



Government Services Union
Syndicat des services gouvernementaux

**LOCAL
OFFICER
HANDBOOK**



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GETTING STARTED

THANK YOU for stepping in as a Local Officer for the Government Services Union.

Local Officers are the backbone of our union. **You** represent members in the workplace and provide leadership within your Local and all levels of the organization.

Whether you are new in your role or have been doing it for many years, union work can sometime feel overwhelming.

This handbook will provide you with an overview of your Local Officer role and responsibilities and is one of the tools that GSU is developing to help you carry out your important work.

As a Local Officer, you represent an inclusive union whose members are at the **core of its priorities**.

Thank you for contributing your time and effort to the Government Services Union.



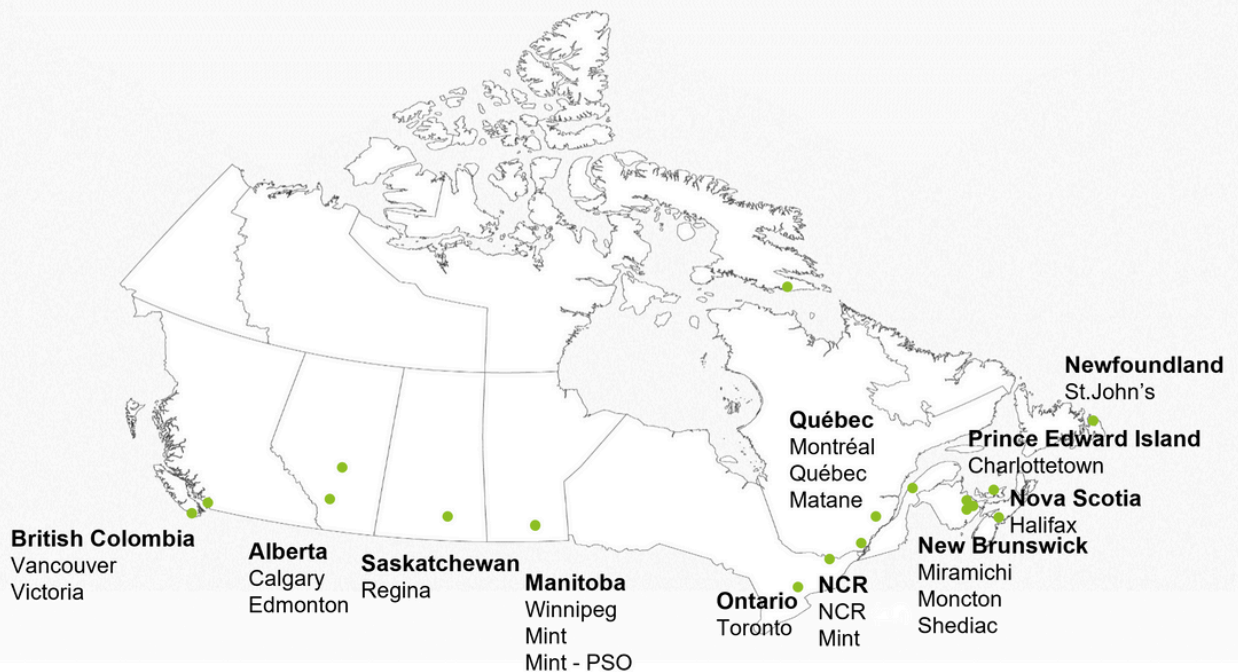
GSU STRUCTURE

Created at a merger Convention in August 1999, **Government Services Union (GSU)**, is one of the 15 Components of the PSAC. A Component brings together members who work for the same government department, agency or separate employer. **PSAC**, in relation to GSU, acts as the **bargaining agent**— in other words, they are the one negotiating your collective agreement.

GSU is organized into **24** Locals Across Canada and represents over **12 000** Members.

Our members work for Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), as well as Shared Services Canada (SSC) within the **PA, SV** or **TC** groups.

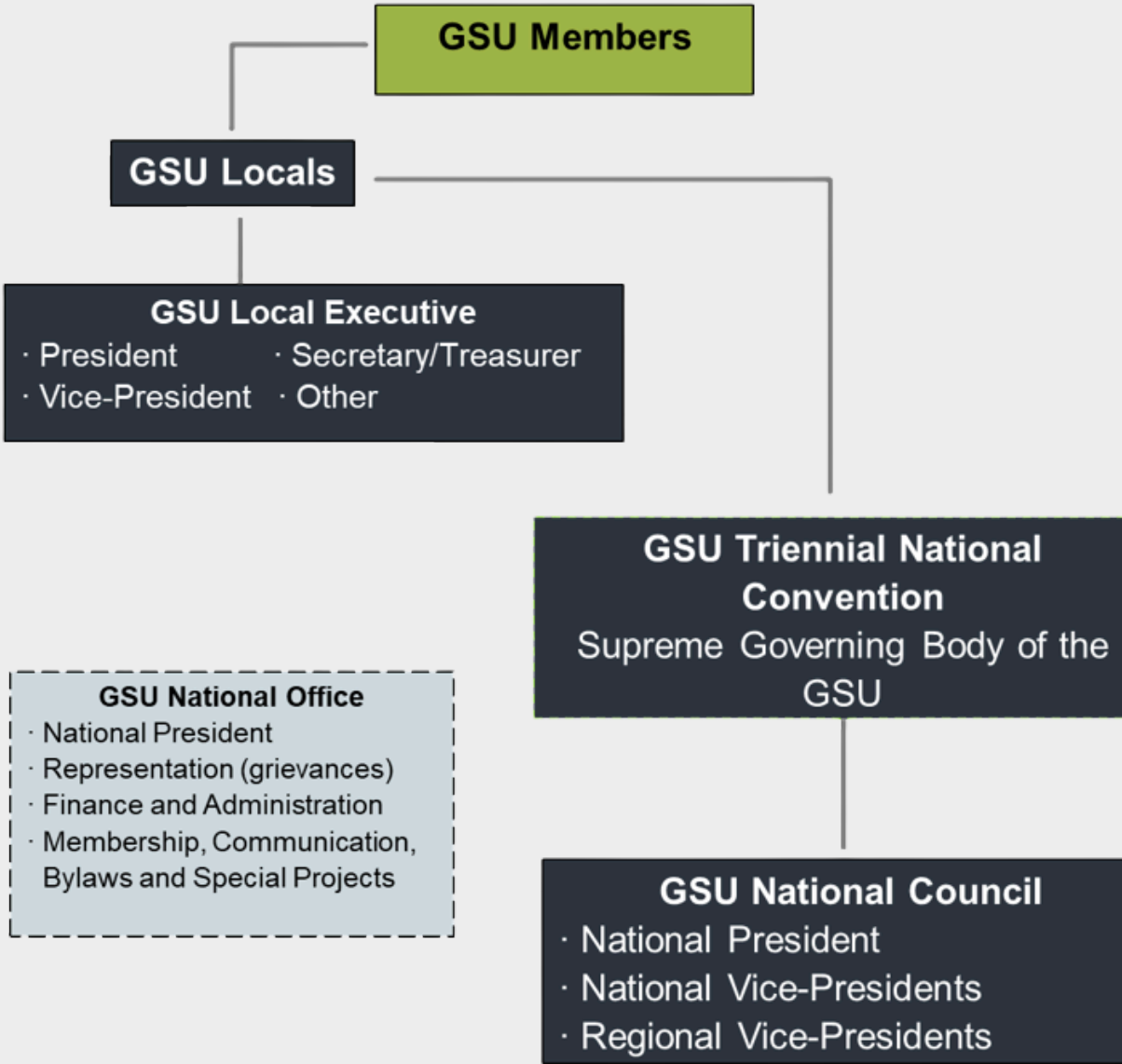
We also represent members from the **Royal Canadian Mint (RCM)**, in both Ottawa and Winnipeg.



GSU’s National Council is elected at our **National Triennial Convention** from Local delegates and is composed of **14 Regional Vice-Presidents, 3 National Vice-Presidents**, (one with the Equity portfolio), and the **National President**.

In addition to electing the Regional and National Leadership, the convention allows delegates to set GSU's priorities and direction for the next three years.

GSU National Office is located in Ottawa and provides members, Locals and elected Officers with advice and representation on various labour relations matters including grievances and disability claims as well as financial and membership services.



LOCAL ORGANIZATION

GSU LOCALS HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO ELECT THEIR OWN OFFICERS, ADOPT BY-LAWS, CONDUCT THEIR OWN MEETINGS, SET THEIR OWN LOCAL DUES RATES

You hold a position within your Local – but what exactly does it mean?

There are **four core positions** that need to be filled for a Local to be considered active. Except for Secretary/Treasurer that can be combined into one position, a member cannot hold more than one position on the executive.

LOCAL PRESIDENT

- Convene and preside at all meetings of the Local;
- Deal with Local Representatives of the employer on matters affecting the interests of the members of the Local;
- Participate on Regional Consultation Committees if requested by the Regional Vice-President and if approved by the GSU National President;
- Participate on GSU Standing Committees if requested by the GSU National President;
- Responsible for members' representation (grievances) in their locals.

LOCAL VICE-PRESIDENT

- Assist the President in their duties and replace the President when requested, or in the case of absence, incapacity, resignation, or death;
- Attend all meetings of the Local, including the Local Executive Committee meetings.

SECRETARY

- Keep an accurate account of the proceedings of each meeting and distribute the AGM minutes to the appropriate members and to the GSU National Office;
- Responsible for maintaining proper documents and all correspondence;
- Attend all meetings of the Local, including the Local Executive Committee meetings.

TREASURER

- Responsible for the financial records of the Local;
- Responsible for the preparation and presentation of financial statements at membership and Local Executive meetings as required;
- Ensure that an up-to-date listing of all members is kept;
- Collect all moneys payable to the Local and deposit such funds in a financial institution approved by the Local Executive Committee;
- Responsible for the disbursement of funds payable by the Local in settlement of its just debts;
- Attend all meetings of the Local, including the Local Executive Committee meetings.

In addition to the four positions mentioned above, a Local can choose to add more elected positions within their executive or outside of the executive, such as, but not limited to, a chief shop steward, a director, a communications officer, occupational health & safety representative. The duties for these positions are determined by the local.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

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REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT (RVP)

Although RVPs are not part of the Local Executive, they play a crucial role in mentoring the Local executive and in helping fulfill their duties.

BY-LAWS

The Local By-laws constitute the democratic framework within which the Local operates. They must not conflict with the GSU By-Laws and/or the PSAC Constitution. In Regulation 2 of GSU By-Laws, Locals can find a framework to guide them. Locals can add By-laws, Regulations and Policies.

Each Local is responsible to have their own set of By-Laws. Although GSU provides a framework to guide Locals in forming their By-Laws, each Local can modify their By-Laws in order to meet their needs - as long as it does not contravene the GSU By-Laws and the PSAC Constitution.

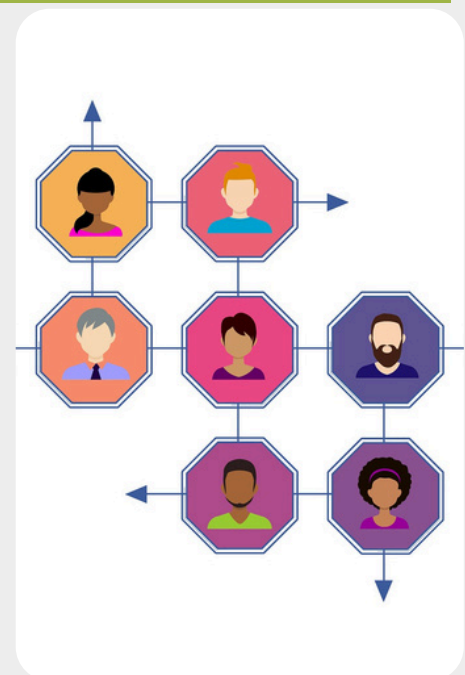


TIPS FOR LOCAL OFFICERS

The potential for effectiveness largely depends on your ability to maximize your time and effort. One way to accomplish this is for you and the other officers in your Local to work together. Although you all have your roles and responsibilities, you are all working towards the **same goal**: creating an effective and positive union presence in the workplace.

All Local Officers are volunteers. Time management, planning and prioritizing will be key in keeping on top of your union work. Try to set some time aside every day to complete union tasks. Depending on the Local's workload, the Local may want to consider hiring someone part-time to help with some clerical tasks, as an example.

Talk with your members – the more they know about the Local activities, the more they will be interested in getting involved. **The bigger your network of volunteers is, the lower the workload for everyone involved.**



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

EVERY YEAR, YOUR LOCAL MUST HOLD AN AGM WHERE YOU WILL APPROVE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, BUDGET AND CONDUCT ELECTIONS

IT CAN BE OVERWELMING ORGANISING AN AGM. THAT IS WHY SEVERAL RESOURCES HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED FOR YOU TO USE.

AGM CHECK LIST



AGM PROCEDURE CHEAT SHEET



LOCAL BUDGET TEMPLATE



UNLESS YOU HAVE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE EMPLOYER, EMPLOYER'S EMAIL SHOULD NOT BE USED TO ADVERSITY YOUR AGM, OR ANY OTHER UNION MATTER.

YOU CAN DO YOUR AGM IN PERSON OR VIRTUAL. IF YOU CHOOSE TO DO A VIRTUAL AGM, GSU CAN PROVIDE YOUR LOCAL WITH A PLATFORM TO DO SO.

AN AGM IS A GREAT ENGAGEMENT TOOL SO MAKE IT FUN! DRAW PRIZES, OFFER SNACKS & REFRESHMENT, HAVE GUESTS SPEAKERS.

SUBSIDIES AVAILABLE TO LOCALS

OVER THE YEAR, GSU AS CREATED POLICIES TO HELP LOCALS BY THE MEAN OF SUBSIDIES. THE DETAILS OF THOSE SUBSIDIES CAN BE FOUND IN GSU BY-LAWS, REGULATIONS AN POLICIES

POLICY 9.1 **CONFERENCES & CONVENTIONS** **LOCAL SUBSIDY**

The Union will provide a subsidy of up to \$1,000 per Local per conference or Convention, to a maximum of four subsidies per Convention cycle, to assist Locals in sending Delegates or Observers to GSU, PSAC, CLC and other Federation of Labour Conferences or Conventions.

POLICY 16 **ACCESSIBILITY FUND**

the union will provide up to \$500 to local to help them ensure that members with disabilities participate fully in official Local functions.

POLICY 9.2 **PSAC CONFERENCES AND TRIENNIAL** **REGIONAL CONVENTIONS LOCAL** **SUBSIDY**

The GSU will provide a Local Subsidy of \$300.00/per day of rest, per delegate, for those GSU Local members attending a PSAC Regional Convention or PSAC National Conference.

POLICY 21 **DISTANT MEMBERS ENGAGEMENT** **SUBSIDY**

The GSU will provide a subsidy of up to \$500.00 per year to locals who have members working in government workplaces located at least 50 km outside of the local's headquarters

CONSULTATIONS

GSU CONSULTS WITH THE EMPLOYER
AT THE LOCAL, REGIONAL AND
NATIONAL LEVEL.

UNION/MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION COMMITTEES (UMCC) OR LABOUR/MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION COMMITTEES (LMCC)

These committees provide an opportunity for union and management representatives to engage in meaningful dialogue on issues that confront or may confront either one or both parties. Everything can be discussed during those consultations, except matters that would lead to altering or changing the intent of a collective agreement. Typical subjects may include:

scheduling of annual leave, internal communications, rescheduling of shifts, working conditions, training programs, change in employer policies and programs, recreational programs, parking and flexible hours.

Local officers are required to attend the LMCC meetings and provide facts relating to particular problems or subjects which affect all the membership of the local. When a problem affects the membership in a specific work area, those members should be consulted, and the steward assigned to this area should be included in the meeting as a resource person. The steward in the area is usually the best resource person to draw on in such cases.

Familiarize yourself with the internal operation of LMCC at all levels: local, regional and national. You should also ensure you are familiar with legislation and policies which govern consultation in your workplaces.

The importance of informing the membership about the issues discussed at these meetings and their outcome cannot be over-emphasized. This will enhance the credibility of the union and the effectiveness of the local.

CONSULTATIONS

GSU CONSULTS WITH THE EMPLOYER
AT THE LOCAL, REGIONAL AND
NATIONAL LEVEL.

LOCAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEES (LOSH)

Workplace health and safety committees must be established in workplaces under federal jurisdiction where there are 20 or more employees.

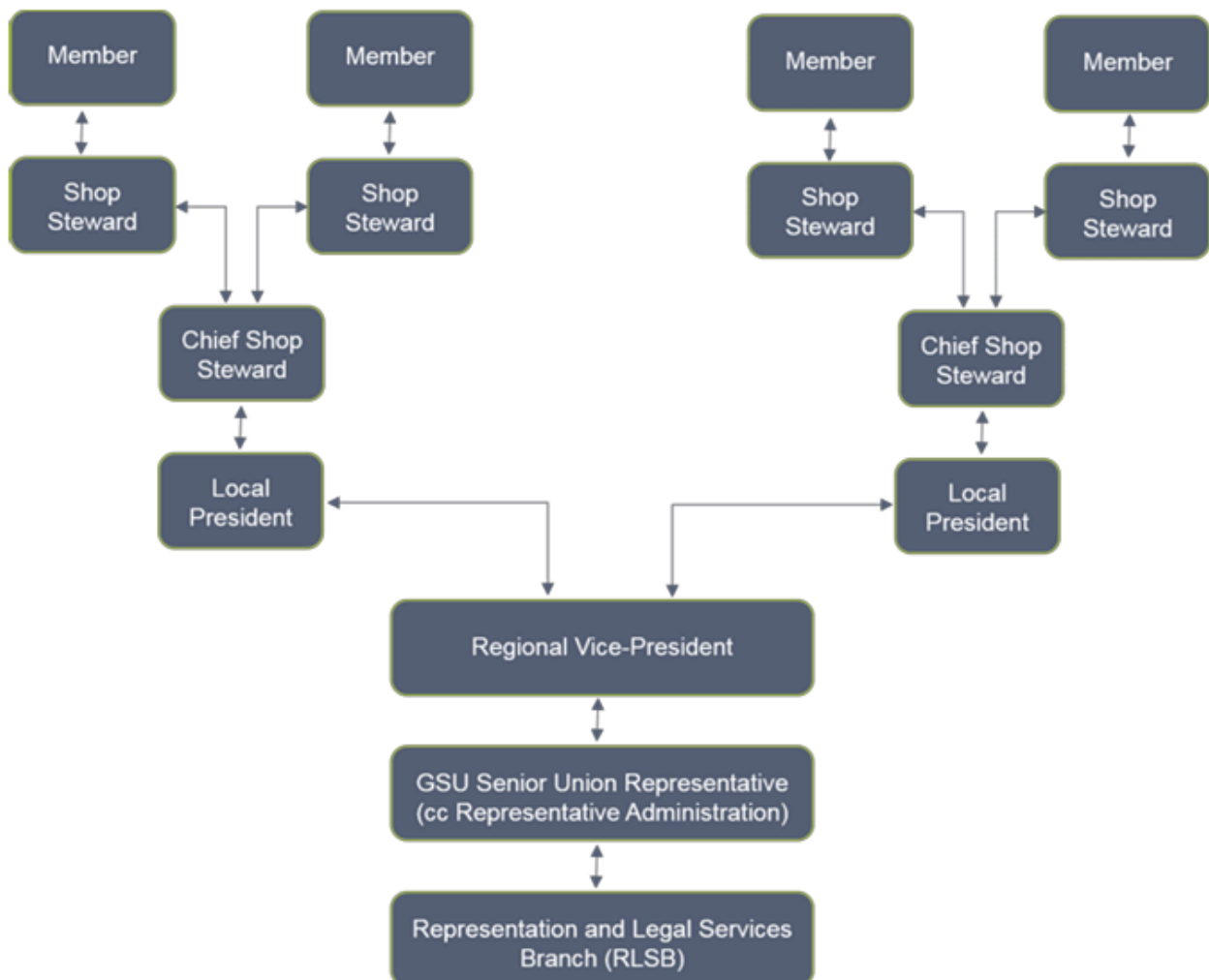
These committees have many duties including the following:

- to consider and expeditiously dispose of health and safety complaints;
- to participate in all of the inquiries, investigations, studies and inspections pertaining to employee health and safety;
- to participate in the implementation and monitoring of a program for the provision of personal protective equipment, clothing, devices, or materials, and, if there is no policy committee, participate in the development of the program;
- to participate in the implementation of changes that may affect occupational health and safety, including work processes and procedures, and, if there is no policy committee, participate in the planning of the implementation of those changes; and
- to inspect all or part of the workplace each month, so that every part of the workplace is inspected at least once a year.
- Employees sitting on the workplace health and safety committee must receive training and compensation for participating in meetings and carrying out their duties.

For more information, see [Pamphlet 6B - Workplace Health and Safety Committees.](#)

GSU KNOWLEDGE TREE

IN ORDER TO SUCCEED ON BEHALF OF ITS MEMBERS' INTEREST, A UNION MUST HAVE AN EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION SYSTEM WITHIN A STRUCTURE THAT SHARES EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE THROUGHOUT THE CHAIN OF SUPPORT. WE LEARN FROM EACH OTHER. THE 'KNOWLEDGE TREE' ILLUSTRATES HOW THIS SYSTEM WORKS WITHIN GSU.



RESOURCES

GSU WEBSITE

Representation Section

- Grievances Tools
- Disability Claim
- Staffing Complaint
- Duty to Fair Representation



Ressources for Locals

- Administration
- Finance
- Education



GSU By-Laws, Regulations & Policies



GSU YOUTUBE CHANNEL

PSAC EDUCATION



Government Services Union
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GOVERNMENT SERVICES UNION

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