



***UVAE POLICY STATEMENTS***

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***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 1***

***NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEETINGS***

1. The Triennial Convention of this Component provides funds for National Executive Meetings.
2. All meetings are at the call of the National President, or at the request of a simple majority of the National Executive Officers as outlined in By-Law 6, Section 7, and By-Law 8, Section 1(g).
3. All National Executive Officers shall furnish written reports to all National Executive Meetings.

## ***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 2***

### ***NATIONAL EXECUTIVE TRAVEL***

1. The National President shall travel as necessary in the conduct of the business of this Component.
2. The National Executive Officers will obtain authorization from the National President for any travel other than:
  - a. to attend meetings of the National Executive,
  - b. to attend Committee Meetings of the National Executive when appointed to do so,
  - c. to visit the Locals within their Regions one time per mandate.
  - d. Subject to special circumstances and if the budget permits, additional visits to the local can occur.
3. The National Executive Officers shall give advance notice to the National President when scheduling visits to Locals and Sub-Locals within their Region.
4. All invoices or vouchers for travel and hotel accommodations are to be forwarded to the Component Office immediately after travel is completed.
5. National Executive Officers can be accompanied on condition that the combined airfares and any additional hotel and meals of the National Executive Officers are less than the regular economy fare and that there be an overall saving to UVAE. These exceptions have to be approved by the National President or designate.

***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 3***

***NATIONAL LOCAL PRESIDENTS' CONFERENCE***

The National Presidents' Conference was authorized by the UVAE 2005 Convention. When possible, this conference will be held jointly with the Annual Regional Union Management meeting.

***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 4***

***REFERRAL OF POLICY QUESTIONS***

Requests for and results of policy decisions shall be communicated to each National Executive Officer.

The urgency of correspondence relating to policy decisions will be as determined by the National President.

***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 5***

***INSURANCE - NATIONAL EXECUTIVE AND STAFF***

National Executive provided for the establishment of a group insurance policy covering the National Executive and the National Office Staff.

Premiums of the insurance policy to be paid by UVAE.

October 1990

***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 6***

***MEMBERSHIP TRAINING POLICY***

Basic Policy

All UVAE National Officers and members are urged to attend training courses sponsored by the Public Service Alliance of Canada, or any other training courses approved by the Component that would benefit the Locals concerned.

February 2006



***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 7***

***BILINGUAL POLICY***

1. All bulletins and other information of interest to the membership emanating from the National Office shall be published in both official languages.
2. All correspondence relative to UVAE Conventions shall be reproduced in both official languages.
3. The verbatim proceedings of our Convention will be reproduced as spoken.
4. All National Executive Officers' Meetings of this Component will, when necessary, provide simultaneous translation for the National Executive Officers.

***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 8***

***UNION LABEL POLICY***

Wherever possible, UVAE Component shall honour the Union Label Policy.

October 1990

***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 9***

***PSAC NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE***

UVAE will encourage the women National Executive Officers and women members to attend the PSAC National Women's Conference.

Upon receiving the list of UVAE women applicants from the PSAC, each National Vice-President will recommend a woman applicant from their region to attend the PSAC National Women's Conference.

In situations where we have more applicants than seat allocations, a selection committee will be convened to select women participants ensuring representation from each region.

## **POLICY STATEMENT NO. 10**

### **ORGANIZATION PRINCIPLES - UVAE LOCALS**

#### **Authorization**

1. UVAE National Executive, in session November 1986, clarified and reaffirmed established principles related to UVAE organization and operational policies.

#### **Principles**

Pursuant to UVAE By-Law 7, the following Principles of Organization govern the continuance of and the creation of UVAE Local identities:

##### **Principle No. 1**

All VAC Regional Offices will have separate and distinct Local identities, except in the case of Regional and District Offices which are co-located. Members in both Locals may have a referendum vote to determine if they wish to amalgamate as one Local by submitting a written request, signed by a majority of members, to the National Office.

##### **Principle No. 2**

Subject to the proviso in Principle No. 1, all major District Offices will have separate and distinct local identities.

The National Executive defined major District Offices to be:

- a) a Local duly constituted prior to regionalization,
- b) a Local having a duly established Local Executive,
- c) a Local issued a Charter by the National Executive, either prior to or subsequent to regionalization, providing such Charter has not been the subject of revocation by the National Executive.

##### **Principle No. 3**

Members at Deer Lodge Centre, Ste-Anne's Hospital, Charlottetown H.O. and Ottawa H.O. will have separate and distinct Local identities.

**Principle No. 4**

UVAE members in locations other than covered by Principles 1 or 2 above may have a referendum vote to determine if they wish to be under their Regional Local or the closest District Local within that Region and if not, shall be declared members at large of their respective Regional Office Local.

## **POLICY STATEMENT NO. 11**

### **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITHIN UVAE**

#### **Purpose**

Channels of communication have been established by UVAE National Executive to regularize the conduct of communication:

- a) within UVAE; and
- b) to the Public Service Alliance of Canada.

#### **Local Origin Correspondence**

Correspondence from UVAE Locals must emanate over the signature of a Local Executive Officer to UVAE National Office.

Correspondence emanating direct from members other than the Local President or Local Secretary may be redirected to the Local President for appropriate action.

#### **National Office Correspondence**

##### **A) Policy Matters**

UVAE National Office will conduct policy matter correspondence by authority of and/or on behalf of the National President.

##### **B) Regular Correspondence**

UVAE National Office will conduct regular correspondence with UVAE Locals, with "advice" copy to the relative National Executive Officer.

##### **C) Urgent Matters to National Executive Officers**

All subject matter of an URGENT nature shall be prepared in duplicate on green paper.

Recipient will reply promptly.

#### **D) Correspondence to PSAC Headquarters and Government Addresses**

Correspondence to PSAC Headquarters, VAC Head Office, or other Governmental, Ministerial or Departmental authority, will be prepared for signature of the National President or designate.

#### **E) Telephone Calls**

Telephone contact to the National Office should follow the lines of communications under normal circumstances, that being the Local Executive Officer for local matters and the National Vice-President for other Component/PSAC matters. All contact with the PSAC should be made by the National Office, unless the caller is authorized to deal directly with the PSAC (e.g., a negotiating team member).

## **POLICY STATEMENT NO. 12**

### **ESSENTIAL SERVICES**

1. The NVPs are responsible to communicate with the locals in their region to review the demands presented by the department.
2. The NVPs in turn must review all information given to them by their locals and then make recommendations to the National President.
3. The National Office will then submit a final list established according to the legislation.
4. The NVPs will consult with the locals in their region with regard to the final changes to the list in case of unforeseen circumstances.



***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 13***

***STAFFING – UVAE***

1. The Staff of UVAE National Office are appointed under the authority vested in the UVAE National President.
2. Staff selections and appointments of bargaining unit members are made pursuant to collective agreement negotiations with Alliance Employees' Union, Unit XIII.
3. Selection of the Executive Assistant shall be by a board whose members shall be selected from the National Executive.

**POLICY STATEMENT NO. 14**

**TRANSFER OF LEAVE CREDITS**

1. In this Regulation, the term "employee" means all employees of UVAE, as well as all full-time employees of the Alliance Centre and all full-time employees of Components of the PSAC with which UVAE has a reciprocal Transfer of Leave Agreement.
2. For the purpose of the Regulation, "leave" is defined as:
  - a) sick leave,
  - b) special leave,
  - c) severance pay entitlement.
3. When an employee terminates employment in the Alliance Centre or in a Component with which UVAE has a reciprocal Transfer of Leave Credits Agreement and, within two weeks, commences employment in UVAE, there will be transferred to UVAE all unused leave credits that stand to the employee's credit in the Alliance Centre or the Component, whichever the case may be, provided these are substantiated to the satisfaction of the UVAE Component.
4. These unused leave credits shall be placed in the records of UVAE as though they had been earned while in the employ of UVAE and shall be so regarded for all purposes.
5. Severance pay to which the employee is entitled shall be calculated in accordance with the pertinent collective agreement. A cheque shall be issued to the UVAE in the amount required to satisfy the provisions of that article.
6. The provisions of this Regulation shall apply, mutatis mutandis, when an employee terminates employment in the UVAE and within two weeks commences employment in the Alliance Centre or a Component of the PSAC with which UVAE has a reciprocal Transfer of Leave Credits Agreement.
7. The National President of UVAE shall be authorized to enter into reciprocal Transfer of Leave Credits Agreements with other Components on the basis of paragraphs 1 to 6 inclusive.

November 1994

## ***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 15***

### ***UVAE HARASSMENT POLICY AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE***

#### **1. Principle**

The Union of Veterans' Affairs Employees believes in the full equality of all of its members and staff and in the right of each member and staff person to be treated with dignity and respect. Through its By-Laws and policies, UVAE strives to eliminate all forms of discrimination within the union. UVAE also actively supports and promotes the aims of human rights legislation and associated programs which are designed to achieve equality within Canadian society.

#### **2. Statement of Commitment**

The Union of Veterans' Affairs Employees will take all necessary steps to create and maintain a harassment free environment at all UVAE functions.

UVAE will neither tolerate nor condone attitudes and behaviours, regardless of intent, that are likely to undermine the dignity, self-esteem or security of an individual, or create an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive environment.

#### **3. General Responsibilities**

Respect for human rights must be the basis of interaction among trade unionists. The responsibility to create a harassment free environment rests with the individual members and staff in attendance at a union function and with UVAE as a union and an employer.

Any member or staff person who witnesses or observes harassment taking place in any form at union activities has a responsibility to take appropriate steps to see that the behaviour is stopped. Members and staff of our union also have the responsibility to provide leadership in setting standards of behaviour that reflect our commitment to equality.

Since statistics show that women are the predominant victims of sexual harassment, union brothers have a special responsibility where this type of harassment is concerned. Brothers can show their support by being proactive in helping each other to learn about and prevent sexual harassment and in encouraging each other to adapt to society's changing standards of behaviour.

#### 4. Definition

Harassment is an expression of perceived power and superiority by the harasser(s) over another person or group, usually for reasons of sex, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, family or marital status, social or economic class, political or religious affiliation, or language.

Harassment is unwelcome and unwanted, may be expressed verbally or physically, and can occur as a single incident or on a repeated basis.

"Unwelcome" and "unwanted" in this context means any actions or attitudes which are undesired by the person(s) experiencing the harassment and which the harasser(s) knows, or ought reasonably to know, are not desired by the victim(s).

Harassment, when based on one of the grounds described above, can include the following types of behaviours:

- unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendos, taunts, or other discriminatory language;
- insulting gestures or practical jokes which cause someone embarrassment or discomfort;
- display of offensive pictures, graffiti, or other materials;
- refusal to talk with, or work with, a person;
- over-protection of someone because of a perceived need (e.g., disability; pregnancy; etc.);
- physical assault.

Sexual harassment is a particularly vicious form of harassment and is almost always directed at women. Examples of sexual harassment include:

- unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendos, or taunts of a sexual nature about a person's body, clothing, or sex;

- insulting gestures and practical jokes of a sexual nature which cause discomfort or embarrassment;
- display of pornographic pin-up pictures, graffiti or other offensive material;
- leering (sexually suggestive staring);
- demands for sexual favours;
- unnecessary physical contact such as touching, patting or pinching;
- physical assault.

## **5. Individual Impact**

Harassment is a serious social and union issue. Harassment is not a joke nor is it a joking matter. Its impact can range from feelings of uneasiness or discomfort to actual physical harm. It can be emotionally, psychologically and physically damaging. Harassment hurts.

## **6. Impact on Environment**

People can be victimized by harassment both directly and indirectly. Indirect victims are adversely affected by harassment when they are witnesses to the harassment and/or must continue to operate in a tense, poisoned environment. In response, they may withdraw into silence, cease to actively participate, leave the union function, or withdraw from union activity altogether. Harassment weakens our union.

All forms of harassment that go unchallenged leave the wrong impression as to what is acceptable human interaction. They poison the environment and may cause an escalation in the offensive behaviours.

Victims of harassment do not cause the attitudes and behaviours of the harasser(s). While we live in a society that is not free from discrimination and harassment, we are each individually responsible for our own behaviour.

## **7. Complaint Procedures**

UVAE will respect this policy and implement it fully. At any union function, once it is made known to the union, either through the responsible staff representative or elected officer, that an incident of harassment may have occurred, UVAE has a legal responsibility to take all necessary steps to address the situation. All complaints and investigations initiated under this policy will be treated with discretion and handled in a confidential manner by the staff representatives and elected officers involved.

### **7.1 Member to Member Harassment:**

#### **a. Victims:**

A person who believes that she or he is a victim of harassment has not only the right, but also the responsibility to make it clear that the attention, attitude, or behaviour is unwelcome and unwanted. However, should you feel threatened, vulnerable, or simply unable to confront the harasser, you should seek immediate assistance from either the elected officer(s) or staff representative(s) responsible for the union function. It is important not to wait to make your complaint known. The sooner the appropriate people are aware of the situation, the sooner it can be resolved.

Some forms of harassment (e.g., physical) are so severe and serious that the union must take immediate action to protect both the victim and potential victims. For other forms of harassment, victim(s) may be satisfied to resolve the situation informally, especially when this results in an end to the offending attitude or behaviour. However, in cases where the attitude or behaviour persists, the person making the complaint

(complainant) may be asked to put the allegation in writing. The elected officer(s) or staff representative(s) will investigate the complaint and determine whether the member's conduct falls within the union definition of harassment. This process will provide for separate interviews with the complainant(s), alleged harasser(s) and with any witnesses. If it is determined that harassment has occurred, appropriate action will be taken by the elected officer(s) or staff representative(s).

Regardless of what disciplinary action may be imposed on the harasser(s), the union will make every effort to ensure that victims of harassment are protected from any and all forms of retaliation.

**b. Alleged Harasser(s):**

The alleged harasser(s) should also understand that UVAE will fully implement this policy. Alleged harasser(s) should expect a fair, thorough and objective investigation of all complaints, and should understand that they may be subject to disciplinary actions by the union if a complaint is upheld.

**Examples of appropriate action may include:**

- a requirement that the harasser(s) make a private or public apology to the victim(s) depending on the situation;
- a requirement that the harasser(s) make a commitment to cease the offensive behaviour;
- a requirement that the harasser(s) study the union's policy on harassment and demonstrate that they understand what it means;
- a suggestion that the harasser(s) attend training sessions on harassment that may be available in the community;
- a stipulation that a specific period of time must pass before the harasser(s) would be entitled to attend similar union functions in the future;
- removal of the harasser from the union function;
- suspension from union membership.

For substantiated serious offenses such as unnecessary physical contact, or physical or sexual assault, regardless of intent or proffered apology, the harasser should expect to be immediately expelled from the union function. In such circumstances, it is imperative that the union take action to protect other members from similar behaviour as well as to protect the victim from retaliation or continued physical attacks. Members who harass a second time at a union function, or at a subsequent union function, can also expect to be immediately expelled.

In the case of an harasser expelled from a union function, the union's constitutional provisions with respect to membership rights and discipline may be applied and may result in penalties up to and including suspension from union membership. In circumstances where the behaviour falls within the criminal code, the Union may assist the victim in filing the appropriate criminal charges.

Where incidents of harassment result in disciplinary action by the union, UVAE National Executive Officers will have the right to disseminate the relevant information.

c. Staff Person(s) or Elected Officer(s) Responsible for the Union Function:

For harassment behaviours that do not constitute assault, or threatening physical contact, these are the considerations that will apply in determining what disciplinary action, if any, will be imposed on the harasser(s):

- any voluntary admission by the harasser(s) to the behaviour that is the basis of a complaint;
- cooperative attitude on the part of the alleged harasser(s) with the investigation of a complaint;
- evidence that an harasser sincerely regrets the behaviour and is willing to take steps to change;
- the needs of the victim;
- the welfare of the group;
- the union's legal obligations under applicable human rights legislation.



## **7.2 Staff or Elected Officer to Member Harassment:**

Any member complaints of harassment by a staff person or by an elected union officer at a union function should be immediately directed to:

1. the National President or the Executive Assistant if the alleged harasser is an elected union officer; and
2. the National President or Executive Assistant if the alleged harasser is a staff person.

When the alleged harasser is an elected union officer the complaint procedure outlined in By-Law 12 of the UVAE By-Laws and Regulation No. 19 of the PSAC Constitution will apply.

## **7.3 Member to Staff Harassment:**

As an employer, the Component has a legal responsibility to ensure a harassment free work environment for employees. Any staff person who experiences harassment by a union member has the right to complain to the employer (Component). All such complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the applicable provisions in employees' collective agreements.

## **8. Unjust Complaints**

Nothing in this policy condones making an unjust complaint. A complaint is considered unjust when it constitutes a false charge that is made with malicious or vexatious intent. Members making such complaints may be subject to UVAE and PSAC disciplinary procedures.

## **9. Appeal Procedure**

A harasser who has been expelled from a union function may file an appeal in writing with the National President. The National President will initiate an investigation and make a final decision as to whether or not the disciplinary action was appropriate. In the event that harassment at a union function results in suspension pursuant to Section 22 of the PSAC Constitution, the member may appeal the decision to a Tribunal established under PSAC Regulation 19.

When a decision is made that a complaint is unjust, the complainant may file an appeal in writing with the National President. The National President will initiate an investigation and make a final determination as to whether or not the decision that the complaint was unjust was an appropriate decision.

#### **10. Ongoing Assistance to Victims**

Members who are victims of harassment at union functions may expect assistance from the union in dealing with the effects of the harassment. Any requests for additional assistance will be referred to the National President for consideration. Victims should make their needs for assistance known to the responsible union officer or staff representative at the union function.

Harassers will be provided with any information the union may have available on community counselling services.

To learn more about harassment and how it can be prevented, we encourage members to undertake the following:

- review the Union's policies with regard to harassment.
- attend PSAC courses such as "Men and Women Talking: A Vision of Equality"; "Fighting Discrimination: The Local's Role"; "Sexual Harassment: What Harm Done?"
- view the PSAC video, "Harassment at Work".
- take advantage of resources available in the community.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

#### **Definition of Complaint:**

A complaint is an allegation concerning the actions or behaviour of an elected union officer, union member, or UVAE staff person during a duly authorized UVAE function, meeting or convention.

## **Procedure:**

### **a. Local Union Meeting or Function**

When a member, elected union officer or UVAE staff person has a complaint regarding the actions or behaviour of another member, elected union officer or UVAE staff person the following steps will be taken:

1. The member should contact their National Vice-President and report the incident, including details as to the circumstances, witnesses available and corrective action requested.
2. In cases where the National Vice-President is unavailable or the complaint is going to be lodged against the NVP, the member should call the National Office and report the incident to the National President or Executive Assistant.
3. The National Vice-President, National President or Executive Assistant will:
  - a. During or at the end of this discussion, request the complainant to provide the complaint in writing or sign a statement provided by the National Vice-President, National President or Executive Assistant; whichever is considered appropriate.
  - b. If the complainant is unwilling to prepare and/or sign a statement, he/she will be advised that no further action will be taken on the complaint. In addition, no record will be kept of the discussion, if the complainant is unwilling to sign a statement the complaint will be viewed as never having been made.
4. Should the complainant agree to sign a statement the National Vice-President, the National President or Executive Assistant will provide a copy of this statement to the member, elected union officer or UVAE staff person who is the subject of the complaint and request their comments within ten working days.
5. The National President will be responsible for investigating a written complaint.
6. If the complaint is substantiated in the opinion of the National President; she/he will take appropriate action to remedy the problem and will advise the complainant, member, elected union officer, UVAE staff person and any others involved in the complaint process.

7. If the complaint is unsubstantiated, the complainant, member, elected union officer, UVAE staff person and any others involved in the complaint process will be advised.

#### **B. UVAE Committee, Local President or National Executive Officer Meetings**

When a committee member, Local President or alternate, National Executive Officer or Alternate or UVAE staff person, has a complaint regarding the actions or behaviour of another committee member, Local President or alternate, National Executive Officer or alternate or UVAE staff person the following steps will be taken:

1. The complainant should report the incident to the National President, Executive Assistant or Service Officer including details as to the circumstances, witnesses available and corrective action requested.
2. The National President, Executive Assistant or Service Officer will:
  - a. During or at the end of discussing the complaint, request the complainant to provide the complaint in writing; or sign a statement prepared by the National President, Executive Assistant or Service Officer; whichever is considered appropriate.
  - b. If the complainant is unwilling to prepare and/or sign a statement, he/she will be advised that no further action will be taken on the complaint. In addition, no record will be kept of the discussion, if the complainant is unwilling to sign a statement, the complaint will be viewed as never having been made.
3. Should the complainant agree to sign a statement, the National President, Executive Assistant or Service Officer will provide a copy of this statement to the committee member, local president or alternate, National Executive Officer or alternate or UVAE staff person who is the subject of the complaint and request their comments.

4. The National President will be responsible for the disposition and/or investigation of a written complaint, unless the complaint is against the National President, in which case the Executive Vice-President in consultation with the National Vice-Presidents will be responsible for the disposition and/or investigation of a written complaint.
5. If the complaint is substantiated in the opinion of the National President she/he will take appropriate action or recommend action to remedy the problem and will advise the complainant, committee member, local president or alternate, National Executive Officer or alternate, UVAE staff person and any others involved in the complaint process. If the complaint is substantiated against the National President, the Executive Vice-President and the National Vice-Presidents will decide appropriate action and advise the Complainant, National President and any others involved in the complaint process.
6. If the complaint is unsubstantiated, the complainant, committee member, local president or alternate, National Executive Officer or alternate, UVAE staff person and any others involved in the complaint process will be advised.

### **C. UVAE Triennial Conventions**

When a UVAE delegate, observer or staff person has a complaint regarding the actions or behaviour of another UVAE delegate, observer or staff person the following steps will be taken:

1. The complainant should report the incident to the National President, Executive Assistant or Service Officer, including details as to the circumstances, witnesses available and corrective action requested.
2. The National President, Executive Assistant or Service Officer will:
  - a) During or at the end of discussing the complaint, request the complainant to provide the complaint in writing; or sign a statement prepared by the National President, Executive Assistant, or Service Officer; whichever is considered appropriate.

- b) If the complainant is unwilling to prepare and/or sign a statement, he/she will be advised that no further action will be taken on the complaint. In addition, no record will be kept of the discussion, if the complainant is unwilling to sign a statement, the complaint will be viewed as never having been made.
3. Should the complainant agree to sign a statement, the National President, Executive Assistant or Service Officer will provide a copy of this statement to the UVAE delegate, observer or staff person who is the subject of the complaint and request their comments.
  4. The National President will be responsible for the disposition and/or investigation of a written complaint. Unless the complaint is against the National President in which case the Executive Vice-President and the National Vice-Presidents will be responsible for the disposition and/or investigation of a written complaint.
  5. If the complaint is substantiated in the opinion of the National President, she/he will take appropriate action or recommend action to remedy the problem and will advise the complainant, UVAE delegate, observer, staff person and any others involved in the complaint process. If the complaint is substantiated against the National President, the National Executive Officers will take appropriate action to remedy the problem and advise the Complainant, the National President and any others involved in the complaint process.
  6. If the complaint is unsubstantiated, the complainant, UVAE delegate, observer or staff person and any others involved in the complaint process will be advised.

**General:**

If the complaint was frivolous, unsubstantiated hearsay or lodged in bad faith, appropriate action will be taken.

It is also recognized that rumour or innuendo can be a negative force with the potential to grow and ultimately damage an individual's reputation or that of the Component. The spirit and principles of this complaint procedure will be applied, where appropriate, to complaints of this nature.

***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 16***

***MONTHLY ALLOCATION***

The monthly allocation for National Officers is established by the National President and approved by the National Executive.

The monthly allocation for the Technical Advisor and Appeal Officer, National Health and Safety Committee must be approved by the National Executive.



**POLICY STATEMENT NO. 17**

**GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
REGARDING UVAE LOCALS**

1. National Executive Officers are expected to examine the financial, organizational and administrative procedures of the Local.
2. National Executive Officers shall make every effort to ensure:
  - Local's finances are in acceptable order;
  - Local compliance with UVAE By-Law 11;
  - Local understanding of UVAE By-Law 5, Section 6;
  - Each Local has adopted By-Laws that conform to the standard format approved by the National Executive and that a copy has been forwarded to the National Office for approval (By-Law 7, Section 8 (i)(ii)).
  - Local structure of Officers and Shop Stewards is adequate for the efficient operation of the Local.

**POLICY STATEMENT NO. 18**

**CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS**

UVAE By-Law 10, Section 4, provides our National Convention shall deal with all recommendations, resolutions and matters brought before it from Local Meetings and the National Executive.

The National Executive in session has formed a Committee of that body which, in conjunction with National Office Staff, will examine Convention resolutions to ensure:

- a. accurate background information is included in the WHEREAS portion,
- b. the RESOLVE of the resolution clearly and fully states the intent of the resolution,
- c. implications of any financial nature or commitment of Component funds form an integral part of the resolution,
- d. all resolutions are referred to the appropriate committee.

Committee authority is limited to the tasks enumerated above. Any resolution subject to editorial or other changes shall be referred back to the Local concerned for approval/rejection of recommended changes.

Resolutions relating to collective bargaining policy will only be accepted as Convention resolution input.

Resolutions received which would more aptly be the subject of group collective bargaining proposals will be returned to the Local of origin for inclusion as bargaining demands for the appropriate bargaining unit.

**POLICY STATEMENT NO. 19**

**UVAE GRIEVANCE REPRESENTATION**

**Authority**

1. UVAE National Executive, in session, reviewed and reestablished UVAE grievance Representation procedures required.

**Representation**

2. UVAE grievance representation at each level of the procedure is as follows:

- a. Where there is one (1) level

Level 1 - Shop Steward or Local Officer, or  
UVAE National Office, or  
UVAE National Vice-President or  
UVAE National Executive Vice-President

- b. Where there are two (2) levels

Level 1 - Shop Steward or Local Officer.  
Level 2 - UVAE National Office, or  
UVAE National Vice-President or  
UVAE National Executive Vice-President

- c. **Where there are three (3) levels**

Level 1 - Shop Steward or Local Officer.  
Level 2 – Regions

UVAE National Vice-President or a delegated Alternate.

Hospitals

UVAE National Vice-President or a delegated Alternate  
from the UVAE Hospital Local.

Level 3 - UVAE National Office and/or National Vice-President.

**d. Separate Employer Locals**

Level 1 - Shop Steward or Local Officer.

Level 2 - UVAE National Vice-President or UVAE National Office  
(PSAC Regional Representative or a delegated Alternate from the  
Separate Employer Local).

3. If there are grievances from more than one region, the National President will decide who will do the representation at the final level.

***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 20***

***ATTENDANCE OF NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS  
AT PSAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETINGS***

**Authority**

The National Executive Vice-President can attend the regular meetings of the PSAC Board of Directors' on a regular basis, if the budget permits.

## ***POLICY STATEMENT NO. 21***

### ***CHILD CARE POLICY***

UVAE fully recognizes that family is not solely defined as consisting of “mother and father with children” and may take several forms including, but not limited to: single parents, same-sex parents, dependant relatives residing in the household.

The objective of this policy is to remove one of the barriers which prevent members from participating fully in Union activities.

The Family Care Policy (FCP) is intended to assist the member in covering additional costs incurred as a direct result of attending an authorized UVAE activity.

Where the member is the sole caregiver at the time of the authorized union activity, the FCP will cover costs for care during the day outside normal work/school/daycare hours.

#### ***WHAT IS NOT COVERED***

Family care costs that **would have ordinarily been incurred during work hours** had the member been at his/her place of work.

The FCP shall not cover cost for care provided by a spouse/partner or a relative residing in the household.

#### ***WHO IS COVERED***

Members are entitled to claim expenses related to the care of the following family members who reside on a full or part-time basis with the member:

1. A child under 18 years of age;
2. A person with a disability;
3. An adult, who is a dependant, requiring care.

## ***COSTS COMPENSATED***

Family care expenses will be reimbursed as follows:

1. Where the care is provided by someone *other than a licensed agency/caregiver or the spouse/partner*.
  - a. the **actual amount** up to a **maximum** of \$50 per day<sup>1</sup> for the first family member;
  - b. the **actual amount** up to a **maximum** of \$25 per day for each *additional* family member;
  - c. the **actual amount** up to a **maximum** of \$30 per night<sup>2</sup>, per family member for *overnight care*.
2. If care is provided by a licensed agency/attendant, the **actual cost** will be reimbursed.
3. Where child care is provided **on-site**, the cost of meals for the duration of the care and increased shared accommodation costs will be covered.
4. Other pre-approved *reasonable* expenses.
5. Upon request, consideration will be given to special needs or unusual circumstances resulting in costs which exceed the above rates and expenses allowable. Detailed information must be provided ***in advance for pre-approval***.

## ***HOW TO CLAIM***

A completed Family Care Expense Claim form must be submitted, **accompanied by a receipt which includes the caregiver's name, address, telephone number, license number (if applicable) and signature, as well as the dates and hours worked.**

***INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED FOR PAYMENT.***

<sup>1</sup> Day is defined as care provided some time between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> Night is defined as care provided some time between the hours of 5:31 p.m. and 7:20 a.m.

**POLICY STATEMENT NO. 22**

**UVAE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COORDINATOR**

1. An Equal Opportunity Coordinator and an Alternate shall be elected by the National Executive, following the regular Triennial National Convention.
2. The Candidates for the position of Equal Opportunity Coordinator and Alternate must be members in good standing who have submitted a résumé stating their background qualifications and reasons for their candidacy to this position.
3. The Equal Opportunity Coordinator shall represent the Component on the PSAC Equal Opportunity Committee and on the National Employment Equity Advisory Committee (NEEAC) and the Veterans' Affairs Union Management Consultation Committee - Employment Equity (UMCC-EE).
4. The Equal Opportunity Coordinator shall file a report and any applicable recommendations to each National Executive meeting.
5. The Equal Opportunity Coordinator shall promote matters concerning Equal Opportunity and issues under the PSAC Human Rights Policy.
6. The Equal Opportunity Coordinator shall have full delegate status at National Conventions of this Component.



## **POLICY STATEMENT NO. 23**

### **MACHINE-PACED WORK ENVIRONMENT & ELECTRONIC MONITORING**

Veterans' Affairs Canada (VAC) has introduced call centres into all regional and sub-regional offices. Furthermore, Government On Line (GOL) and Seniors On Line will impact working conditions at Veterans Affairs Canada. VAC has introduced and is likely to introduce more equipment that allows for electronic monitoring and creates machine-paced work. While UVAE recognizes the employer's right to implement the use of new technologies, the union is committed to ensuring that the introduction of new technologies does not have a negative impact on the working conditions of its members.

The quality of office life has been dramatically reduced by the introduction of machine-paced work in Call Centres. Call centre work is controlled by Automated Call Distribution (ACD) technologies. Automated Call Distribution Technology forwards incoming calls or e-mail to available workers automatically. Workers are controlled exclusively by technology and have no control over their own workload. Workers who make outgoing calls often have even less control. Predictive dialing methods initiate calls automatically and pass them to available workers when respondents answer their phones. In many workplaces Call centres have become the assembly lines of the 21st century.

There is a high degree of surveillance in many call centre environments. Electronic Monitoring is especially pervasive. Results from recent surveys suggest that over 75% of Call Centre Employers record calls and e-mails to assess workers' performance. Call centre technology gives employers the power to permanently monitor each and every worker. It can include the interception of e-mails, listening in, counting keystrokes and using infrared transmitters to record the exact movements of employees. Employers are able to know which of their staff are currently handling calls, which are waiting for new calls, which are taking breaks, and what is being said during the call. Employers have the facility to secretly monitor and record telephone conversations and e-mail correspondence.

The Union of Veteran's Affairs Employees has identified ways in which these technologies have been used to the detriment of the worker and the workplace.

- i. Employers routinely evaluate quantitative responses to automated call distribution in Performance Reviews. The only criteria is the number of calls responded to and not the quality of the work performed.
- ii. Employers have used information derived from secret electronic monitoring in performance reviews.

- iii. Performance reviews have been based on verbal evidence obtained by electronic monitoring with no written substantiation of events and with no redress for frivolous claims against workers.
- iv. Employers have initiated disciplinary action up to and including discharge for unsubstantiated claims of poor or incompetent performance based on electronic monitoring and unreasonable workload expectations.
- v. Employers have used evidence gathered from electronic monitoring to substantiate invalid and/or negative employment recommendations or inaccurate reference checks for competitive processes.
- vi. Electronic monitoring can be used as a tool to support personal bias, conflict and favouritism. Unrestricted use can facilitate inequitable treatment, discrimination, intimidation and other forms of harassment.
- vii. The externally paced demands of ACD and the constant threat of electronic monitoring and its potential misuse is a documented cause of worker stress.
- viii. Surreptitious or secret electronic monitoring, or monitoring for purposes other than that agreed to by workers and their union can lead to violations of various privacy agreements and legislation as well as collective agreement obligations.

Working in a call centre is inherently stressful. Stress is a collective problem, which is rooted in workplace systems. It is not the result of a personal failing. Stress impacts on quality of life and general mental health as well as more chronic conditions like hypertension and depression. In addition, merely sitting at a desk for long periods of time accelerates fatigue and makes the muscular skeletal system susceptible to recurring injuries. Machine-paced work and electronic monitoring increases health and safety problems and often leaves workers with no alternative but to remove themselves from the workplace and jeopardize their livelihood. The UVAE emphasis is on improving these work methods to reduce the risk of stress rather than dealing with problems of stress after they have already occurred. The UVAE demands that Call Centre employers actively exercise zero tolerance policies for harassment including harassment caused by abuse of authority. Bullying and targeting workers for disciplinary action as a result of monitoring and call distribution quotas will not be tolerated. To ensure worker's health UVAE has taken the following positions on machine-paced work and electronic monitoring in call centre environments.

## **Machine-Paced Work**

- i. Workers are the employers' greatest assets. They should control the technology. The technology should not control them.
- ii. The quality of work should be measured not the quantity of calls answered. Targets and quotas are unacceptable. Wrap up time between calls must be adequate to allow for worker reflection. Workers should spend no more than 65% of their shift actually taking calls.
- iii. The UVAE believes that call centres should practice good health and safety practices to counteract the damage done by a machine-paced work environment. All health and safety legislative obligations must be strictly adhered to.
- iv. Call centre environments may be occupied on a 24-hour basis 7 days a week. Ventilation, air filtering and heating systems need to be designed to cope with this level of use, but often are not. Ergonomic design of telephone and computer equipment chairs and desks must be adhered to in order to help reduce the risk of Repetitive Strain Injury, which typifies a machine-paced work environment. Call Centre workers are subjected to prolonged levels of background noise and to sudden intense noise (acoustic shock). Acoustic shock is a potential cause of headaches and other health problems. Call Centre workers are prone to voice loss (dysphonia) brought on by the pace of work. In light of these health and safety concerns the UVAE believes that a 10-minute break should be afforded to workers every hour.
- v. Workers should have designated rest areas in the workplace other than their workstations to which they can go during breaks, and where they can acquire sustenance 24 hours a day.

## **Electronic Monitoring**

1. Workers have a fundamental inherent right to privacy in the workplace. There will be no electronic monitoring of members unless its purpose, procedures and on-going uses are agreed to by the union and a process is in place to monitor its use.
2. Electronic monitoring must not violate legislation that is now in force or will be in force.

3. Electronic monitoring should only be used for training purposes. Training should be designed to facilitate worker empowerment by increasing communication skills or skills and knowledge that enhance career mobility.
4. Electronic monitoring must be agreed to in advance by both the bargaining unit and any worker affected.
5. Electronic monitoring should be tolerated only when the worker and the bargaining unit know the purpose and it is deemed acceptable by both. It should be confined to what has been agreed to. Monitoring should only be what is reasonably required to accomplish the purpose agreed to. It should only occur occasionally and not continuously. Data collected by monitoring must also only be used for the purpose agreed to. The agreement should be captured in a written policy or collective agreement and be widely distributed in the workplace.
6. E-mail will not be routinely read or monitored. Email will be monitored and retrieved only if the employer is legally obliged to do so or has reasonable reason to believe that an employee has committed a criminal offence or serious disciplinary offence. In these situations, e-mail will be monitored and retrieved only in the presence of a trade union representative or employee selected representative.
7. Electronic monitoring may not be used for performance appraisals, disciplinary or other personnel purposes.
8. If data acquired by monitoring is recorded, the worker must have access to it and there must be a process in place for the worker to correct inaccuracies. If data is in the form of recorded tapes or computer records it must be destroyed regularly and periodically and in a timely manner as agreed to in advance by the union. All records of the data will cease to exist at that time.

9. Everyone has the right to have her/his private, home, family life and correspondence respected. It is only reasonable to expect that from time to time workers will be contacted on important domestic matters at work or have to make a personal call or e-mail from the workplace. Workers must be offered facilities for making and receiving personal phone calls or e-mails at the workplace free from electronic monitoring.

Electronic monitoring must never be used to prevent workers from organizing collectively or carrying out the business of the union.

**POLICY STATEMENT NO. 24**

**LOCAL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

The following are the steps that a Local must do in accordance with PSAC Regulation 19, Section 6:

1. Each member who is charged with misconduct must be sent a letter stating that they have been charged with a violation of the Local, UVAE By-Laws and the PSAC Constitution. The charge could be made by one or more members. (see attached Appendix "A")
2. The Local shall establish an internal or external impartial review committee consisting of three (3) people to investigate and assess the charges, including the receipt of oral and written evidence.
3. The Investigation Committee holds a meeting(s) during which witnesses who have evidence concerning the member(s) who are charged with misconduct would appear as well as the members charged to provide explanation regarding their actions.
4. The Investigation Committee produces a written report in two parts. Part 1 will include a finding of fact that either confirms or not that the member(s) have violated the Local or UVAE By-Laws and PSAC Constitution. This part of the report cannot be amended. Part 2 would recommend the specific disciplinary action in the event that the committee finds that the member(s) have violated the Local, or UVAE By-Laws and the PSAC Constitution. This would be written with a specific recommendation for each individual member who has been charged. The recommendation can be amended at the general meeting dealing with the committee report.

Examples

Part 1

The Investigation Committee finds that.....is not guilty of the charge.

The Investigation Committee finds .....guilty of violating Section 25, Sub-section (5) (n) of the PSAC Constitution and UVAE By-Law 12, Section 5(N) and

Part 2

The Investigation Committee recommends no disciplinary action be taken regarding  
.....

The Investigation Committee recommends that.....be suspended for five years.

5. The Investigation Committees' findings and recommendations shall be submitted to the Local Executive, and if disciplinary action is recommended, the Committee report shall be placed before a properly constituted Special or General meeting of the Local which will be held to deal with the Investigation Committee report. The Investigation Committee will present its report and the local members will vote on each of the recommendations presented and/or amended by the members. It is necessary for the local members to vote acceptance of the recommendation(s) by 2/3 of those in attendance. The members initiating disciplinary action and the accused member(s) shall be denied voice and vote during the decision-making process.
6. If the Local meeting accepts a recommendation to suspend or expel from membership, the Local Executive shall advise the Component President in writing, together with all the relevant documentation. A package containing the copies of the charge letter(s), the Investigation Committee report and the minutes of the Local Special or General meeting is to be sent to the Component National President to be placed before a meeting of the National Executive Officers where a vote will be conducted to approve the Local decision.
7. If the National Executive approve the Local decision, then the matter is sent to the National Board of Directors for decision.

Appendix "A"

TO: Member charged

Please be advised that a charge has been brought against you by .....for violating Section 25, sub-section 5(n) of the PSAC Constitution and By-law 12, Section 5(N) of the Union of Veterans' Affairs Employees: "Crossing a Picket line of your own bargaining group" on ..... An investigation will be conducted and you are invited to appear before the Investigation Committee on .....

You will have the right to appear before the Investigation Committee to offer your explanation. Please be advised that disciplinary action may proceed regardless of your attendance.



**POLICY STATEMENT NO. 25**

**ACCOMMODATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

1. Persons with disabilities as defined by the Employment Equity Act, are persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment.
2. Persons requesting accommodation will be asked to provide documentation from a qualified health care professional to clarify the limitations caused by the disability and/or the type of accommodation that would be most effective. Any costs incurred by the member to obtain the documentation requested will be reimbursed by UVAE.
3. UVAE will accommodate such persons to the extent it is possible to do given the circumstances.
4. UVAE will determine the accommodation required, based on information provided by the member.
5. All documentation provided will be kept confidential at the National Office.