

# OPSEU Local 527 Newsletter

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## Did you know?

Ontario Public Sector Employees Union (OPSEU) has more than 90,000 members. It's composed of (roughly) 45,000 Ontario Public Service (OPS) workers, 6,000 community college support staff, 6,500 community college faculty and 33,300 Broader Public Service workers (BPS).

### *In this*

#### *Issue:*

- Did you Know?:
- OPS Bargaining
- Grievances

OPSEU organizes its members by Locals, reflecting close occupational, workplace or geographical ties. Each Local may include more than one Unit, representing members from the same workplace.

There are three types of Locals:

- Single-Unit Locals, representing members from the same employer and location (e.g. Ministry, Department, Board, Agency, Commission)
- Multi-Unit Locals are groups of members from one employer who work at two or more locations.
- Composite Locals include members from more than one Ministry, Agency, Department etc, who work at more than one location.

For organizational purposes, OPSEU divides the province into seven Regions. The union Locals are grouped into these seven Regions, representing various parts of the Province. We are members of Region 5 (the '5' in 527), the Region with the largest membership. Each Region elects three representatives to the Executive Board. The Executive Board is the governing body of the Union when the annual Convention is not in session.

Every couple of years, from among the Members of the Board, the Convention delegates elect the OPSEU President (Leah Casselman was re-elected as President at the April 2001 convention) and the First Vice-President/Treasurer ("Smokey" Thomas was elected at the same convention).

## Local 527—Who we are

Local 527 is a "composite" multi-workplace OPSEU Local. Local 527 represents OPSEU members who work at 400 University Ave, 505 University Ave and 655 Bay St. Local 527 with (currently) 527 signed members and another 14 paying dues but not signed to membership cards, may be the only Local whose number reflects its membership status! Our Local is relatively large: Region 5 Locals range from Local 500 with 1,576 members to Local 591 with 10 members. About 15 per cent of the Region 5 locals have more than 500 members.

At 400 University, Local 527 includes OPS employees from the Ministry of Citizenship, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. Membership at 505 University includes OPS employees from the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB), the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal, and the

**Did you know?** (continued from Page One)

Human Rights Board of Inquiry, as well as BPS employees from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal (WSIAT). 655 Bay St. Members work for MOL. The Local's members are roughly 80% OPS and 20% BPS. Our members are covered by two collective agreements.

The Local has a five-person executive and 24 stewards. The Local's president, Rod Sawyer is from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. There are two Vice Presidents: John Carter is from the Ministry of Citizenship/Culture Tourism and Recreation and the MOL V-P position is currently vacant. Victoria Lernell, the Local's Treasurer, works at the Ministry of Labour and Patricia Fontyn, the Local's Secretary, works at WSIAT.

The Local has stewards for most floors it represents. There is always a need for additional stewards. Anyone interested should speak to another steward or a member of the local executive. Ideally, an individual will not act as steward for an entire floor, but for a work unit of ten to twelve people.

Contact list: More information on the Local's executive, stewards and committees (including Health and Safety and the Bargaining and Grievance Committees) is attached for your information.

**OPS Bargaining Steps**

- Essential Services Agreement expires 190 days before expiry of current Collective Agreement.
- Essential Services Bargaining
- Notice to Bargain Issues (Dec 18) (usually 90 days before Dec 31/01 expiry of Collective Agreement)
- Bargaining
- Appointment of Conciliator (either party can make an application to appoint a conciliator)
- Meeting with Conciliator
- If no settlement at Conciliation "No Board Report"
- 17 day countdown starts
- Mediation (not required, but usually happens)
- Essential Services Agreement (in place prior to a strike)
- Legal Strike or Lockout (a minimum of 17 days from issuing of No Board Report.)
- Bargaining and Ratification Vote
- New Collective Agreement

**STRIKE VOTE:** Earliest is 30 days before the expiry of the current Collective Agreement. A vote can take place after the expiry of the Collective Agreement, but must take place prior to a strike.

**LOCAL 527 GRIEVANCE REPORT UPDATE**

Your Local is fighting a number of Grievances on behalf of members. Since February, these include: 2 harassment grievances, 2 harassment / accommodation / discipline letter grievances, 1 accommodation grievance, 1 Systems Officer Review and 2 other classification grievances, and 3 Posting grievances involving a number of positions.

Upcoming Newsletters: More on OPS bargaining, Local Employee Relations Committees, Health and Safety issues, using e-mail to manage your manager and more! Plus Newsletter naming contest, details soon!