

## **Grand Erie Public Health**

### **Public Sector Labour Relations Act (PSLRTA)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. What will be decided in the representation vote?**

The Ontario Labour Relations Board (“OLRB”) has ordered a two bargaining unit structure for Grand Erie Public Health unionized employees: one unit for Nursing and one for All Employees.

The vote will decide which union is elected to represent the All Employees unit.

**2. When does the PSLRTA campaign period begin? When will the representation vote be held?**

The campaign period starts on Thursday, February 19 and will end on February 25, 2026. The voting period will begin on February 26 at 8 a.m. and finish at 4 p.m. on February 27, 2026. (the specific start and stop times of the vote may vary by order of the OLRB, should this happen ONA will post those times in all relevant communication and on the ONA website. The vote will be held virtually.

On the morning of February 25, the OLRB will send your Personal Information Number (PIN) to your work e-mail address. The Personal Identification Number (PIN) is a secure code used by the OLRB for confidential electronic union votes. Each eligible employee will receive a unique, one-time-use PIN via your Employer email address to cast their ballot in a secret vote, which is supervised by the OLRB.

If, by the day of the vote, you have not received your PIN, please go to the ONA website. Our website will be updated with the contact information for the OLRB Vote Officer assigned to our campaign. That Vote Officer will assist you in getting your PIN.

**3. What unions will be on the ballot?**

There will be two Unions listed on the ballot: ONA and CUPE. ONA is the only union that focuses solely on representing health care workers and is the best choice to represent Grand Erie Public Health employees.

**4. What if I am on leave, or on vacation? Can I still vote?**

Yes, you are entitled to vote even if you are on leave. First, you need to ensure that the Employer has your personal email address so your electronic ballot can be sent to

you.

If you are on vacation or on any other leave, please follow your employer policy with regard to accessing your work email remotely in order to access your PIN from your work email.

If you are unable to access your work email to obtain your OLRB issued PIN, the OLRB Vote Officer assigned to our campaign will be able to issue a PIN to your chosen email address. Contact information and the process to do so will be posted on ONA's website in advance of the polls opening on February 26, 2026.

**5. What if I don't receive the email with my PIN from the OLRB?**

The ONA website will be updated with the Notice of Vote information from the OLRB. This will include the OLRB case number and specific contact information for the OLRB Help Desk. For security reasons, when contacting the OLRB Help Desk, you will be asked to verify your identity and provide your full name, contact information, and the OLRB case number for the Grand Erie Public Health vote.

**6. Why does there need to be a campaign period?**

The campaign period gives each union the opportunity to contact potential members with their message and try to win support and establish a "level playing field" between the unions. Campaigning should only take place starting February 19, 2026 and no union, other than your own, should be contacting you before the campaign begins (inside or outside of the workplace).

**7. What will the campaign look like?**

ONA will be running a professional campaign, and the OLRB will ensure, through previously agreed-to campaign arrangements, meant to ensure all union campaigns are on a level playing field.

As you know, in the union movement, we are all brothers and sisters, allies who often work together. As a result of the Ford government passing legislation that resulted in the employer electing to voluntarily merge, triggering the PSLRTA process, we are all now in this situation that pits one union against another.

ONA is a professional health-care union, and our campaign will reflect why ONA is the best health-care union to represent you. ONA has represented health-care employees for a very long time, and we understand your workplaces, and the work you do, better than any other union. ONA provides high-quality representation for members. We are the right choice to continue the fight.

**8. Will the union be campaigning in the workplace during the campaign period?**

Yes, ONA will be in the workplace for both Information Tables and Information Sessions.

**9. When will the Tabling be scheduled? Can I visit the table during my work hours?**

The Unions have agreed to hold tabling and information sessions from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. during the campaign as per a set schedule. Attendance at these sessions should be on unpaid time.

**10. When will the Information Sessions be held? Can I attend an Information Session for each union?**

A schedule of ONA Information Tables and Information Sessions will be posted on the ONA website.

Yes, you can attend an information session for each union. Each voting employee is permitted to attend the Information Tables or Information Sessions on unpaid time, breaks or meal period.

**11. Will I receive campaign emails from the unions?**

Yes. Each union is allowed to send up to 5 campaign-related emails through the Employer's email system during the campaign period. You should also expect to receive contact from both unions via any personal email address you have provided your employer.

**12. Will I be contacted by the unions through my personal phone number, or by mail at my home address?**

Yes, you very likely will be contacted via telephone and/or mail during the campaign by each of the unions.

The ability to contact all potential members has been recognized as necessary by the OLRB to ensure a fair campaign. The OLRB ordered the Employer to provide each employee's personal contact information to the unions for the purposes of the campaign, which means they do not need to seek individual consent to release that information. To ensure fairness, the OLRB ordered the unions not to use this personal contact information until the campaign period. All unions have agreed to use the personal contact information provided by the Employer only for the purposes of the campaign, and will destroy it when the campaign is over.

**13. How many votes does ONA need to win representation rights for the bargaining unit?**

ONA will need 50 per cent plus one of the overall number of votes cast to win bargaining rights.

**14. Are there any anticipated impacts on my rights under the existing collective agreement?**

All existing collective agreements will remain in place however the parties will negotiate a transition agreement in order to establish common grievance language, job posting language and common seniority provisions on an interim basis until the first collective agreement is negotiated.

**15. Is it possible that we may have our wages lowered through the harmonization process?**

This would be highly unusual. It is safe to say that ONA would be looking to harmonize wages at the best rates and further looking to apply annual increases beyond that. ONA will fight to ensure this does not happen as we have in every round of bargaining and as we have in all previous post-PSLRTA first collective agreement negotiations.

**16. How will ONA achieve a first Collective Agreement following PSLRTA?**

Following the vote and certification of ONA as the bargaining unit, a transitional collective agreement must be negotiated and ratified first.

ONA has reviewed and analyzed all collective agreement language and entitlements. We will require disclosure of updated documentation and information from the employer to prepare for bargaining.

**17. Does ONA represent members in different sectors of health care?**

Yes, ONA represents members in all sectors of health care. Our members work in a variety of diverse health-care settings, from acute care in hospitals, residential care, community-based public health, Nurse Practitioner-led clinics, wall-to-wall in clinics and even industrial settings in every classification. ONA is the only union on this ballot that focuses primarily on health-care workers, and as a result we have exceptional expertise in this sector.

**18. ONA members do not have carriage of their grievances while in other unions they do. What does this mean? What is the benefit of not having carriage?**

Carriage simply means a member owns their grievances. In ONA, the union owns the grievance. Having grievance carriage might sound great, but the truth is this approach results in nurses and health-care professionals not being supported to resolve grievances in their earliest stages with management. There is no assessment of the merits of the grievance, if it is winnable, by considering contract interpretation, case law, past practice, and other factors. For members in unions who have carriage of their grievances this means all grievances can advance to arbitration. This results in backlogs in the arbitration process, long wait times for resolution or hearings. It is a costly approach to contract administration and may not be the best use of dues. In ONA, a member can determine at any stage of the grievance process if they would like to withdraw, settle, or if the grievance has merit to proceed to arbitration, whether they want to proceed. ONA does have the right to not refer a grievance to arbitration, and this determination and rationale must be shared with the member who is grieving.

**19. What will I pay in dues? Is it more than I am currently paying? What do I get for it?**

The services and benefits members have access to are funded by membership dues. Those services and representation include:

- Negotiating collective agreements, open and transparent membership led and driven process including the election of negotiating committees, demands setting and bargaining campaigns to win demands;
- Grievances and arbitrations, including legal counsel;
- Professional Practice Specialist support, assistance with practice issues and workload issues;
- Legal Expense Assistance Plan, including malpractice insurance and representation at licensing body hearings (regulatory colleges), in certain courts of law and inquests related to your work;
- Occupational health and safety specialists support and guidance;
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) specialists to assist with claims appeals and hearings
- Long-term disability (LTD) specialist support to assist with claims appeals and base coverage for members without employer LTD plans;
- Critical illness coverage;
- Free education workshops and training;
- Communications, including a digital magazine;
- Opportunities to attend member events and meetings;
- Advocacy, workplace and provincial campaigns through lobbying, media relations, organizing and mobilizing;

- Membership in the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) and Brantford and District Labour Council. ~~and~~
- On the Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan (HOOPP) Board of Directors.

All of this makes it possible for you and your coworkers to fight for workplace rights.

ONA membership dues are a flat rate – a set amount that you pay monthly through payroll deductions. You can deduct union dues from your taxable income. Some unions calculate dues as a percentage of wages. This means that the more you earn, the more you pay. Instead, we offer predictable membership dues that don't penalize you for earning more.

The collection of union dues is a democratic and transparent process. At ONA Biennial Conventions, members vote on the dues structure and any increases, along with how dues are spent.

As of January 2026, rates are:

<b>Straight Time Hourly Rate</b>	<b>Monthly Dues</b>	<b>Tax Deductible</b>
<b>Equal or greater than \$37.50</b>	\$132.69	\$129.19
<b>Greater than \$26.00 but less than \$31.00</b>	\$78.20	\$74.70
<b>Equal or less than \$31.00</b>	\$68.20	\$64.70
<b>Stand-by Pay</b>	\$5.00	\$1.50

**20. What does ONA's Legal Expense Assistance Plan cover?**

The Legal Expense Assistance Plan helps ONA members who face legal or regulatory body problems relating to their work as part of an ONA bargaining unit. There are no time limits on complaints to regulatory colleges, so allegations can sometimes arise months or even years after an alleged incident. LEAP provides advice and/or representation in the following situations:

- Criminal investigations or charges arising from a work-related incident;

- Coroner’s investigations and inquests;
- Complaints to the Information and Privacy Commissioner; and
- Being subpoenaed as a witness in a criminal case, regulatory matter, coroner’s inquest or custody dispute.

All health-care workers for whom ONA is the bargaining agent, and who regularly pay dues or the equivalent, are covered by the Plan. In addition, ONA members who are not health-care professionals are eligible for help with coroner’s and police matters, and for witness advice. French-language representation is available on request. ONA provides secondary coverage for professional liability (malpractice) lawsuits, through Trisura Guaranteed Insurance Company. This professional liability Insurance policy is designed to provide coverage that is secondary and in addition to the coverage that is carried by health-care employers where ONA is the bargaining agent.

**21. I thought ONA was a nurse’s union.**

We are a health-care union. We are sector specific, single focus, health care only. Most of our staff come out of health care. We are specialized. The ONA Board of Directors who help shape the policy and direction of ONA all come from health care. There is nothing wrong with the fact that we have historically been a nurse’s union or that we use the power of those numbers to achieve superior contracts and respect from stakeholders. All our health-care workers have value and have made significant contributions. The bottom line is, ONA’s only focus is improving working conditions for health care professionals and fighting for quality health care in Ontario.

**22. I want to be with the biggest group of health-care workers – Why would I join the smaller group?**

ONA is the largest health care union in Ontario. We are 100% health care. Health care professionals in ONA will tell you that they receive the same level of support, regardless of occupation. Regardless of your classification, what you all have in common is that you work in health care and provide some level of care or support of care for clients. As such, ONA is the logical choice as this is our area of expertise. The concern that health care will get lost or have no voice in ONA is not factual. How does a health care professional get lost in a health care union? When you attend an ONA educational conference or convention, everything addressed will be relevant to you as a health-care worker. Your dues are spent on issues that matter to you and are not used to subsidize the needs of workers outside the health-care sector.