



## **Canadian Union of Public Employees**

**Local 3903**

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**This manual can be found online at:**

<https://cupe3903.org/members-manual-and-handbooks/>

### **Credits:**

This member's manual was prepared by the Executive Committee and staff, building on the work of volunteers from the 2014-15 and 2017-18 Bargaining Mobilization Committees and the previous efforts of CUPE 3903 members.

# Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that this space is the traditional territory of Tkaronto (where there are trees standing in the water), a gathering place for the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Huron Wendat, and many other nations that travelled and travel through this territory.

Tkaronto is part of treaty 13 and the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant. The dish is Southern Ontario, a land which we all share and eat out of together. This means that we must care for the land and all creatures residing on it, and that we need to limit what we take from the land so that there is enough for everyone else. Reconciliation requires more than just words — it requires education and action.

*Other ways to get involved:*

- Kanyen'keha:ka Culture, Language, Indigenous Food Sovereignty, and Land-Based Education:  
<https://www.onedishproject.com/>
- Native Land: <https://native-land.ca/>
- Toronto Indigenous Harm Reduction:  
<https://www.torontoindigenoushr.com/>
- Indian Residential School Survivors Society:  
<https://www.irsss.ca/donate>
- Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs:  
<https://www.instagram.com/gitanyowchiefs/>

“[i]t’s one thing to say, ‘Hey, we’re on the territory of the Mississaugas or the Anishinaabek and the Haudenosaunee.’ It’s another thing to say, ‘We’re on the territory of the Anishinaabek and the Haudenosaunee and here’s what that compels me to do.’” – Hayden King, *Toronto Metropolitan University*

# Equality Statement

Union solidarity is based on the principle that union members are equal and deserve mutual respect at all levels. Any behaviour that creates conflict prevents us from working together to strengthen our union.

As unionists, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate any behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Discriminatory speech or conduct, which is racist, sexist, transphobic, or homophobic hurts and thereby divides us. So too, does discrimination on the basis of ability, age, class, religion, language and ethnic origin.

Sometimes discrimination takes the form of harassment. Harassment means using real or perceived power to abuse, devalue or humiliate. Harassment should not be treated as a joke. The uneasiness and resentment that it creates are not feelings that help us grow as a union.

Discrimination and harassment focus on characteristics that make us different; and they reduce our capacity to work together on shared concerns such as decent wages, safe working conditions, and justice in the workplace, society, and in our union.

CUPE's policies and practices must reflect our commitment to equality. Members, staff and elected officers must be mindful that all persons deserve dignity, equality and respect.

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## PART 1: WELCOME TO CUPE 3903



### **You are a worker, and CUPE 3903 is your Union!**

CUPE 3903 represents contract faculty, teaching assistants, graduate assistants, part-time librarians and archivists, and workers at the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness at York University. CUPE 3903 is a local of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), a national union whose membership exceeds 600,000 workers—making it Canada's largest union.

CUPE 3903 is your union. As a union, we continuously struggle to improve the working conditions of our approximately 3,000 members. York promotes the funding package it offers to graduate students, and relies heavily on

the precarious work of our members to deliver courses and other services. Yet our members have had to fight hard against the York administration to win the wages, rights, and benefits in our Collective Agreement (CA).

The key distinction between unionized and non-unionized workplaces is the protection provided by the Collective Agreement (CA) between workers and their employer. In non-unionized workplaces, employees have limited protection and recourse against mistreatment by employers, who can arbitrarily change the terms and conditions of employment.

In a unionized environment, workers have protections and recourse via written and legally binding guarantees in our CA. Being a member of CUPE 3903 protects your wages and benefits, and provides a certain measure of job security. If our employer breaches any provision in our contract, we can take action through the established grievance procedure outlined in the CA. Every year, we file dozens of grievances to defend members' rights and working conditions.

In the last five rounds of bargaining, we have won tremendous gains in the following areas:

- In our most recent bargaining and strike, we won a new \$25,000/year fund to support racialized members experiencing racial discrimination, harassment, and violence; this is a proposal we have fought for unsuccessfully in previous rounds of bargaining!
- We also in our most recent bargaining and strike won a new Mentoring Fund of \$10,000/year to provide mentoring, professional development, and other supports among the units, especially for employment equity groups.
- Guaranteed funding packages for graduate student workers, including protection from tuition increases.
- Additional funds and protections for international graduate students.
- Research leaves for contract faculty.
- One of the strongest benefits packages in the university sector: including vision, drug, dental, and paramedical

health benefits, with an additional extended health benefits fund, a trans fund, and a childcare fund.

- Inclusive employment equity language alongside strong protections from harassment and discrimination in the workplace.
- Job security programs for contract faculty.

In 2016, we won the first Collective Agreement for part-time librarians and archivists at York, which substantially increased their pay and provided them with access to a wide range of benefits. In 2018, we won a revitalized job security program for long-serving contract faculty (Special Renewal Contracts) and modest improvements for graduate student members. In our most recent bargaining and strike, we won retroactive pay (for both wages and GIA) despite an expired wage re-opener, and ensured eligibility for everyone who held a contract during the 2020-2023 collective agreement, regardless of current status, thus setting a new higher floor for future wage gains and fighting back the Employer's push to restrict the eligibility!

In spring of 2024, we also gained our newest unit, Unit 5, which consists of all employees at the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, except supervisors.

Because of the collective work we do and the resounding strength of our members' contributions, our Collective Agreements set the national standard in the higher education sector. With your help, we continue to work to improve our contract in each round of collective bargaining.

**If you think you're being treated in a way that violates your rights, contact the Union. We can help—that's what we do!**

In addition to protecting your rights as workers, CUPE 3903 is active in the wider labour movement and supports other social justice struggles. We have a number of active social justice groups that you are encouraged to join (see Part 2). Our strength as a union comes from the active commitment to social justice—both in the workplace and beyond—of our members.

## **CUPE 3903 Believes in Social Unionism**

CUPE 3903 engages in social unionism. We focus on mobilizing, organizing, and making the world better even beyond our workplaces. This means fostering meaningful ties to our communities and championing social justice. Our union is member-driven, and that means that as a member, you're empowered to have a say in everything that happens. You can vote at meetings, access transparent information about whatever is happening, and build the union you want to see. Being in a social union means being a part of something bigger and working with your fellow members toward real change.

## Structure of CUPE 3903

According to CUPE 3903's By-Laws, the structure of the local shall consist of the following:

- a) the Membership;
- b) the Executive;
- c) Stewards' Council;
- d) Caucuses;
- e) Working groups; and
- f) Committees.

This section describes the two key decision-making bodies in the union, while the next section deals with the organizational structure of the membership.

### The Membership

CUPE 3903 is a member-driven union. As such, the membership is the highest decision-making body in the Local. Typically, a **General Membership Meeting (GMM)** is held at least once a month. The Executive Committee may also call (or 25 members can petition the Executive to call) a Special GMM (SGMM). At SGMMs, only items associated with the reason for the meeting (e.g. bargaining updates, bylaw changes) may be discussed. Also, the **Annual General Membership Meeting (AGM)** is held in March. All members are encouraged to attend to learn about, question, discuss, and participate in the activities of the Local. Membership meetings are a great way to get informed about the issues we face and how to get involved with any of the committees or



working groups that are active within the union. Check our website, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter/X plus subscribe to the newsletter to keep up-to-date with meetings and events.

## **The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee is elected annually by the membership to execute the decisions made by members at regular monthly GMMs, and to handle the day-to-day activities of the union. There are currently 15 positions on the Executive Committee, seven of which are designated for particular units (one Vice President for each of Units 1, 2, and 3, and one Lead Steward from each of Units 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) so as to ensure adequate and balanced representation and mobilization across the diverse range of workers CUPE 3903 represents. While they are unit specific positions, the VPs and Lead Stewards work for the entire union, and not just their particular unit. The Executive Committee meets regularly. **These meetings are open to all members of the union** and you are encouraged to attend. Check out our website or event calendar ([cupe3903.org/calendar/](https://cupe3903.org/calendar/)) to see when the next meeting is taking place.

See “Part 2: Getting Involved” to learn about the other various councils, working groups, committees, and caucuses in the union

## **Five Units – One Union**

Although CUPE 3903 is a single union local, we actually have multiple separate Collective Agreements (CA), one for each of the worker groups (or “units”) we represent. Each CA includes what is called a “scope clause”; this clause defines which employees are covered by each agreement.

Two basic principles guide the way our CAs divide us into units: 1) the type of work we are contracted for, and 2) our student status (if any) at the time of receiving the contract. A worker is only ever in one Unit at a time, but because it is common for people's type of work and student status to

change from year to year, it is possible for someone to switch Units over time.

## **Which Unit am I in?**

- **Unit 1:** Full-time graduate students with a teaching contract (note that teaching includes demonstrating, tutoring, and marking).
- **Unit 2:** Members who have a teaching contract and are not full-time graduate students, often referred to as contract faculty or sessional instructors.
- **Unit 3:** Full-time graduate students with a Graduate Assistantship or a Research Assistantship that is not predominantly for the purpose of advancing their progress towards fulfillment of their program and degree requirements.
- **Unit 4:** Part-time librarians and archivists.
- **Unit 5:** All workers at the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, except supervisors.

There are many differences between units: pay rates, summer work guarantees, available funding, etc. See Part 3: Collective Agreements for more details.

## **Post-Contract Political Membership**

Any member whose employment terminates may maintain their membership for 12 months following the end of their last contract. In this 12 month period they are “political members.”

## **CUPE 3903 Union Dues**

As you will notice on your monthly pay stub, union dues are subtracted from your pay on a monthly basis. The benefits of union dues outweigh the costs! Being a member of the union not only guarantees your rights as a worker, but also provides you with wage protections, access to health, dental, and vision care, a drug plan, childcare subsidies, research and conference travel funds, leaves related to sickness, childcare, bereavement, and more.

Dues help the union to mobilize the membership and fight for the rights and interests of members, including legal costs for

grievance mediations, arbitration hearings, and overall legal advice. Our staff members who provide day-to-day support to the Executive Committee and who provide assistance to rank-and-file members in cases of grievances and other matters are paid from union dues. Paying union dues is a big part of what keeps the essential services that the union provides consistently available to support members, no matter what they're facing in the workplace.

If the membership decides to take strike action in support of its bargaining demands our strike fund, maintained by dues, is essential for running an effective strike. Our dues mean we can also provide limited support to various social justice groups and organizations working toward changing the society in which we live for the betterment of workers and our communities. Dues are the financial foundation that allows your union to do all the things it is able to do, from supporting members to supporting our communities.

## **Our Office**

CUPE 3903's office is located on the Keele Campus, at 143 Atkinson (96 The Pond Road), and is usually open from 9-5 on weekdays. Members are always welcome to stop by and ask questions, access resources, or just hang out. There are various amenities available to members, such as coffee, and tea, and a microwave and fridge members may use. You can find a list of what executives to expect in the office at the bottom of each weekly newsletter. **Union spaces are your spaces; you are always welcome.**

## **Deadlines at a Glance**

### **September**

1st - Student Financial Profile opens for Fall/Winter term bursaries (Units 1 & 3)

10th - Professional Development Fund (all units)

30th - PhD Completion Fund (Unit 1)

30th – Childcare Fund, Trans Fund and Sexual Assault  
Survivor  
Support Fund (all units)

### **November**

1<sup>st</sup> - Blanket Application Deadline for Unit 2 members in the  
CSSP  
10th - Research Cost Fund (Units 1 & 3)

### **January**

10th -  
Professional Development Fund (all units)  
31st - Blanket Application Deadline (Units 1 & 2)  
31st - Student Financial Profile closes for Fall/Winter term  
bursaries (Unit 1 & 3)  
31st - PhD Completion Fund (Unit 1)  
31st - Childcare Fund, Trans Fund and Sexual Assault  
Survivor  
Support Fund (all units)

### **February**

1st - Teaching Development Fund (Unit 2)

### **March**

1st - Conference Travel Fund (Unit 2)  
1st - Research Grants Fund (Unit 2) (major/minor grants)  
10th - Research Costs Fund (Units 1 & 3)

### **May**

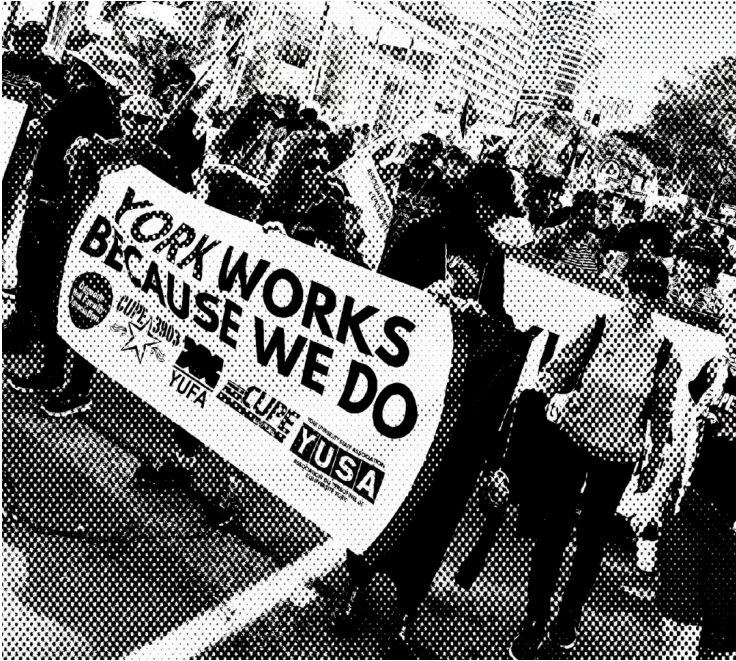
1st - Student Financial Profile opens for summer term  
bursaries (Units 1 & 3) and Masters Bursary Funds (Unit 1)  
31st - PhD Completion Fund (Unit 1)  
31st - Student Financial Profile closes for Summer term  
bursaries (Unit 1 & 3)  
31st - Childcare Fund, Trans Fund, and Sexual Assault  
Survivor  
Support Fund (all units)

### **June**

1st - Conference Travel Fund (Unit 2) (travel costs only)  
3rd - Conference Travel Fund (Unit 2)  
3rd - Research Grants Fund (Unit 2) (minor grants only)  
10th - Professional Development Fund (all units)

**August**

31st - Tuition Costs Fund (Units 1 & 2)



## PART 2: GETTING INVOLVED

Committees, caucuses, and working groups are not only very important to our local's success, but are also a great opportunity to meet other active union members with interests similar to yours! The people on the committees help enforce and implement the gains we have made in collective bargaining. Committee work varies from tasks such as overseeing the disbursement of various funds to mobilizing for collective actions. See below for a detailed list of all of our many committees, caucuses and working groups, and contact them or a steward to find out how you can get involved!

## Stewards' Council

Stewards' Council is the political mobilization branch of the union, where stewards and members of each department and hiring unit come together at least once a month to discuss issues, plan political actions, and identify grievances.

Stewards play an important role by communicating information to members and mobilizing within their departments, both around York specific issues and in relation to other social justice struggles in the community as a whole. Each university department or hiring unit should have at least one steward who acts as a liaison to the rest of the union, and should be trained with the current Collective Agreements to assist members in their departments. If you don't have a steward, why not become one? Being a steward is a great way both to learn about your rights, responsibilities, and benefits as an union member, and to protect these hard-won provisions with and for your colleagues.

In a bargaining year, the Stewards' Council becomes the **Bargaining Mobilization Committee (BMC)** as soon as we give an official Notice to Bargain to the employer. The BMC is tasked with the mobilization, organization, and education of members in support of our bargaining team and the union's demands. If the membership decides through a democratic and legal vote that strike action is necessary, the BMC transforms into the Strike Committee. The Strike Committee focuses on organizing the logistics of a strike, including setting up safe and effective picket lines, organizing regular collective meetings, rallies, and demonstrations, and organizing a variety of alternative strike support activities so that all members can participate.

The Committee also works with and supports other union committees to communicate our messages to various York constituencies (e.g. undergraduate students and student organizations, York faculty and administrative staff, etc.) and to the wider community.

**On a departmental level, the role of stewards includes:**

- Clarifying each unit's CA provisions for members in their department or hiring unit
- Answering questions from members in departments
- Passing on reminders about union meetings and other information
- Following through on members' grievances (including attending grievance meetings with members)
- Organizing departmental meetings or actions, especially when collective responses are necessary
- Informing members about the ways they can participate in and help shape the important political work of the Local
- Encouraging member participation in the union's day-to-day functioning
- Keeping members informed about issues in the Local and important struggles in the community

**At the union level, the role of stewards includes:**

- Attending Stewards' Council meetings and GMMs
- Participation in Stewards' Council subcommittees
- Participation in union political campaigns

**Stewards build our Union's relationship with the community.**

Through Stewards' Council we can make links with the social justice community and political allies regarding issues that affect all of us, including the silencing of dissent, increasingly rampant racism and racial profiling, growing systemic poverty, heteronormativity, transphobia, Eurocentrism, ableism, sexism, and ageism.

**New Stewards & Stewards' Council meetings**

Stewards' Council meetings generally take place once a month. We are always looking for new stewards in all departments and are seeking to broaden representation of all five units on the Council. If you would like to be a steward, or know of others who do, contact one of the Lead Stewards. See the list of email addresses for the Lead Stewards at the beginning of this manual.



All members are welcome to attend and participate in the Stewards' Council. For more information, contact any of our Lead Stewards.

## **Caucuses**

### **Trans Feminist Action Caucus**

The Trans Feminist Action Caucus (TFAC) is an autonomous body of CUPE 3903 that consists of all women, trans, gender queer and gender variant members of the Local. The Caucus was formed under the Constitution of Local 3903, which states that the members of any group discriminated against on the grounds enumerated in the Ontario Human Rights Code have the right to form exclusionary caucuses within the Local.

The Trans Feminist Action Caucus began in 1986 as the Women's Caucus. The Women's Caucus was formed to improve the situation of women and to combat sexism at York, within CUPE 3903, in the trade union movement, and in the broader community. On July 17, 2003, the Women's Caucus was renamed the Trans-identified, Women-identified Caucus (TIWI) in order to better reflect our opposition to all forms of gender oppression and its intersections with other forms of oppression. Three years later, at the TIWI AGM on February 23, 2006, the membership of the Caucus expanded to include all gender queer and gender variant members of the Local. We simultaneously decided to change our name in solidarity with this broadening of mission and mandate and became the Trans Feminist Action Caucus.

TFAC works in coalition with other relevant critical feminist organizations on campus in an effort to improve the position of all women, trans, gender queer and gender variant people at York University and within the labour movement. To this end, TFAC defines "sexism" to include any type of gender or sex-based discrimination or oppression. With this we also recognize that other factors such as race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status and/or ability may exacerbate discrimination on the basis of gender.

TFAC has a number of active committees including the Sexual Assault Survivor Support Fund Committee and the Trans Fund Committee.

**The Sexual Assault Survivor Support Fund Committee** adjudicates the Sexual Assault Survivor Support Fund (SASSF). This is a fund of \$10,000, supported by union dues, administered throughout the year. In the 2018 strike we were able to secure a \$50,000 contribution to the fund by York in the 2018-19 year. We continue to fight for York to properly support this fund. Members can draw on this fund to an **annual maximum of \$1000 and a lifetime maximum of \$3,000**. The Committee recognizes that legal support can be very expensive and will consider adjusting the yearly maximum based on need. **Application deadlines:** Sept. 30, Jan. 31, May 31. More information on this fund can be found here:

[cupe3903.org/funds/sexual-assault-survivor-support-fund/](https://cupe3903.org/funds/sexual-assault-survivor-support-fund/)

**The Trans Fund Committee** adjudicates the Trans Fund. The Trans Fund supports trans members in their everyday life necessities as well as for surgeries. The committee understands 'trans' to be a broad and inclusive term that includes transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, intersex, two-spirit, non-binary, and gender variant among others. Members can draw on this fund to an **annual maximum of \$5000 and a lifetime maximum of \$15,000**. **Application deadlines:** Sept. 30, Jan. 31, May 31. More information on this fund can be found here:

[cupe3903.org/trans-fund/](https://cupe3903.org/trans-fund/)

If you are a woman, trans, gender queer and/or gender variant member of the Local you are automatically a member of TFAC. TFAC members can email [tfac1@cupe3903.org](mailto:tfac1@cupe3903.org) or [tfac2@cupe3903.org](mailto:tfac2@cupe3903.org) with questions, to get more involved or to join the listserv.

## **BIPOC Caucus**

The Black and/or Indigenous and/or People of Colour (BIPOC) Caucus is an informal group that has been established to respond to the ongoing need for community,

networking, and support. The BIPOC Caucus was organized in response to racism during the 2015 strike as an ad hoc independent group and has recently been revitalized. To get involved, check the newsletter and website calendar for events.

## **Working Groups**

Working groups are open, self-determined, and semi-autonomous groups that exist to carry out targeted work both internal and external to the union. Any member can create a new working group by presenting a motion to the General Membership that includes the objectives and process of the working group. As such, new working groups may exist that are not listed in this manual. See the email list of Executive Committee members at the beginning of this manual.

### **Anti-Racism Working Group**

The Anti-Racism Working Group began in 2001 and has recently been revitalized! It organizes to challenge privilege, racism, and white supremacy in all its forms, whether in the union, the workplace, or the larger community. We attempt to pay particular attention to intersectionality, recognizing that discrimination, inequity, and oppression take form in multifaceted ways, and our work involves understanding that our members are affected in complex and varied capacities based on class, gender, race, sexuality, (dis)ability, and other social identities/factors.

### **First Nations Solidarity Working Group**

The First Nations Solidarity Working Group (FNSWG) is a body of CUPE 3903 members focused on the issues and struggles of Indigenous peoples (Contact: [cupe3903fnswg@gmail.com](mailto:cupe3903fnswg@gmail.com)). The First Nations Solidarity Working Group has a mandate to:

1. Educate and organize the CUPE 3903 membership about issues relating to matters of Indigenous

sovereignty and solidarity and to encourage membership participation both within the caucus and the Local in general on this issue.

2. Work within and to help build rank-and-file networks of union activists working on issues of Indigenous solidarity.
3. Co-ordinate efforts in support of Indigenous sovereignty with other local, regional and national (union and non-union) projects in support of Indigenous sovereignty and solidarity.
4. Actively participate in supporting Indigenous struggles, both on and off reserve, in Six Nations, Grassy Narrows, Mishkeegogamong, Saugeen #258, and other Nations.

## **Palestine Solidarity Working Group**

The CUPE 3903 Palestine Solidarity Working Group is comprised of rank-and-file union members dedicated to advocating for Palestinian liberation through various events and initiatives at York University. Get in touch with them through the linktree: <https://linktr.ee/cupe3903palsol>

## **The Flying Squad**

The CUPE 3903 Flying Squad is an association of members who confront corporate bosses and their lackeys by disrupting the normal functions of their operations, much like during a strike. This body is **autonomous from all decision-making and financial structures of the local**. It organizes actions in a manner that is transparent and accountable to its members, such as strike support and other direct actions as deemed necessary by the Flying Squad. The Flying Squad and its activities are **not discussed in formal union spaces** (ex: GMMs, Stewards' Council, the newsletter or other official communication platforms, etc.).

Flying Squad members are the highest decision-making body of the Flying Squad. Any 3903 member can become a member of the Flying Squad by agreeing and adhering to the basis of unity and attending one meeting. The Flying Squad functions on a decentralized, anti-authoritarian basis, and its

members work to eliminate internal hierarchies (including ableism, sexism, racism, and heterosexism).

## **Committees**

An excellent, generally time-limited way to help out your union colleagues, gain valuable experience, and make a contribution to your Local is to join one of our many

Committees. Committees are elected bodies that take on the work of the union and usually members receive an honorarium.

Committees perform a wide variety of different tasks, from adjudicating funds, running the Local's communications strategy, sitting on advisory bodies, and much more. You can see the full list of committees at [cupe3903.org/committees/](http://cupe3903.org/committees/). The membership of most committees is decided by balloted vote at the Annual General Membership Meeting in March. For further information about our Committees, please contact one of our Vice Presidents.

## **Email Lists**



## **The Newsletter**

This is the easiest way to stay in touch with the union! Stay up to date with news bulletins and a weekly newsletter. Traffic

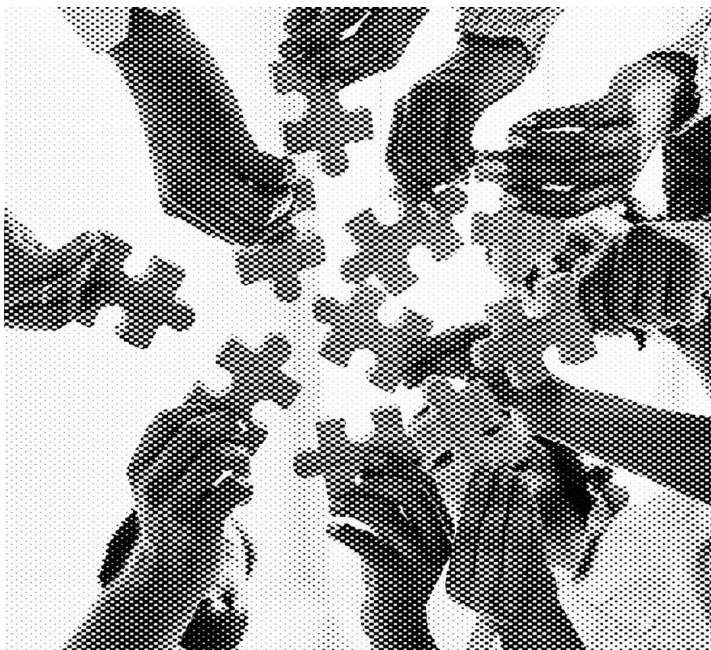
on this list is kept to a minimum and we encourage all members to subscribe to the newsletter. To subscribe, visit: [eepurl.com/gfwQwb](http://eepurl.com/gfwQwb) or fill in the sign up box on our website. If you have any events or news you would like to send out to your fellow members you can email the Communications Officer at [communications@cupe3903.org](mailto:communications@cupe3903.org). The Comms Officer will consider all submissions sent by Friday evening for the following Monday's newsletter, but the more notice you can give the better.

## Email Newsletters

**TFAC newsletter:** The Trans Feminist Action Caucus hosts a closed listserv for women, trans, gender queer, and gender variant members of CUPE 3903. To sign up, email [tfac1@cupe3903.org](mailto:tfac1@cupe3903.org) or [tfac2@cupe3903.org](mailto:tfac2@cupe3903.org).

**Stewards' Council newsletter:** To be added to the Stewards' Council listserv and get emails about upcoming meetings for stewards as well as ways to get involved, contact the Lead Steward of Unit 1 ([lsu1@cupe3903.org](mailto:lsu1@cupe3903.org))!

**Archive Project newsletter:** This sporadically scheduled newsletter has interesting historical information, plus info about ways to get involved with archiving initiatives in CUPE 3903! To sign up, email the Archive Coordinator at [cupe3903archive@gmail.com](mailto:cupe3903archive@gmail.com).



## PART 3: COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

A **Collective Agreement** (CA) is a contract between a group of workers and their employer. CUPE 3903 is proud to have won CAs that set the standard within and beyond the university sector. Though CUPE 3903 is a single union, it is composed of five separate units—each with its own CA. When Units 1, 2, and 3 bargain, all three units confront the employer at the bargaining table together. This has resulted in the strongest CAs for graduate student university workers and contract faculty in the country.

This section covers some highlights of the rights accorded to CUPE 3903 members under the Collective Agreements.

Electronic copies of all Collective Agreements are available online at: [cupe3903.org/collective-agreement/](https://cupe3903.org/collective-agreement/)

# **Your Rights as a Unionized Worker**

## **Academic Freedom**

As a Course Director (CD), you have absolute academic freedom to run your courses the way you want. As a Teaching Assistant, you have to adhere to the direction set by the Course Director, but have freedom in running your tutorial, as you feel necessary. As a time librarian or archivist, you have academic freedom in the design, methodology, and presentation of library materials for which you are responsible. In all cases, you must adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code. You also have the right NOT to have your work electronically monitored. The employer (including, for TAs, the CD) cannot check your email or computer to survey your work, or videotape your class.

## **Discipline**

You cannot be disciplined without the employer going through a series of extensive steps. The burden of proof lies with them, and you have the right to union representation at any disciplinary meetings. You also have the right to confidentiality. If you anticipate the launching of disciplinary action, or have been issued a “Notice of Meeting,” you should contact the union office. See Article 8 in each of the CAs.

## **Resources and Workspace**

Members of Units 1, 2, and 4 are entitled to adequate office space, such as a desk, computer, printing, and photocopying services in the performance of their duties, and should also be given the course textbooks and reading materials for free. See Article 15.01 of the Unit 1 and 2 Collective Agreements, or Article 18.01 of the Unit 4 Collective Agreement.

## **Funds, Bursaries, and Leaves**

As a union member, you are eligible for a number of funds, bursaries, and leaves. For instance, in case of a financial emergency, you can apply to the Ways and Means Fund. You can learn about funds and application deadlines in Part 7:



Funds and Deadlines of this manual or on our Funds and Benefits page ([cupe3903.org/funds/other-funds/](http://cupe3903.org/funds/other-funds/)).

There are new funds won in our most recent bargaining and strike that will have more information released soon! These include a new \$25,000/year fund to support racialized members experiencing racial discrimination, harassment, and violence and a new Mentoring Fund of \$10,000/year to provide mentoring, professional development, and other supports among the units, especially for employment equity groups.

Leaves can be taken if you need to take some time off for conferences, injuries or disabilities, jury duty, bereavement, caregiving, emergencies, sickness, transgender transition, and pregnancy. In addition, Unit 2 members can take leaves for research. All leaves are described in the CA and a staff member (see contact page at the front of this manual) can answer your questions or help you with arranging a leave.

## **Employment Insurance**

In the 2011-2012 round of bargaining, the Union won language that makes each CD worth 535 hours for EI purposes. The number of hours for a Teaching Assistantship is 357 hours. See Part 6 of this manual for more information on EI.

## **Graduate Funding**

The funding package offered to most graduate students is the result of long battles by past CUPE 3903 members. As a result of these struggles, members in Unit 1 and Unit 3 can expect to receive, in addition to wages:

- PhD or Master's Fellowship (once a term, applied to tuition)
- Grant-in-Aid (one a month while you hold a contract)
- Graduate Financial Assistance (once a term, to your student account)

International Tuition Offset (international students only; once a term, to your student account)

## Tuition Indexation

Tuition indexation is how we talk about our guaranteed rate of tuition at York University. It means that **if tuition is raised, funding is raised in an equal amount**. This provision was won by our union in collective bargaining, defended during the 78-Day strike in 2000/2001, and improved in the 2011-2012 round of bargaining. In 2015, we went on strike to protect this language after the employer raised tuition by 50% for international students. We fought for this language for 11 months in 2015-16, through a mix of political and legal strategies, and we won!

## Overwork Protection

All full-time graduate students who have a full teaching assistantship (TA) are obligated to work **no more** than an average of 10 hours per week, up to a maximum of 270 hours for the duration of the Fall/Winter contract (i.e. from Sept. 1 to Apr. 30). If you have less than a full TA your maximum hours are pro-rated accordingly, for example if you have a half-TA you are obligated to work no more than 135 hours.

As of 2024, Unit 2 members who hold Type 2 (tutor) contracts have won similar protections.

If you find yourself doing more, that's not acceptable. It's very important to fill out a workload form with your Course Director (CD) at the start of your contract, and **keep a record of your hours**, as it helps keep track of the amount of work you do, and provides proof of overwork when it occurs. If you are being overworked, it is your responsibility to request a meeting - in writing - with the CD as soon as you are aware that you are working more than the average of 10 hours per week or will go over the maximum contract hours.

Members are highly encouraged to contact one of their department Steward, the Staff Representatives, their Lead Steward, or the Grievance Officer at the same time. **You are entitled to have, and we strongly suggest you do have, a Union representative with you at all meetings concerning overwork.** If an informal resolution can't be reached, you can file an overwork grievance.

## Job Security

Members of Unit 2 and Unit 4 have seniority and incumbency provisions to determine who will be offered contracts. The principle is that the most senior qualified candidate should receive the offer.

Unit 2 members also have access to job security programs that have various eligibility criteria:

- The **Continuing Sessional Standing Program (CSSP)** offers a measure of predictability for mid-seniority, mid-intensity contract faculty
- The **Long Service Teaching Appointments (LSTA)** are a limited number of multi-year appointments for high seniority contract faculty
- **Conversions** offer a small number of high seniority members an opportunity to be converted to a tenure-track position

## Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER)

Every contract faculty (Unit 2) member is entitled to claim expenses for home office and teaching supplies including books, printer ink, paper, hard drives, printers, and journal subscriptions. You will need to submit original receipts. How much you can claim depends on your teaching intensity.

## Tuition Waivers

Members of Unit 2 may be eligible for a tuition waiver for most undergraduate and graduate degrees at York. Members of Unit 2 and Unit 4 may be eligible for tuition waivers for their dependents.

## Grievances

### What is a grievance?

Grievances are the legal vehicle through which unions make complaints when there is a violation of the collective agreement (your contract) or labour law. While a grievance can seem intimidating, union staff will help you every step

along the way. Grievances are a standard process; you should not feel you are unduly “rocking the boat” or otherwise making trouble by filing a grievance if you believe your rights have been violated.

## **The grievance process**

The grievance process begins when a member of the union realizes that one or more of their rights under the Collective Agreement have been violated. As of 2024, grievances follow different steps, each representing an escalation if the issue can't be resolved at the previous step.

### **Informal Resolution**

Raise the issue with your direct supervisor/course director. They must meet with you within 7 days of when you raised the issue and give you a written answer within five calendar days. This step is informal and you can do it on your own.

### **Step 1**

The union files the grievance with the department Chair. They must set a meeting to discuss the issue within 10 calendar days, and give a response in writing within 10 calendar days of the grievance meeting. The grievance must be initiated within 28 days of when you became aware of the issue; note that the informal resolution step does not pause the clock.

### **Step 2**

Within 17 calendar days of the Step 1 response, if the issue is not resolved we file with the Dean or designate of the Faculty and Faculty Relations. They must convene a meeting to discuss the grievance within 14 calendar days, and must provide a response in writing within 21 days of the meeting.

## **How Do I Initiate a Grievance?**

If you think you have a grievance, it's important to act promptly, as there may be time limits involved. The first thing to do is to contact your Lead Steward or union staff to discuss the issue (see contact list at the front of this manual). They will help you understand your options and what to do next. It's always best to share any documentation and evidence that you have with your Union representative; they will also help you determine what other material you might need for a successful case.

## PART 4: HEALTH BENEFITS PLAN



*\*You must enroll in the plan to obtain coverage and re-enroll if you have contract gaps (see details below)\**

### **Health and Dental Benefits**

Our core health benefits plan is provided and administered through SunLife Insurance (Policy Number: 014098). Some of the core policies covered by this plan are:

- Vision Care: \$400 every two years from the first use (Glasses, contacts, eye exams)
- Dental Care: \$3000 every calendar year (Oral exams, certain dental procedures)
- Prescription Drugs: 100% coverage of prescribed medication

- Paramedical Services (e.g. Counseling, naturopaths, and chiropractors): \$2000 for any one expense every calendar year; for a total of \$3000

For more details please check out the Sun Life Policy Package at [cupe3903.org/benefits/benefits-plan/](https://cupe3903.org/benefits/benefits-plan/)

## **Who is covered?**

All CUPE 3903 members and their dependents (spouses, common law or same-sex partner, and dependent children; parents and siblings are ineligible) are covered under this plan from the first day of your contract until **5 months after the end of your contract**. Any contract gaps of longer than 5 months require you to re-enroll in the Sun Life plan once you start a new contract. If you have had a contract gap and are not sure if you are still enrolled in the plan you should contact SunLife or York's Pension and Benefits office.

There is an exception to the 5-month extension. If you are a Unit 1 member in years 1 through 5 of the priority pool and have had a TA assignment in one term, followed by an 8-month gap, you are eligible for those additional 3 months of coverage. You have to collect your expense receipts during that 3-month period, which you can then submit once you re-enroll at the start of the new contract.

## **How do I enroll in the plan?**

Returning members of CUPE 3903, who have previously enrolled and do not have a contract gap of more than 5 months (i.e. you have not been without a contract for more than 5 months), are already enrolled in our health benefits plan. New members of CUPE 3903 starting their first contract must manually enroll for health benefits coverage.

## **Enrolment Process: An Overview**

There is an electronic form which you can access to enroll into the Sun Life benefits plan. If you have not already signed up for Passport York as an employee you will first need to set this up to obtain your username and password to access this online enrolment form.

Once you have your Passport York information you can access this page:

[https://askus.yorku.ca/portal/service?btn=9&itil\\_requesttype\\_id=3&root\\_category=29&shownewticket=true&categoryid=29&id=316](https://askus.yorku.ca/portal/service?btn=9&itil_requesttype_id=3&root_category=29&shownewticket=true&categoryid=29&id=316). Be sure to upload the supporting documentation for any of your dependents. Check the [cupe3903.org](https://cupe3903.org) website for more details about how to enroll!

## **Do I pay upfront?**

Some practitioners will cover your expense upfront, while others will require you to cover your expense and file for reimbursement from Sun Life Insurance. This process will vary by practitioner.

## **How do I make a claim and get reimbursed?**

After enrolment, you can make claims online at [sunlife.ca](https://sunlife.ca). To submit online, you will need to register with Sun Life. You will need your policy number (014098) and your employee number to register. Once registered, you can login to file claims and get further information on your benefits. Sun Life also has a mobile app! Compensation and claims are processed within 48 hours and are directly deposited to your bank account.

You can also send your claims by completing a claim form with the necessary paperwork, and mailing it to the address attached to the form. The claim forms are available on the union's website.



## **What do I do if I exhaust my coverage or incur other expenses?**

If you exhaust your coverage or your expense is not covered by

Sun Life you can apply to our Union's Extended Health Benefits Fund. Depending on the number of applications, you may receive full or partial reimbursement for additional expenses. Note that the Extended Health Benefits Fund only covers expenses incurred by the member (not dependents). See the "Extended Health Benefits" section that follows.

## **What if my contract ends?**

Your benefits continue for five months following the end of your contract. As such, you should hold on to your drug card and continue to use it until your coverage expires or you get a new contract.

## **Notes for international students**

What is the difference between this plan and UHIP? The latter is for international students only. It is designed to pay the cost of the hospital and medical services which members and their family members may need to maintain their health while in Canada. The plan provides coverage comparable to that of OHIP for Ontario residents. The CUPE 3903 Health Benefits plan is in addition to, and separate from, UHIP; if you have a contract and are a member of CUPE 3903 you are eligible for these benefits.

Information about UHIP is available on the York International website. You can enroll online and print your UHIP card. Note that your member ID is "YU" followed by your student number (e.g.: YU123456789) and your policy number is 050150.

## Numbers you might need

**Employee Number** (this is also your benefits ID number). It starts with “1” and appears on your pay stub. Pay stubs can be found on [hrselfserve.info.yorku.ca](http://hrselfserve.info.yorku.ca); graduate student members may also be able to ask their Graduate Program Assistant.

**Policy Plan Contract Number:** 014098

**Sun Life’s number:** 1-877-SUN-LIFE

(1-877-786-5433)

**Sun Life’s website:** [www.sunlife.ca](http://www.sunlife.ca)

## Other questions?

When you have questions, the first person to contact is a Pension & Benefits Administrator at the York Pension and Benefits Office. You can reach them at:

Phone: 416-736-2100 ext. 27572

Email: [askpb@yorku.ca](mailto:askpb@yorku.ca)

If they are not able to address your problem, then contact CUPE 3903 staff.

## Extended Health Benefits Fund (EHB)

CUPE 3903 has negotiated a substantial fund for extended health reimbursement. This fund is administered through an elected committee of members. The amounts reimbursed vary depending on the number of requests received.

The purpose of the EHB is to support members with health care costs that would cause an undue financial burden and that are not covered by the SunLife Insurance plan (the insurance company that administers our Health and Dental plan). This fund is for members’ own health related costs and does not cover health costs for dependents. The only exception is for reproductive technologies, as members and their partners are eligible for reimbursement.

In setting up the policy, guidelines, and allocation process for the EHB, the Union recognizes that there is a strong

relationship between a range of social factors and a person's health and wellbeing. Health issues and health inequities are thus often deeply intertwined. The Union also recognizes that there is a finite amount of money in the Fund for a membership of thousands. Ongoing collective bargaining is critical to continuing to improve member access to funds to support the reimbursement of extra health care expenses.

The EHB Fund is available to all members of CUPE 3903 from their first day of employment until 5 months after their last contract has expired. There are two parts of the fund: Option A is for extended health care needs that are **unexpected** and **urgent** and that present an undue financial burden. This option is for expenses you need to make right away. Option B is for extended health care needs that are **foreseeable** or **planned** and that present an undue financial burden. This is for expenses expected during the upcoming term.

## EHB Fund Coverage

Support from this fund might range from the one-time purchase of an assistive device, to an ongoing regimen of therapy, to unexpected health needs resulting from a sudden accident or injury. This includes assistance with costs associated with longer-term disabilities and/or care needs that are **not** otherwise covered under other health insurance plans. Cosmetic procedures are not covered. In addition, the following is covered:

- Non-MD psychotherapy, once the regular plan coverage is exhausted (proof of exhaustion required)
- Travel health insurance (does not include baggage or cancellation insurance)
- Acupuncture
- Orthotics (with a doctor's note)
- Vision care expenses, once the regular plan coverage is exhausted (proof of exhaustion required)
- Emergency dental work, once the regular plan coverage is exhausted (proof of exhaustion required)

- Prescription drugs after coverage is spent, once the regular plan coverage is exhausted (proof of exhaustion required)
- Naturopathy, Chiropractic, Physiotherapy, Psychologist, Podiatry and Massage Therapy once the regular plan coverage is exhausted (proof of exhaustion required)
- Incidental health expenses (e.g. hospital parking, emergency taxis, crutches/canes, etc.)
- Other services de-listed from OHIP

If you have any questions about the Extended Health Benefits Fund, please contact the EHB Committee at

[ehb3903@gmail.com](mailto:ehb3903@gmail.com).

## **How to apply**

Please fill out the jotform at:

<https://form.jotform.com/92410791293256>

## **Employee and Family Assistance Program**

Due to the persistent advocacy and lobbying by various CUPE 3903 members and staff, as of May 2017 all members have access to the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), which provides free, confidential mental health and overall wellness services. EFAP is delivered by an arm's length, third-party provider independently from York. To find out more, go to:

<https://yulink-new.yorku.ca/group/yulink/employee-and-family-assistance>

## PART 5: BARGAINING AS COLLECTIVE ACTION



CUPE 3903 enters collective bargaining when our collective agreements (CAs) expire, which currently occurs every three years. CUPE 3903 draws its strength from member-driven organizing, which has resulted in CAs that are the gold standard across Canada. During bargaining, important decisions are always directed and approved by the membership. The active involvement of rank and file members in the many stages and numerous levels of bargaining is essential to our collective success.

**“York Works Because We Do”** is a statement of fact—members of CUPE 3903 do the majority of the teaching at York, in addition to providing invaluable research, library

and archival work, and other support for undergraduate students. Because of our essential role in this university, our working conditions have real effects on undergraduate students, research, and the university as a whole. Additionally, since we are sector leaders, we set the standard: a victory for CUPE 3903 sets the stage for victories for other unions across the university sector. We don't have the best contract in the country because we asked for it nicely. We have had to fight to keep and improve our contracts each and every round of bargaining. Without strong membership-driven mobilization during bargaining, York can and will attempt to **weaken** our CAs in its favour.

## Why we bargain

We bargain not only to defend against York's attacks on our working conditions and jobs, but also to **improve** our contracts. Because of our strength during bargaining, in previous rounds we have won tuition offsets, childcare funds, a comprehensive benefits package, additional funding and protections for international students, and equity guidelines for hiring practices, just to name a few.

When it comes down to it, **you** are why we bargain. We bargain in solidarity with our colleagues against a university that is more committed to profits than to quality education. If we have to go on strike, we do it because we're fighting for each other and for the right to a fair contract and a quality education for all. The strength of CUPE 3903 wouldn't be known across the country if it weren't for members like you getting involved and fighting for a common goal!

## How we bargain

CUPE 3903 is a member-driven union and it is the membership that directs important bargaining decisions. Members elect the Bargaining Team (BT), determine bargaining priorities, help formulate proposals, and regularly weigh in on the bargaining process. We operate under the model of **open bargaining**, which means that members are encouraged to attend bargaining meetings where they can observe, pass notes to the Bargaining Team, and participate

in Bargaining Team caucuses. Open bargaining has made our past successes possible and is necessary for us to continue making gains.

Open bargaining keeps York accountable! York cannot mislead our members about their proposals, our bargaining process, or hide their demeaning attitudes towards our members. In addition the presence of members in bargaining meetings shows York that the Bargaining Team (BT) is supported by the membership; membership support is crucial to securing a good contract. Open bargaining also keeps the BT accountable to the membership so you can feel confident in supporting your BT.

Bargaining decisions are driven by the membership and that includes any decision to go on strike. **The final decision to strike rests with the general membership.** Going on strike is a last resort. We make sure to exhaust all of our options at the bargaining table, and members will get to vote on any strike action before it is taken. Bargaining is therefore strengthened and defined by our collective power as workers fighting for each other



## PART 6: EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Employment Insurance (EI)** is supposed to be the safety net that kicks in when a worker becomes unemployed. This section covers frequently asked questions about Employment Insurance as it relates to all CUPE 3903 members.

**Who is eligible?** Most workers who have accumulated enough hours of work paying into EI, who are out of work for 7 consecutive days for reasons beyond their control (such as the end of a contract), and who are available for work, are eligible to claim benefits.

**How many hours do you need?** The number ranges from 420 to 700 hours and depends on several factors. The



minimum number varies by geographic region and in different periods because the federal government bases the figure on the local official unemployment rate. If you live in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), currently the minimum is 630 hours in the 52 weeks prior to becoming unemployed. This is called the “qualifying period.” This qualifying period will be less than 52 weeks if you had an EI claim within that period, and your EI claim will be automatically reactivated on re-application. The qualifying period might be extended to a maximum of 104 weeks in specific circumstances, such as if an illness, injury, or pregnancy prevented you from doing EI-insurable work. You will need records of employment (ROEs) for the 52-week period before your separation from work. You can add together all EI-insurable jobs you have had in those periods to make up those hours so you need to get ROEs from all of your past employers. If you think you might qualify for the 104-week extension, make sure you get ROEs sent to Service Canada for the full 104 weeks.

If you are eligible for benefits, York University will automatically send your ROE to Service Canada soon after the end of your contract. You can confirm receipt of this ROE by setting up a My Service Canada account online to manage your EI claim.

**How do hours work for TAs and CDs?** Each full TAship counts as 357 hours (for the ROE) and each CD counts as 535 hours.

**How much are the benefits?** Benefits are paid at 55% of your average weekly earnings (based on your earnings over the last 6 months) to a weekly maximum of \$668 (2024 rate). There are no benefits paid for the first week of unemployment.

**How long do benefits last?** This also depends on the local unemployment rate and your total hours worked in a qualifying period. For the current GTA rate, this could be from 17 to 42 weeks. The more insurable hours you’ve accumulated, the longer you’re eligible to receive benefits.

**When did I start and stop work?** That depends on the contract.

Currently York contract end dates are the end of the month (e.g. April 30). Start dates may vary.

**While on benefits what do I do?** You are required to be available for employment and to be actively looking for work. These are separate criteria. “Available” means that if someone offered you a job tomorrow you would take it. That is why you cannot claim benefits while out of the country. “Actively looking” means that you are doing everything reasonable to find work in your general field in which you found work before. Since part-time academics have established a pattern of work as part-time academics, you are allowed to restrict your search to academic work, at least for the first few months of benefits. After that, the federal government will expect you to broaden your search to related kinds of work.

**What if I am applying for maternity, parental, sick or compassionate leave?** You need a minimum of 600 hours in the 52 weeks prior to the leave to qualify for maternity, parental, sick, and caregiving leave EI benefits. There is a maximum of 15 weeks of payment for maternity and sick leave, and 35 weeks for parental leave.

There are also paid leaves in your collective agreement that can be paid out as supplemental benefits to EI. Talk to one of the union staff before requesting your parental leave if you are planning to also take EI parental benefits.

**Questions? Need help applying?** Contact the CUPE 3903 office.



## PART 7: FUNDS AND DEADLINES

Through bargaining, CUPE 3903 has won the following funds for its members, guaranteed through the provisions of our Collective Agreements. Many of the forms along with more detailed information about the funds can be found on the CUPE 3903 website.

### **All Units Funds**

#### **Child Care Fund**

**Deadlines:** Jan. 31, May 31, and Sept. 30. Apply to CUPE 3903.

The Childcare Fund is a fund of ~\$275,000 per year, which was won for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. It is meant to offset the childcare costs for members with childcare responsibilities. The fund is disbursed equally to all members

who have childcare responsibilities and who apply. To apply, fill out the jotform (<https://form.jotform.com/92429058337261>).

The Collective Agreement also includes child care subsidy funding of \$50,000 allocated to each of the on-campus child care facilities—Student Centre Childcare ([www.yorku.ca/children](http://www.yorku.ca/children)) and the York Co-Operative Day Care Centre ([daycare.info.yorku.ca](http://daycare.info.yorku.ca)). These amounts are pooled among all applicants, hence amounts vary, with reimbursement levels determined by the number of eligible members applying for a subsidy in any given year.

**To apply:** You will need to provide proof of parental responsibilities by providing documentation such as, but not exclusive to, copies of birth certificates or guardianship papers. For children with disabilities/additional needs a letter from a medical care provider shall be submitted. The union will destroy all personal information with the exceptions of the fact that you have children, the age of your youngest child, and whether any of your children have different abilities.

## **Extended Health Benefits Fund**

Apply as needed. Apply to CUPE 3903.

The purpose of the Extended Health Benefits Fund is to support members with health care costs that would cause an undue financial burden and that are not covered by the SunLife Insurance plan provided by our Collective Agreement. Please note these funds are not administered by the Sun Life Insurance Plan, and are administered by the Extended Health Benefits Committee of CUPE 3903. See the “Extended Health Benefits Fund” page in this manual for more info.

## **Professional Development Fund**

**Deadlines:** Jan. 10, June 10 and Sept. 10. Apply to CUPE 3903.

The Professional Development Fund provides funding to members in all Units to support them in attending and presenting at conferences, and with other professional development expenses.

A total of \$137,000 is allocated to this fund for purposes such as assisting new employees (priority to those within the first two years of employment) to develop professional competence and ability, to assist employees in upgrading professional qualifications, and to help cover some of the expenses associated with presenting at conferences (airfare, hotels, etc.). The PDF does not cover capital costs such as equipment, software, stationery, and books, but does cover conference funding and professional development such as fees for courses, programmes, and workshops. You can apply via jotform (<https://form.jotform.com/92431073655254>).

## **Trans Fund**

**Deadlines:** Jan. 31, May 31, Sept. 30. Apply to CUPE 3903. A fund of \$40,000. The Trans Fund is administered three times a year except in emergency situations where members can apply to the committee on an on-going basis. The committee understands "trans" to be a broad and inclusive term that includes gender queer, transgender, transsexual, and gender variant, among others. The fund is to be used to support members in their everyday transition-related life necessities as well as for surgeries. You can apply via jotform (<https://form.jotform.com/93417707463260>).

## **Ways and Means Fund**

### **Emergency Financial Aid**

Apply as needed, to CUPE 3903. A fund of over \$245,000. Intended as a fund to cover financial needs not addressed by other Collective Agreement funds. Funds are available for members who have experienced a recent unexpected hardship that resulted in unexpected financial stress/hardship; generally the maximum reimbursement is \$1000. You can apply online via jotform (<https://form.jotform.com/92430173722249>).

## **Sexual Assault Survivor Support Fund**

**Deadlines:** Jan. 31, May 31, and Sept. 30. Emergency applications: year-round. Apply to CUPE 3903.

A fund of \$50,000 to help survivors offset costs such as counselling, legal support and lost wages. Members can draw on this fund to an annual maximum of \$1000 and a lifetime maximum of \$3,000. The Committee recognizes that legal support can be very expensive and will consider adjusting the yearly maximum based on need.

You can apply online via jotform

(<https://form.jotform.com/93418059946267>).

## **Kilometreage Allowance**

Apply as needed to the department that required the travel (the department will direct you on the required application procedure) Travel costs will be reimbursed when members must travel to a place of work other than the campus where they normally work and these costs are in excess of that member's normal travel costs. Car expenditures will be reimbursed at 45 cents/km.

## **Unit 1 Specific Funds**

### **Graduate Student Bursary Fund**

**Deadline:** Apply once in the Fall semester, and once in the Spring through the Student Financial Profile.

A fund of more than \$238,000 distributed on the basis of need, especially prioritizing international students who pay UHIP, single parents with childcare expenses, and those who incur large, uncovered medical expenses. Apply through the Student Financial Profile available through Student Financial Services.

### **Masters Bursary Fund**

**Deadline:** Apply in the Spring through your Student Financial Profile.

A fund of \$107,000, distributed on or after June 15th to assist members in the summer who do not have other sources of funding (excluding bursaries). First priority is for members who will be returning to a Master's program in Fall, second

priority is for those who will be entering a PhD program in the Fall.

### **PhD Completion Fund**

**Deadline:** September 30, January 31, and May 31. Apply to FGS in your last term.

A fund of \$100,000, distributed in the second month of your last term on the basis of need to members who have no funding in the last term of their PhD studies.

### **Research Costs Fund**

**Deadline:** November 10 and March 10. Apply to FGS.

A fund of \$110,000. Applicants can receive up to \$1600 each per year. Funds are distributed by Department so deadlines vary. See your department for specific details.

### **Thesis Allowance**

Apply as needed, to FGS.

This fund is designed to offset costs of the final form of a MRP (\$200), Master's Thesis (\$300), or Doctoral Dissertation (\$400). Allowable expenses include but are not limited to photocopying, binding for two copies, and certain expenses related to the production of other media. A full list of what is and is not covered is available on the application form.

### **Tuition Costs Fund**

**Deadline:** Aug. 31. Apply to CUPE 3903.

A total of \$10,000 of the PDF fund will be allocated each year to offset tuition costs for courses, programs, or conferences related to members' employment. Regular graduate student fees at York are not covered by this fund. Find the application here:

<https://form.jotform.com/92440519443254>

### **UHIP Fund**

No need for application.

Total of \$81,737, distributed evenly amongst international students in the bargaining unit who use UHIP.

## **Unit 2 Specific Funds**

### **Conference Travel Fund**

**Deadlines:** June 3rd. Apply to Faculty Relations.

A total of \$100,000 to support attendance at scholarly, professional, or artistic conferences. The June round will only defray travel costs, the other two rounds will also provide money towards accommodation and other expenses.

Applicants will normally only receive one grant per year.

### **Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER)**

Contract faculty members have this allowance to use towards professional development. They receive an allotment of \$375 per 6-credit course directorship or 1/3 of \$375 per 6-credit Tutor 1 position (to a maximum of \$1125 per year). See Part 3 of this manual for more details.

### **Research Grants Fund**

**Deadlines:** June 3rd. Apply to Faculty Relations.

A fund of \$190,000. Members can only receive funds once per year. Minor Grants of up to \$8000 are available at either deadline; Major Grants with a value of one course directorship in salary plus one applicable prior experience credit are available only in the spring round.

### **Teaching Development Fund**

**Deadline:** Feb. 1. Apply to the Teaching Commons at York.

To assist in the development of a new program of study, new courses and teaching materials, and teaching skills. Five minor teaching development grants of \$1000 will be provided, as well as two major grants of the same value as the salary of one course directorship. Only those contract faculty who have held at least one Type 1 or equivalent position in each of the two years prior to the start of this contract year will be eligible for the major grants.



Adjudicated by 3903 and the York Teaching Commons.  
Applications can be found on our website  
([cupe3903.org/funds/other-funds/#unit-2-funds](https://cupe3903.org/funds/other-funds/#unit-2-funds))

## **Tuition Costs Fund**

**Deadline:** Aug. 31. Apply to CUPE 3903.

A total of \$10,000 of the PDF fund will be allocated each year to offset tuition costs for courses, programs, or conferences related to members' employment. Regular graduate student fees at York are not covered by this fund.

## **Tuition Waiver**

Provides a full tuition waiver for dependents or spouses (including common-law and same-sex partners) of contract faculty members who have held an average of 2.5 full course equivalents per year for three years (see our website for application: [cupe3903.org/funds/other-funds/#unit-2-funds](https://cupe3903.org/funds/other-funds/#unit-2-funds))

Contract faculty members themselves, who have held at least three Type 1 positions or equivalent in the last three years, including at least one in the last year, will receive a tuition fee waiver for any York University undergraduate or graduate program to which they are admitted. This will be limited to part-time fee levels. (Note: enrolling full-time would make the worker a Unit 1 member).

# **Unit 3 Specific Funds**

## **Graduate Assistant Bursary Fund**

**Deadline:** Apply in the Fall semester through your graduate Student Financial Profile .

A fund of \$275,000 to be distributed according to need for Unit 3 members, prioritizing international visa students.

## **Research Costs Fund**

**Deadline:** November 10 and March 10. Apply to FGS.

A fund of \$110,000. Applicants can receive up to \$1600 each per year. This fund is run on a department-by-department

basis, so exact deadlines vary. See your department for specific details.

### **UHIP Fund**

No need for application.

Total of \$81,737, distributed evenly amongst international students in the bargaining unit who use UHIP.

## **Unit 4 Specific Funds**

### **Tuition Waiver**

Members who are eligible qualify for a tuition waiver for undergraduate or graduate York University degree credit work (part time only; see our website for application:

[cupe3903.org/funds/other-funds/](https://cupe3903.org/funds/other-funds/)). Dependents of eligible members also qualify for a tuition waiver (part or full-time). Please see the Collective Agreement or speak to your Lead Steward to determine If you are eligible.