



Education Policy

Updated: 10 July 2025

PREAMBLE

Education of its members is a core mission of the union. CUPE 391 delivers on this mission by paying for its members to attend courses that aid the member in performing duties on behalf of the union and its members.

CUPE 391 pays for everything for the member to attend education so they will not be out of pocket. Its Financial Policy (Appendix C of its bylaws, under Member Expenses) indicates the local pays the registration fee for the course, as well as the lost wages of the member (see CUPE 391 book off policy), transportation (mileage, bus/airfare, parking), a per diem so that the member does not need to pay out of pocket for meals and incidentals, and dependent care if the member needs to pay an outside party for it.

EDUCATION OFFICER

Because the local pays all charges related to education, it is the responsibility and the prerogative of the local to determine the eligibility of a course to qualify as valuable to the union, the eligibility of a member to attend a course, and to register the member for the course. The member is not to register themselves unless specifically advised to do so by the local's Education Officer. The Education Officer of the local is one entrusted by the local with this great responsibility, and thus is usually a member of the executive. The Secretary Treasurer, for example, because they process payment for all costs related to education, is a good candidate for an Education Officer, but other candidates can be considered. The Education Officer is appointed by the executive at the beginning of every term, at the Executive Think Tank.

ELIGIBLE UNION EDUCATION SOURCES

1. CUPE Education (National, administered locally by the BC Regional Office. Courses hosted by locals throughout the year, as well as Spring Weeklong School in Kelowna and Fall Weeklong School in Nanaimo)
2. Vancouver and District Labour Council (courses usually held at the Maritime Labour Centre)
3. BC Federation of Labour OH&S courses (courses throughout the province, with one Weeklong School in June in Whistler)
4. Canadian Labour Congress Winter School (courses held at Harrison Hot Springs Resort in January and February)
5. Other sources as approved by the Education Officer

EXAMPLES OF UNION COURSES COMMONLY TAKEN BY MEMBERS OF CUPE 391

May include but are not limited to:

1. Bargaining training

2. Stewardship and grievance training (CUPE requires its stewards to take the Steward Learning Series, a series of modules, to fulfill a graduation as a steward)
3. OH&S training (being on a committee, workplace incident investigations, mental health in the workplace)
4. Classification training

5. Communications and member engagement
6. Political action
7. Human rights in the workplace
8. Preparing for retirement
9. Financial officers training (for Secretary Treasurers, Trustees, Presidents and Vice Presidents, as required by the bylaws)
10. New executive training
11. Union supervisors in the workplace

MEMBER ELIGIBILITY TO TAKE UNION EDUCATION

Any member in good standing has the right to request union education. All requests for education will be seriously considered by the Education Officer. Priority of consideration will be allotted as follows:

1. Education required by the bylaws (e.g. Financial officers for Secretary Treasurer)
2. Education for newly elected members of the executive (new executive training, local presidents training, financial officers, etc.)
3. Education for newly appointed committee members (e.g. new members of the bargaining committee will be registered for bargaining training.)
4. Members within five years of retirement can request to attend the Preparing for retirement seminar.
5. All other requests will be considered with regard to their value to the local and how the member will use the skills learned to benefit the local, and whether the Education budget will accommodate the expense.

PROCESS FOR REQUESTING UNION EDUCATION

All members can either send a request by email to treasurer@cupe391.ca. All requests will be forwarded to the Education Officer. Successful candidates will be contacted by email with the confirmation by the education provider, which includes details of the course (dates and times, directions and parking information, etc.), and informed by the Education Officer of all expenses the Financial Policy allows for reimbursement, and how to submit for reimbursement.

IF A REQUEST FOR UNION EDUCATION IS DENIED

A member can appeal if their request for union education is denied. The appeal will be brought to the next executive meeting for consideration and a vote without the Education Officer present. Members will be informed in writing if their appeal has been denied with the reasons for denial.