties shall start negotiations within 60 days of receiving written notice.

Q: Is it possible that we may go on strike?

A: The union has the legal right to strike if negotiations between the college and the union over the terms and conditions of employment are not successful. The colleges are committed to working with the union to complete those negotiations and avoid a work stoppage.

Q: I wasn't here when the vote took place, how does this affect me and do I have to join the union?

A: Whether part-time support staff signed a union membership card or not, voted or did not vote; all will be represented by OPSEU. You may decide to join the union or not join the union, regardless, the union will represent you and it is anticipated that you will need to pay union dues.

Q: I voted against the union, can I refuse to be represented by the union?

A: No, you are not able to opt out of union representation. Even if you did not vote for OPSEU and/or did not sign a membership card, you are included in the bargaining unit.

Q: Does this mean I have to pay union dues?

A: Yes, collective agreements invariably include an obligation for the employer to deduct union dues from employees' pay cheques and remit the dues to the union.

Q: How much do I have to pay as union fees and when will my union dues be deducted?

A: OPSEU will determine the amount of any union dues deduction and the timing will depend on a number of factors including when a collective agreement is implemented. We will advise staff when we have been advised of these details from OPSEU.

Q: Who is my union representative?

A: OPSEU now has the exclusive right to represent all part-time support staff when it comes to negotiating working conditions for these employees. We have not been informed of any local OPSEU representatives and would suggest that if you have specific questions around this topic that you direct them to the provincial OPSEU offices.

Q: Am I required to do anything?

A: No, you are not required to do anything at this time.

Q: Where can I get further information?

A: Humber College's [Human Resources website](#) will be updated with information as it becomes available. OPSEU's website can be found at <https://opseu.org/>.