

Provincial Executive Liaison Report

To: District 10 Council
From: Malini Leahy, Executive Officer

1. Report on the CLC Domestic Violence Roundtable – May 13, 2020

On May 13, 2020, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) convened a video call for unions across Canada to discuss domestic violence issues, to share actions taken by the CLC, and to share what unions are doing to address the increasing levels of domestic violence during COVID-19. The pandemic is amplifying issues across the country that were present in shelters, with employers and with unions prior to the pandemic.

In some places, reporting of violence is very high and shelters are full. However, in a majority of places, reporting of violence is low and shelters are empty. Many women are not sure if shelters are open and they are worried about contracting COVID-19 if they go to a shelter. Some shelters cannot reopen due to government regulations during this pandemic, as they are unable to adhere to the rule of providing one bathroom per resident.

What is the CLC doing?

The CLC continues to push the federal government for a National Action Plan on Domestic Violence. They have created a statement and people can sign on to that statement on their website, which calls for the creation and implementation of an action plan.

In addition, the CLC continues to focus on education. They have a variety of training courses, in conjunction with University of Western Ontario (UWO) and the shelter movement. Those courses include:

- A 2.5 day course for union representatives to recognize and respond to domestic violence should they become aware of it.
- A 2.5 day facilitators training course to be taken by union representatives, co-facilitated by the shelter movement.
- A 1-hour training module, to be taken by a representative who has already taken the 2.5 day facilitators course to become a local expert on domestic violence and to use that training to educate other members.

What is happening across Canada during COVID-19?

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, many of the training opportunities offered by the CLC and other affiliates are on hold because of social distancing and limited gathering rules.

The main issues that unions are struggling with or are working towards are:

- Do they wait for COVID-19 to end or try to deliver some kind of online training? The impact of not doing the training is great. The need to adapt for triggering is also important.
- How do we, as a union, provide support to women who are experiencing domestic violence during COVID? Domestic violence has gone in hiding, as many women are at home with their abusers and not able to talk to anyone privately.
- How do you measure domestic violence training outcomes and results with online training?

- Some unions have put together an open domestic violence forum to discuss training opportunities and have discussion on the issues.
- Access for service in rural areas is lacking and contact with those members is difficult.
- Post COVID-19 recovery needs to be feminist focused.
- Unions are putting together #MeToo workshops for men. Finding supportive allies is important.
- CLC is committed to putting online resources together for other affiliates to share.
- SEIU, Unifor has women's advocates. SEIU has not begun this program due to COVID-19 and although advocates are trained, there is uncertainty on how to roll out this program.
- Most unions are using the UWO training in some way.
- CUPE developed a domestic violence at work workshop for members and they have rolled out an online version of this training.
- Many affiliates are attempting to bargain domestic violence language.

2. National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

On May 26, 2020, the federal government announced that it is postponing the release of an action plan on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. A comprehensive plan was supposed to be released in June 2020, on the one-year anniversary of the release of the final report [Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)

Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Carolyn Bennett's explanation for the delay is that more work and consultation needs to take place with Indigenous partners, before a formal response to the report's 231 recommendations can be finalized. Minister Bennett also cited the COVID-19 pandemic as a cause for the set back in the government's timeline. The government has not provided any timeline for the release of the plan.

When questioned in the House of Commons, Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau also reiterated the COVID-19 pandemic response as a cause for the delay.

Former chief commissioner Marion Buller has publicly stated that governments have had ample time to get the work done by the promised date.

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is "appalled" by the decision and has called on the government to meet with them in an effort to move forward with action and present a comprehensive action plan.

Chief Connie Big Eagle of Ocean Man First Nation in Saskatchewan and chair of the Assembly of First Nations Women's Council has publicly stated support for the government's decision and said she does not want to see a rushed response.

OSSTF/FEESO has put out messages and statements about the MMIWG National Inquiry in the past supporting its work, as well as the work of the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation. To continue our advocacy on this issue, the Provincial Executive has requested input from the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Advisory Work Group on the advisability of sending a letter to the federal government to: 1) express OSSTF/FEESO's disappointment with the lack of action on the recommendations from the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and 2) call on the federal government to respond to the concerns and request from the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), and 3) request a definitive timeline for the release of the government's action plan.

3. PSUO-SSUO

The University of Ottawa filed on May 25, 2020 a request to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to force a “Final Offer Vote” on the PSUO-SSUO membership based on the university’s last tabled position on April 16, 2020.

The local PSUO-SSUO bargaining unit leaders and Provincial Executive and Provincial Office staff have been working to prepare a fight back campaign to encourage members to overwhelmingly vote NO to the Employer’s final offer and egregious move in negotiations.

This Final Offer includes significant strips such as:

- Benefit cut for the reimbursement of prescription drugs which is currently 100 % but now will be 80 % reimbursement with an out of pocket cap of 3000 \$;
- reductions to the supplementary employment benefits (SEB) plan for members who choose to take an extended parental or adoption leaves;
- not addressing the staffing needs to fill over 60 vacant positions which have been vacant an average of 480 days;
- removing the retirement allowance for new hires; and
- not being willing to ask for an exemption to salary increases under Bill 124 even though the Employer had tabled a total of 5.25 % over 3 years before Bill 124 was introduced in June 2019.

A Town Hall meeting was held on May 26 and an excellent participation was had by engaged PSUO-SSUO members.

The date of the electronic vote has not been set by the Ministry of Labour but we encourage all Districts and Bargaining Units to send letters of support to your colleagues D35 Ottawa.

4. OCT Video Conferencing Guidelines

On May 1, 2020 the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) released [Video Conferencing Guidelines](#), advice for teachers using video conferencing strategies during the pandemic. The guidelines are intended to provide best practices for teachers in maintaining professional boundaries and modeling professionalism while engaging in video conferencing with students and families.

While much of the advice from the OCT adheres to previous advice from the OCT and OSSTF/FEESO, the risks raised in the new College document underscore the need for members to use their professional judgment to evaluate the appropriate use of technology applicable to their practice. Live videos do make members more vulnerable to unpredictable audience behaviour. Members may consider using techniques such as asynchronous pre-recorded videos, where technology permits. Communicating with students and families can happen effectively without the use of video, and if using a platform that includes video, covering up or turning off student and teacher webcams can also be considered, where appropriate. Teacher members are strongly advised to avoid having one-on-one video sessions with students because of the inherent risk associated with being alone with a student. As per the OCT Professional Advisory [Professional Misconduct of a Sexual Nature](#), members should avoid *seeing [a student] in private situations. Ensure classroom and office doors are open, that the student is not physically isolated from others, and that your interactions can be observed.* OSSTF/FEESO believes the same principles apply in virtual formats.

OSSTF/FEESO issued D/BU #126 OCT Video Conferencing Guidelines to highlight that employer protocols differ from one school board to another; it is not possible to give consistent detailed advice to all members across the province. It is OSSTF/FEESO's position that members should exercise professional judgment on strategies and formats they use for curriculum delivery during this time in order to deliver the most effective and appropriate instruction. D/BU #126 also provides suggested strategies for virtual format implementation and classroom management. These suggestions can be considered for all members using online formats.

D/BU #105 Implications of the Use of Video Streaming Platforms with Students and COVID-19 Update #3 and #10 provide further context and advice to all education worker members using video communication with families and students.

All members should be reminded of their obligation to be aware of, and comply with, any advisories released by their own professional colleges.

5. Joint White Ribbon and OSSTF/FEESO Curriculum Resource on Preventing Sexual Exploitation

For many years, White Ribbon and OSSTF/FEESO have collaborated on curriculum resources focused on ending gender based violence and the sexual exploitation of women and girls.

White Ribbon is a thought-leader in gender-based violence prevention. Through research, reports and work with partners, we inspire changes in policy, practice and culture to address the root causes of gender-based violence. White Ribbon is primarily focused on educating and changing attitudes of men and boys to end violence against women.

OSSTF/FEESO has been working collaboratively on a Preventing Sexual Exploitation joint project with White Ribbon. The scope of this project included:

- Selecting members to write curriculum lessons
- Designing and developing digital resources
- Translating the digital resource to French
- Providing training for secondary educators on using the resource and
- Promoting digital resource to stakeholders.

Most of the project has been completed, but due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and school closures, piloting the curriculum has hit a snag. After several meetings between OSSTF/FEESO and White Ribbon, the advisory work group has decided against piloting the curriculum despite the Ministry of Education moving to distance learning. The reason for this is that there will be no support available to students who may be triggered while participating in the piloting due to distance learning. Currently, Tracey Marshall and Peter Bates sit on the advisory group representing OSSTF/FEESO.

Our next steps will instead take the form of virtual focus groups, undertaken by White Ribbon with educators to obtain the necessary feedback for the curriculum. Each focus group would include five to seven educators taking part in a 90-minute session. We will be working with White Ribbon to decide how the focus groups will be unveiled and which districts will participate. The timeline for the completion of this project has been extended to August 2020.

From the creation of these resources and the re-envisioning of this project to accommodate the changing education atmosphere due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, an extension to this project has been proposed and accepted by Public Safety Canada. White Ribbon has

again asked us to collaborate on this extension. The new project, *Preventing Online Sexual Exploitation Together*, has a proposed period of April 2020 to August 2022.

Using new digital assets created from the campaign, and adapted sexual exploitation prevention resources created by White Ribbon and OSSTF/FEESO, the project's goal is to engage vulnerable youth, parents and educators to reduce the fear of reporting. It will enhance their awareness in the prevention of online sexual exploitation, with a focus on interrupting the grooming process on various online platforms. Together with White Ribbon project partners, bilingual workshop and assemblies will be delivered in schools across Ontario, engaging thousands of youth. Workshops with educators and parents will be delivered in-person, with participating schools, and community partners.

6. Solidarity for Colombian Allies Against Illegal Surveillance of Citizens

OSSTF/FEESO has maintained a strong alliance with a number of Colombian labour and human rights organizations through a number of organizations, including Canadian labour affiliates and non-profit groups. Recently, OSSTF/FEESO received a request from Common Frontiers to write a letter to the Government of Colombia regarding recent human rights violations.

Common Frontiers forwarded this request for support and solidarity through the José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers' Collective Corporation (CCAJAR), an organization that OSSTF/FEESO representatives have met on a number of occasions both in Colombia and in Canada. Members of the CCAJAR have come to Canada in the past to speak with Members of Parliament on a number of human rights issues, often with the support of OSSTF/FEESO.

Most recently, the CCAJAR has identified concerns about Colombia's military and intelligence forces using illegal surveillance methods to monitor citizens and international guests, including journalists, human rights defenders, lawyers, politicians and other government officials. The CCAJAR believes that over 130 citizens were the target of illegal military surveillance operations in an 11-month span in 2019.

Past efforts by OSSTF/FEESO to shine a light on human rights violations in Colombia have been welcomed by Common Frontiers, Colombian education unions, Indigenous organizations and other international allies. OSSTF/FEESO will show our support and solidarity by sending a letter to the President of Colombia.

7. Update on OMERS Sponsors Corporation (SC) and the Administration Corporation (AC)

OMERS CEO Change – Effective June 1, 2020

Michael Latimer retires from his position as CEO of OMERS Administration Corporation effective May 29, 2020. Mr. Latimer spent two decades at OMERS, the last six years as CEO. At the May SC Board meeting, the Directors recognized Mr. Latimer's contributions to the success of OMERS throughout his career. In particular, the Board acknowledged Mr. Latimer's initiative and focus on One OMERS. The achievement of the One OMERS strategy and its approval by both boards was a true milestone in the history of the Plan. His focus on One OMERS went beyond the strategic plan. Bringing all of the OMERS offices in Toronto to a new space at 100 Adelaide Street West genuinely changing the dynamic of the organization. Bringing everyone together promoted a more effective organization and resulted in a more diverse and inclusive OMERS. Tone from the top matters, and as a Board, the SC recognized that they saw first-hand the positive results of Mr. Latimer's leadership style. And last, though by no means least, OMERS benefitted from the strong investment returns that OMERS has achieved during his tenure. His focus on quality

investments and building a strong global team has put OMERS in as good a position as possible to deal with the serious challenges OMERS will face in the future.

Blake Hutchison will take on the role of CEO effective June 1, 2020. Mr. Hutchison assumes his new role, having been with OMERS for ten years. The first eight and a half years he served as the CEO of Oxford Properties (an OMERS company) where he grew this business from being primarily a domestic operation to becoming a \$50 billion, truly global leader in the real estate industry that returned an average of 12.5% during his tenure. Since April 2018, he has been the President and Chief Pension Officer at OMERS and has helped transform the Pension Services area within the organization, while carrying out responsibility for Strategy, Operations, Communications, Government Relations, Legal, and Data & Technology. Early this year, under his team's leadership, OMERS approved a 2025 and 2030 Strategy, which provides clear direction for the next five-and ten-year period. Mr. Hutchison has been a successful CEO for over 20 years and has served on more than 25 Boards and Committees of both public and private entities. He is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario, London School of Economics and Columbia University.

The transition from Mr. Latimer to Mr. Hutchison commenced in early January 2020, consistent with the OMERS succession plan, and OMERS has experienced a seamless transition over this period of time.

Update – Proposed Plan Changes

As reported in detail in the April Provincial Council Report, the SC Board is considering two Plan design changes for the OMERS Primary Pension Plan. The proposed changes were identified through the SC's annual decision-making process. The final decision will be made by the SC Board on June 24, 2020. Specifically, the two Plan Design changes are:

Expanding Non-Full Time – Effective January 1, 2023, remove the current eligibility rules so that non-full time employees can voluntarily elect to join the Plan at any time.

Shared Risk Indexing – Give the SC Board the ability to reduce future inflation increases on benefits earned after December 31, 2022. A decision to reduce inflation increases would require a 2/3 majority vote by the SC Board. A recommendation to make a change to the inflation increases would be based on the SC's annual valuation process and assessment of the Plan's funding status and financial viability.

For more information on the changes under consideration, visit <https://omersfuture.ca/>

New – COVID-19 Plan Design Amendments

As part of our ongoing support of members through the exceptional circumstances presented by COVID-19, three additional temporary Plan amendments have been proposed for consideration by the SC Board. These amendments are:

Extend leave purchase deadlines - For members who return from a leave of absence in 2020 or 2021, extend the deadline to complete the leave purchase by one year (i.e., extending to December 31, 2022, or December 31, 2023, depending on the return date).

Reduce or eliminate 36-month employment requirement for purchases of periods of reduced pay - Amend the Plan to align with potential amendments to the *Income Tax Regulations* that may reduce or eliminate the 36-month employment requirement for purchases of periods of reduced pay.

Permit temporary layoffs as purchasable service - Allow members to establish as credited service periods of absence due to temporary layoff that were initiated in 2020 or 2021, at two times contributions (member only).

The SC Board is considering these changes to support members impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These temporary changes will not affect contribution levels or funding of the Plan. You can find more information about each amendment below, along with answers to questions by visiting <https://www.omerssc.com/Sponsors/2020-Plan-Review>.

OMERS COVID-19 – Information for Members

OMERS recognizes the challenging and uncertain times that Plan members and employers are experiencing during the COVID-19 pandemic. In an effort to provide relevant and up-to-date information about the impact to the OMERS Plan, OMERS continues to publish updates and FAQs on their website, both for members, and for employers.

The member information page can be found at – [omers.com/Members/COVID-19-Update](https://www.omers.com/Members/COVID-19-Update).

The employer information page can be found at – [omers.com/Employers/COVID-19-Update](https://www.omers.com/Employers/COVID-19-Update).

8. Recent D/BU Memoranda

- 144 - Ontario Human Rights Commission COVID-19 Advice
- 142 - Advice for Local Leaders on School Re-Opening
- 141 - Regional Moderators for PSC Regionals - Statement of Interest
- 140 - York University Research Study - Teachers' Experiences of a Mass Migration to Online Pedagogy
- 139 - Insurance Policies
- 138 - Selection of Election Organizers
- 137 - Strategic Action Plan Submissions 2021-2022
- 136 - OSSTF/FEESO Condemns all Acts of Anti-Black Hate, Racism and Discrimination
- 135 - Ministry Releases 2020 Summer School & School Learning Opportunities Information
- 134 - Power of Many Action - June 3, 2020
- 133 - Additional Guidance on Special Education and Mental Health
- 132 - Personal Property Retrieval Guidelines for Schools
- 131 - OSSTF Supports OMERS Proposed Plan Changes
- 130 - Additional Assessment and Report Clarification and Guidance
- 129 - Attending Remote Provincial Council as an Observer - June 5, 2020
- 128 - 37th Annual Injured Workers Day - June 1, 2020
- 127 - Transfer to QECO Certification Now Complete
- 126 - OCT Video Conferencing Guidelines
- 125 - Canadian Teachers' Federation - Pandemic Research Study
- 124 - OFL Solidarity and Pride Nominations
- 123 - Voluntary Redeployment Portal