

the **OPSEU** report



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It's your future; be informed

You have legal rights

The Ontario government has passed a law that will make the ORC an "operational enterprise agency" operating under the Ontario Labour Relations Act.

As soon as that law is proclaimed (no sooner than May 1), ORC staff will cease being employees of the Ontario government. You will lose your union representation, and you will lose all the protection and benefits of your collective agreement.

That's the bad news. The good news is that you have options. It is your legal right to join a union.

You can retain OPSEU and continue with effective representation, but it is not automatic. You have to take the initiative to sign a union card. That gives

Come to a meeting

5:15 p.m.

Wednesday, March 29

OPSEU Regional Office

525 University, Suite 700
(University at Elm)

OPSEU the legal authority to act on your behalf.

In this period of uncertainty, you can act to make sure you have a strong union looking out for your interests.

Why sign a card now?

To give you greatest protection, OPSEU needs to be able to file an application for certification with the Ontario Labour Relations Board immediately after the government initiates the

transfer to the new agency. As soon as that application is filed, your working conditions are frozen until we can negotiate a new collective agreement. We need your signed cards to show the labour board the union has solid support.

Here's the process:

1. ORC staff sign OPSEU cards.
2. The government transfers you to the new agency.
3. OPSEU files for certification.
4. Working conditions are frozen.
5. The Ontario Labour Relations Board holds a vote to confirm OPSEU as your official bargaining agent.
6. We enter negotiations for a new collective agreement to replace the one you had in the OPS.

Please see other side

It's your future; be informed

If you choose not to sign a card now, you leave the new employer free to make all kinds of changes in your working conditions as soon as the transfer takes place. The only rights you have are the ones spelled out in the Employment Standards Act. Compare your rights as a union member and the rights of a non-union workplace on the attached blue sheet.

Why OPSEU?

We're convinced you are best served by signing with OPSEU for several reasons.

1 You know OPSEU and OPSEU knows you. OPSEU has been speaking up for ORC employees for a long time – in the workplace, at the ministry level, and to the broader community. Most recently OPSEU called for a full inquiry into questionable land dealings by the corporation. OPSEU President Leah Casselman has written to the provincial auditor supporting his plan to audit ORC's land transactions. OPSEU understands the kind of work you do, and has the resources to represent your interests in a wide variety of forums.

2 OPSEU knows the broader public service. Of OPSEU's 100,000 members, about 40,000 work in this sector, governed by the Ontario Labour Relations Act. This includes several other agencies which have been divested from the OPS. We know the territory, the legislation,

the people who work with it and administer it, and the strategies for effective representation.

3 Your new collective agreement will be based on the priorities you and your colleagues set in demand setting, and will reflect your support and commitment to the bargaining team you will elect. It takes two sides to produce a collective agreement, and no union has control over the management side. OPSEU has the staff, skills and experience to assist your elected bargaining team to achieve the best possible contract.

'Our best protection'

A message from Jack Haft, chair of OPSEU's ORC employer-employee relations committee.

You have the legal right to join a union.

That right is spelled out in the Ontario Labour Relations Act. It is a question of due process.

If we want to have control over our working relationship with the new ORC, the union is the only way to go.

OPSEU has been our bargaining agent for a long time. In my experience with many members of the union staff, I have found them to be professional and responsive.

We have had on-going support from job security staff, to make sure we have everything that our OPS agreement provides during the transition. Most recently we have worked with communica-

4 AMAPCEO makes a big deal of having lower dues, but you really do get what you pay for. OPSEU has the specialized staff to give you campaign and communication support if you need it, as well as to argue grievances to defend your new contract. Its top-notch educational program will give you the skills to run a strong union local and to develop a respectful and professional relationship with your management. In the broader public service, this is even more important.

tions officers and organizing staff, so everyone here has the information they need to make a wise and informed decision.

By choosing to stay with OPSEU, we will have on-going support from staff representatives, pension and benefits experts and negotiators.

The one certainty about ORC right now is that things are going to change. Our best protection through this period of change is to maintain our relationship with OPSEU.

I urge as many of you as possible to come to the information meeting at 5:15 p.m., Wednesday, March 29 at the OPSEU Regional Office, 525 University Avenue – Suite 700.

It's an opportunity to get answers to your questions, and to see for yourself the resources that OPSEU can make available.

Authorized for distribution:  Leah Casselman, President



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