

WELCOME TO THE OSHAWA LOCAL

An introduction to your local, Oshawa 579, your Union,
and its purpose and structure.

Please take the
time to read this
booklet.

Hello.

Welcome to your new job and/or new work location. This booklet is intended to introduce new and older members of our Union to the Oshawa Local. As many new postal workers find themselves in a Union environment for the first time, we thought that it was important to give you a quick tutorial. This booklet gives a quick look at your membership in the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and explains what our role and responsibilities are, as well as how both our Union and our local operate.

MEMBERSHIP

Please note that membership in the Union is mandatory upon being hired. You **MUST** complete a membership form and pay a \$5 initiation fee to the local that you work in. These forms are available from any Union rep. If you have **NOT** filled out a form and paid your initiation fee, you are listed as a **RAND** member and have no voice at meetings nor are you eligible to participate in our many functions or be considered for an elected position. It is **YOUR** responsibility to fill out a membership form. Please let us know if you haven't. Dues are currently equal to 3-hrs pay of a full-time letter carrier per month.

NATIONAL UNION

Our Union is the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. The National Union is comprised of a National Executive Committee (NEC) as well as a National Executive Board (NEB).

The National Executive Committee is made up of seven positions, those being National President, National Secretary-Treasurer, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th National Vice-Presidents, and a National Grievance Officer.

The National Union's website is <http://www.cupw-sttp.org>

We strongly urge you to visit the website and sign up for CUPW's eDigest which will be delivered to your inbox.

An informed member is a strong member.

Members of the National Executive Committee serve four-year terms and are elected at our National Convention. Our national conventions are held every four years and the next one is scheduled for May 2027.

The National Union is broken into eight different regions: Pacific, Prairie, Central, Ontario, Toronto, Montreal, Quebec, and Atlantic. Each region has its own National Director. If you are in Oshawa, you are in the Ontario Region.

The NEC and the eight national directors (one from each region) comprise the NEB. It is the NEB that makes the decisions that affect all of us and who have care and control of the Union as a whole.

REGIONAL UNION

Each region has its own national director (ND), a regional grievance officer (RGO), a regional education and organization officer (REOO), and several full-time Union representatives (URs). (Those regional reps are there to assist locals in Union matters and to oversee the functioning of the region.) Its members are elected at either a regional conference or at

national convention. Their terms are also four-years.

LOCAL

Each region is then broken up into smaller offices called ‘locals’. There are just over 200 of these nationwide within the eight regions. We are Local 579 Oshawa. Our members work in the Port Hope Depot, the Hampton, Orono, and Pontypool offices, the Bowmanville and Whitby Corporate Retail Outlets, as well as Port Perry, Bowmanville and Oshawa. We are comprised of postal clerks and retail clerks (P04s, Group 1), as well as letter carriers, routers, letter carrier assistants, and relief letter carriers (EXT 02 members, or Group 2). These are the members represented under our ***urban collective agreement***, or UPO. We also have many RSMCs, PREs, and OCREs. (RSMC is the acronym for Rural and Suburban Mail Carrier, PRE is the acronym for Permanent Relief Employee, and OCRe are On-Call Relief Employees.) These members are represented under the ***RSMC collective agreement***.

Each CUPW local is made up of the members-at-large as well as the local executive committee (LEC). The LEC is compromised of at least three elected officers, those being: President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer. Our local has six executive officers which include the three aforementioned positions as well as our Local Grievance Officer, Senior Shop Steward Urban and Senior Shop Steward RSMC. Our executive terms are 3-years each. (The number of positions and their term lengths are determined by our local by-laws.)

We also have a Trustee Committee, Social Committee, and several Social Stewards. The function of each of these will be discussed further in this booklet.

Should you find yourself dealing with issues or have questions about the local, you are invited to approach any member of the LEC or any shop steward on the workfloor. Shop stewards are the link between the

membership and the local executive committee. We ask that you follow the chain-of-command and start your queries with a shop steward, but the LEC members are always at your disposal. Also, ALWAYS start your business with the Union at the local level. Calling a higher level of the union with an issue will only see you redirected back to us.

The Oshawa Local participates in two Labour Councils. The Durham Region Labour Council allows us to have two delegates due to the number of members that we have in their area and the Northumberland Labour Council allows us one delegate for the same reason. Labour Council is the bridge between locals from all unions and the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL). The OFL is the highest labour organization in Ontario and is affiliated to the Canadian Labour Congress which is the highest labour organization in Canada.

Oshawa Local information is as follows:

Oshawa Local 579 CUPW

Address: Unit 2 – 44 William Street West, Oshawa, ON L1G 1J9

Phone: See list below Fax: 905-433-1794

Email Address: OshawaLocal@gmail.com

Facebook URL: <https://www.facebook.com/Oshawa579>

Our local is run by part-time officers who spend several days a month in the office, but we are doing the job just like you are for the rest of the time. We have zero full-time officers as the cost is prohibitive to a local our size. As such, we would ask that if you need us that you utilize our cell numbers listed below.

LOCAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	John Lawrence	905-914-1575
Vice-President	Bill Hutchinson	905-213-2804
Secretary-Treasurer	Jennifer O'Neil	905-243-7332
Grievance Officer	Tyler Makeeff	905-429-8455
SR. Shop Steward RSMC	Justin Turpin	289-927-2406
SR. Shop Steward Urban	Kenneth Park	416-553-0556

SHOP STEWARDS

	Work Location	Bargaining Unit
Dino Azzano	Durham East	Urban
Greg Czupak	Durham East	Urban
Anthony Francis	Durham East	Urban
Waseem Khan	Port Hope	Urban
Michelle McKelvie	Durham East	Urban
Stephanie Power	Port Hope	Urban
Justin Turpin	Durham East	RSMC

Shop stewards are on the floor to represent you and to protect you and your rights. **ALWAYS** request a shop steward if you are being questioned or interviewed by the boss, even if they tell you that they are just wanting to 'discuss' something with you. Shop stewards report back to the local executive committee. **We are always looking for new shop stewards, so let us know if you have any interest.**

TRUSTEE COMMITTEE

The local trustee committee's function is to go over the local's finances to determine a) if the local's money is being used in compliance with the national constitution, b) if the local's money is being used in compliance with the local's by-laws, and c) to determine whether there are any irregularities or abnormalities with the local's finances, i.e. fraud,

improper purchases, etc. The committee is comprised of three (3) members who serve on rotating three-year terms with one term opening every year. Nominations for this position are put forward in March of each year at our general membership meeting and all persons nominated must have attended at least 50% of the general membership meetings that they were entitled to attend over the last 12-month period. There is absolutely no knowledge or training needed to be a trustee. With there always being two experienced trustees on the committee, there is always someone on the committee to guide you. The committee meets twice yearly.

SOCIAL STEWARDS

Social stewards are a concept initiated by CUPW many years ago. A social steward is just another member like yourself. The difference is that they have decided to use their compassion, empathy and knowledge to help their co-workers on their own time. They are trained both regionally and locally on mental health first aid matters. While they are not certified medical professionals or social workers, they pull more than their weight when it comes to supporting our members with problems such as financial issues, mental health issues in and out of the workplace, food scarcity, homeless, addiction, personal and domestic issues and are always there when you feel like you just can't get through the day. Whatever is discussed remains between you and the social steward and confidentiality is their number one priority, next to assisting you. Please remember that they are human, too, and try to make the best use of their time. This position is un-elected.

<u>Social Stewards</u>	Work Location	Phone
Tina Soda	Durham East	905-924-3240
Laura Traas	Durham East	905-435-5539

BECOMING ACTIVE AND EDUCATED IN UNION MATTERS

The only way a Union can become and remain strong is by empowering its members. YOU are a member and YOU are part of our strength or our weakness. A Union gets its strength through the participation of its members in general membership meetings, local initiatives, educational courses, and by actions on the workfloor. CUPW has always been a ground-up Union, meaning that its strength doesn't radiate downward from its national office, but is generated on the workfloor and pushed upward to all. We are the strength of CUPW

Why Unionize at All?

Workers usually unionize because of several factors: favouritism, poor treatment, low wages and benefits, and health and safety concerns.

When workers band together and form labour unions, they are not empowering only the union leadership, but themselves. Workers who unite almost always have better working conditions, higher wages, and a better opportunity for advancement than their unorganized counterparts.

I think that, in a perfect world, one would just go to work, make a decent pay, and go home. Unfortunately, the world isn't fair. Many times workers have been overlooked for promotion for a friend of the boss, been fired for no good reason, or denied the rights afforded to them by law, including but not limited to: accommodation when injured, pay for all hours worked, a living wage, fair and safe working conditions, etc.

When workers organize (unionize), they bring the power of the entire workfloor up against the boss's agenda and when many speak with one voice they hold enough power to affect change. The purpose of unions is to prevent mistreatment, to attain benefits and a wage that is fair (almost always higher than those without a union), and to protect our rights

under current legislation such as the Canada Labour Code, the Canadian Human Rights Act, etc.

To better educate our members, the union conducts educational seminars each spring and fall. Only one or two members of our local may be chosen to attend, but we do attempt to include all who are interested.

Sometimes the courses are geared at educating those in officer roles and, regrettably, most spots will go to the executive in that case. There are, however, many opportunities for the members-at-large to become involved. Each depot has a Union information board. Find yours. When educationals are offered, we post a bulletin or a poster on these boards. Simply notify a shop steward or someone on the local executive of your wish to become active and to get involved. We will do what we can to have you sent to a course to begin your journey with us.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Our local holds nine (9) general membership meetings each year. They are held in-person (usually) at Cana Hall in Oshawa. This is located at Unit 4 – 44 William St. W. in Oshawa. Our meetings start at 7pm and run anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes. They are held on the fourth Thursday of each month, excluding July, August, and December when we hold no meetings. They are informal, so come out and have a coffee and learn. (Please note that there is no parking in the lot at the back of the building we are in. It is reserved for elderly tenants of the building.)

Not only are new workers (temps, flex, ocr's) allowed to attend these meetings, they are strongly encouraged to. Your participation, regardless of years-of-service, only serves to make us stronger. If your life is hectic; small kids, etc, please attempt to make at least one or two meetings per year. This is the best way to bring issues forward to the local and the very best way to stay informed as to what is happening around you and to you. Our contracts determine our future living standards and conditions so it is time well spent. It's your future; you decide how to prioritize it. Children are welcome if they are not disruptive.

MEMBERS LOUNGE

We are happy to inform you that we have a members lounge in the Union office. It was named the "Jack Layton Member's Lounge" in tribute to Jack's last stand in parliament fighting for the rights of postal workers shortly before he lost his battle for cancer. When he should have been saving his strength to fight the ultimate fight, he was filibustering to stand up for workers.

The lounge is available in 3-hour blocks and must be approved by the local executive committee. The lounge is suitable for up to 6 people and is a great place to spend time with your kids or friends should you wish to. The lounge is available to both current and retired members of the Oshawa Local and is furnished with a t.v., an arcade game, a pool table, and a dart board. It is NOT accessible to handicapped individuals unless we are present to utilize the building's elevators during office hours.

If you have any interest in booking this lounge, let one of us know. There is no cost in doing so. We do ask you to be respectful to the elderly tenants of this building. Failure to do so will disqualify you from future use.



COMMUNICATION

In our opinion, the worst thing that a Union can do is leave its workers in the dark on the many issues that we face on a daily basis. That is why our local attempts to send out at least one email per month to share the latest bulletins with you and to update you where we are at on a variety of issues. Communication is at the core of any organization and we do what we can to keep you up-to-date. *Sign up for ours through a union rep.*

What Issues Can My Union Help Me With?

Your Union is tasked with representing you, the worker, in all dealings with the employer. Some of the issues that we help you with are, but not limited to, the following:

Discipline (24 hr Notice of Interview, Warnings, Suspension, Discharge)
Pay Defects
Bypass of Opportunity
Bidding/Transfers/Promotion/Demotion
Accommodation
Leave
Medical and WSIB appeals and forms
Retirement Advice

Please note that if you are approached by management in any form and they wish to have a discussion with you that you are contractually entitled to have a Union member present to represent you at ALL times.

While many conversations can be had without representation, please be aware that your supervisor can be fishing for information and use these friendly conversations against you later on. This often happens.

Our strongest caution to you is, when in doubt, request a Union rep. In the case of a formal interview, (one which you have been notified about in writing), we advise you to NEVER attend one of these without a rep.

To close, we really do welcome you to the Oshawa Local and we hope that you are successful in your endeavors. If we can be of any assistance, just reach out to one of us. If you have any questions, we can provide the answers either immediately or by getting back to you with the correct information. Do not wait to do so as there are time limitations on some issues that we deal with.

Lastly, the only ‘dumb’ question is the one that you don’t ask. We are here to inform, educate, and represent you. Please feel free to utilize us.

As Always, Solidarity!

The Local Executive
Oshawa Local 579 CUPW

NOTES

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

2026/2027

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Thursday, September 24, 2026

Thursday, October 22, 2026

Thursday, November 26, 2026

Thursday, January 28, 2027

Thursday, February 25, 2027

Thursday, March 25, 2027

Thursday, April 22, 2027

Thursday, May 27, 2027

Thursday, June 24, 2027

Thursday, September 23, 2027

Thursday, October 28, 2027

Thursday, November 25, 2027

The struggle continues • La lutte continue



Oshawa Local 579

Stronger. Together. Plus forts. Ensemble.

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