

CUTS HURT US ALL



JOIN US IN THE FIGHT FOR QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES

Questions and Answers for July 14

A guide for OPSEU members in the Ontario Public Service

1. What is happening today?

July 14 is the beginning of the biggest cut to public services in Ontario since the layoffs in the 1990s under the Mike Harris Conservatives. The McGuinty government will start cutting 1,900 jobs this summer. 274 layoffs were issued today. This is a sad day for the affected employees and their families. More layoff notices will be come in the weeks ahead.

2. What will be the impact on my community?

We'll know more when the layoffs are announced, but one thing is for sure: A cut to jobs is a cut to services. This could mean:

- reduced enforcement of laws and regulations that keep us safe and healthy;
- more programs and services that are delivered less frequently or not at all;
- increased wait times for government forms and legal documents;
- higher user fees to buy privatized services; and
- less buying power in communities where the job cuts happen.

3. The government says cutting jobs will help reduce the \$16.3 billion provincial deficit.

The amount of money saved will be minimal compared to the value of the services lost. Do we really want unsafe drinking water? Contaminated meat? Security breaches of your personal information? Less help for people with disabilities?

If Dalton McGuinty really cared about the deficit, he wouldn't be shelling out \$2.4 billion a year in corporate income tax cuts. That money is better spent on the jobs and services people and communities need.

4. Don't we need to get government spending under control?

It is under control. For the last five years Ontario has spent less compared to the size of its economy than any other province except Alberta and Saskatchewan.

The recession of 2008-09 was global. It was not caused by Ontario government spending. Ontario's budget was balanced for three years before the recession hit.

Also, much of the current deficit is the result of the McGuinty government's effort to build infrastructure Ontario needs. That money is creating jobs, and history has shown that the surest route to pay down the deficits is through job creation. When the economy grows, deficits take care of themselves.

5. The problem is that public sector workers' jobs are too cushy, and their pay, benefits and pensions are too high.

Some people resent other people's good jobs, and here's why: These days, there aren't enough good jobs around. People should ask themselves why.

For 30 years, corporations have told us that if we go along with free trade deals, privatization, cuts to public services and low corporate taxes, we'll have good jobs and prosperity for everyone. It hasn't happened. Instead of investing in jobs and better wages for their own workers, Canadian corporations are sitting on **\$471 billion** in cash. Instead of prosperity for all, we've got sky-high salaries for corporate executives – and stagnant wages for everyone else.

We need better jobs in the private sector, not worse ones in the public sector.
We need good jobs for all.