

# NOVA SCOTIA UNION OF PUBLIC & PRIVATE EMPLOYEES

## The NSUPE difference

### REPRESENTATION

#### NSUPE

- U** members can directly consult elected representatives in the workplace, fully-trained union business agents and lawyers
- U** business agents/lawyers deal with matters from the initial discussions with an employer through to arbitration and court appeals, ensuring continuity and a reasoned approach
- U** elected reps. are workers just like you, and are all volunteers who do not receive pay for their union work
- U** executives of locals, with the assistance of business agents, make decisions by majority consensus so that no one person can dictate or change policy

#### Most other unions

- Y** members seldom have direct access to fully-trained business agents or lawyers
- Y** business agents are often elected/appointed from the workplace and do not have relevant university or professional training
- Y** different representatives handle issues at different levels
- Y** elected reps. are often paid and are sometimes in it for the money rather than for the good of the members
- Y** presidents of locals often make decisions on their own that may not be well thought-through or documented to ensure consistency

### NEGOTIATIONS

#### NSUPE

- U** lawyers attend all contract negotiations and participate in drafting of contract language
- U** no contract can be signed unless the members vote to accept it
- U** negotiating teams are required under the NSUPE constitution to keep members informed throughout negotiations

#### Most other unions

- Y** lawyers are not involved in negotiations or in reviewing contract language before the contract is signed
- Y** the national union can step in and sign a contract without the membership even knowing about it
- Y** negotiations are carried out in secret so members do not have the opportunity for input along the way

Check out NSUPE's website: [www.nsupe.ca](http://www.nsupe.ca)

## DUES STRUCTURE

<b>NSUPE</b>	<b>Most other unions</b>
<p><b>U</b> dues are currently 1.35% of regular wages for all members</p>	<p><b>Y</b> dues are often 1.5 to 2.5% of regular salary, or are a flat rate which even part-time and low-paid members must pay</p>
<p><b>U</b> dues from all locals are pooled so that all members, no matter what size their local, have the same representation and access to arbitrations. NSUPE has never been unable to take an arbitration because of its cost</p>	<p><b>Y</b> locals are required to pay per capita taxes to national bodies, and still pay their own costs for negotiations and arbitrations. Sometimes locals are left without sufficient funds for arbitrations</p>
<p><b>U</b> union funds are safeguarded by NSUPE's Executive Council, a body composed of members from every local, that decides how dues can and can't be spent</p>	<p><b>Y</b> each local oversees its own funds, and that sometimes leads to dues being inappropriately spent</p>

## STRIKES

<b>NSUPE</b>	<b>Most other unions</b>
<p><b>U</b> for those who need it during a strike, NSUPE provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>!</b> free grocery vouchers</li> <li><b>!</b> free gas vouchers</li> <li><b>!</b> interest-free loans to cover expenses such as mortgages, rent, utilities and minimum credit-card payments. The loans are paid back following the strike</li> </ul> <p>NSUPE's total strike support often exceeds the maximum set by other unions</p>	<p><b>Y</b> many unions have massive strike funds but provide strike pay of a maximum set amount per week (eg. \$150 or \$200)</p>
<p><b>U</b> provided the employer agrees (and so far none haven't) NSUPE pays to cover members medical benefits while on strike</p>	<p><b>Y</b> members are left without benefits while on strikes</p>
<p><b>U</b> strikes can only be settled if the membership votes to do so</p>	<p><b>Y</b> national unions can step in and settle a strike without the local's or the members' agreement</p>

**Call NSUPE: 422-6055 or 422-9495**

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