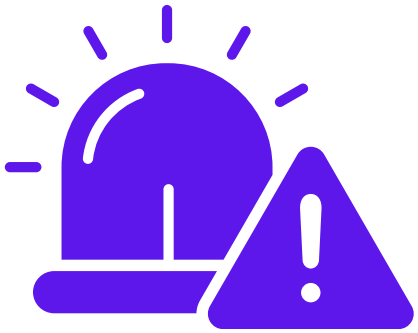
WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Liveable wages and strong social services are Worth Fighting For

Social services across the province are at a breaking point.



- Our members are burdened with ever increasing workload, stress, and burnout at work.
- Our wages are too low. Many members work multiple jobs. Housing and food insecurity is common.
- Retention and recruitment are consistent challenges.
- Cuts, layoffs, and contracting out have reduced CUPE positions and reduced services for our communities.

- The social service workers impacted are predominantly women and often racialized workers. They are the backbone of our communities, yet they are being left behind once again.
- While private agencies have profited, the most vulnerable people in our communities are waiting longer for services or falling through the cracks.

The Ford government and employers must be held accountable.

- Since the Ford government was elected in 2018, per person funding for social services has been cut by 16.4%. This has left a $3.9 billion hole in the budget every year.
- In 2019, the Ford government's Bill 124 capped wages at 1% for 3 years, which has been deemed unconstitutional. While other sectors have been paid for lost wages, most social services workers are still waiting for the remedy we are owed.
- The understaffing crisis is not solely caused by the provincial government's lack of leadership. Employers have also failed to push for adequate funding, fair wages and healthy staffing for frontline services.

Worth Fighting For campaign demands

1. **Reverse funding cuts and adequately fund social services in our communities.**

2. **Fund wage increases for social services workers to ensure liveable wages and address wage suppression due to Bill 124.**

Five critical steps for local unions to take action

To win, it will take building pressure on employers in our workplaces and MPPs in our broader communities through member action. Your local can take action to pressure decision makers.

1 Win local executive committment to the campaign

- Review the Worth Fighting For campaign with your executive.
- Discuss threats and opportunities, including the impacts of underfunding.
- Get commitment from your executive to take steps to achieve assertive labour relations and an agitational stance against the employer's failures.
- Discuss the benefits of pooling together your bargaining power with other locals through coordinated bargaining timelines. By slowing down or speeding up our bargaining timelines to match others, we have an opportunity to create a crisis for the Ford government.

2 Make a plan to engage members and increase two-way communication

- Make a plan to bring the union to the members at the workplace level, rather than wait for members to come to union events.
- Prepare an up-to-date membership contact list divided by work location and shift.
- Increase two-way communication with members, for example, through one-on-one conversations. Agitational bulletins that validate members' experiences and expose the employers' failures can help to get conversations going.

3 Organize member action in the workplace

- Organized member activity at the workplace level on workload, health and safety, or other workplace issues builds pressure on the employer. It puts our union on the path to a credible threat of a strike.
- Consider what collective agreement or legislative rights members may be overlooking, and encourage them to speak up and to assert their rights.
- Holding your employer accountable not only benefits your local's capacity, it also shows a fighting stance behind provincial campaign demands.

4 Build political pressure on MPPs

- Show up to your MPPs office and ask to meet with them unannounced or schedule a meeting with your local MPPs.
- Ask them to publicly support funding for strong social services and liveable wages for our members.
- It is important to convey to local elected representatives that we will hold them accountable in speaking up for their communities.

5 Strengthen relationships with allies

- Meet with allies, beginning with other unions. Explore how you can work together to build pressure on your employers and local MPPs.

Our future is at stake.

Our members deserve to thrive, not just survive, and our service users deserve strong, dependable services. Your local is not alone. When we build power together, it is possible to achieve results.

If you have questions about the Worth Fighting For campaign or are looking for supports and resources to implement these steps, contact your National Representative and your Social Services Workers' Coordinating Committee.