

# Planning an Effective Workplace Action



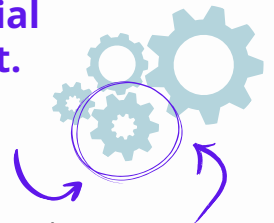
The purpose of CUPE's Regional Days of Workplace Action in March is to visibly demonstrate to employers that social services workers are unwilling to endure poverty wages and unfair working conditions.

Before you begin planning, review the [5-Step Campaign Guide](#) for Local Unions at [cupe.on.ca/worthfightingfor](https://cupe.on.ca/worthfightingfor)



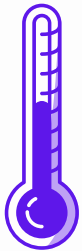
The first step is to win local executive commitment to the campaign. This enables shared ownership and effective, union-driven action at the workplace.

**Pressuring employers is a necessary step in sending a message to the provincial government.**



## Workplace action ideas

- ▶ Presenting a unity letter that at least 60% of your members signed by hand.
- ▶ Organizing members to wear buttons or stickers that call for liveable wages and healthy workloads.
- ▶ Organizing members to email the Board of Directors.
- ▶ Open letter from the local executive to the board of directors highlighting negative impacts on service delivery and sharing the reality from the frontline, asking the employer to publicly call for funding. Copy the entire membership and publish the letter.
- ▶ Parking lot "unhappy hour" after work holding handmade signs and take a group picture.
- ▶ Asserting union rights and members' rights in the workplace. This is not limited to grievances.



The important thing is that your action is about workplace issues that members care about, has a visible and collective energy, and directs pressure against the employer.

## Visible workplace actions hold employers accountable and show a fighting stance behind provincial campaign demands



Local executives hold employers accountable all the time, but this activity is not always visible to members or to provincial decision-makers.








Effective union campaigns require organizing members into action at or close to the workplace in a way that pressures the employer.



Organizing opposition to your employer's harmful actions or inaction can also create momentum that reaches beyond the workplace, building union power to impact important decisions such as funding for public services.

# 10 Steps for Local Executives Planning a Workplace Action

1. Create a planning team with members of the local executive and other leaders, including those who represent the diversity of the workplace.
2. Identify workplace issues that are widely and deeply felt by members. For example, low wages, poor recruitment and retention, health and safety, unhealthy workloads, contracting out, layoffs, and cuts. 
3. Publish an agitational union bulletin on the topic(s) to visibly distribute in the workplace, setting the stage for the action.
4. Establish clear goals for your workplace action. Choose tactics that:
  - Empower and boost members' confidence. 
  - Pressure the employer, rather than appearing 'cozy' or conciliatory.
  - Express solidarity and champion the needs of the communities relying on the services you provide.
5. Invite input from active members before finalizing your workplace action. Shared ownership of the action is necessary to be effective.
6. Learn from previous workplace actions at your local. What worked well? What challenges do you need to address?
7. Organize member participation:
  - Make a plan for one-on-one communication with members to confirm their participation in the action. Through workplace leaders, track progress by work site, department, or shift. 
  - Develop a short and consistent message on the purpose of the action and why it's necessary for members to participate. Share this with your outreach team.
  - Through your outreach team, gather an accurate estimate of the number of participants you can expect.
8. Recruit members and delegate assignments for successful logistical coordination of the action. Consider a one-page checklist with phone numbers of the action team. A group chat can also be useful. Assignments include:
  - Sign up duty to track member participation.
  - Signage/material distribution by building or work area. 
  - Photography and video. 
9. After the action, circulate a follow-up workplace bulletin to provide members with pride and hope, and share next steps.
10. Debrief the action as a team to assess the strengths and challenges of your action.

**By taking action together that pressures employers, we can build power for provincial funding for social services and liveable wages.**