

LABOUR DAY 2021 – WE ARE STRONGER, TOGETHER!

Labour Day's origins date back to the [Toronto Printer's Strike of 1872](#). The implication of that strike was not only the end of 12-hour workdays but also the demand that unions be legally recognized and [protected in Canada](#). Though our struggles as workers have greatly shifted since then, we as workers take this day to recognize our immense debt to those who have fought before us. The fact that we have [weekends, eight-hour workdays, pay equity, and maternity leave](#) in our contracts are a testament to their struggles. As workers who are backed by our collective power of the union in a world of stagnant wages and skyrocketing costs of living, we are not only tasked with defending these victories but to push them further and extend them to all workers.

Though we celebrate our successes on Labour Day, we at COPE Ontario are aware that much work is ahead of us. We know that many of the rights afforded to our members are not shared by all workers in similar fields. We are committed to being a champion for those who have none and for those who are silenced. We are cognizant that our own locals are under attack by the bosses and the broader situation of society wide rampant unaffordability. We affirm our commitment to our members to not only defend their existing victories but to push them further in the spirit of fairness for all.

Bearing these commitments in mind, we at COPE Ontario firmly believe that the power of the union lies in its rank and file. As a result, we call on all our members to take the time to engage with the labour movement's past struggles in the resources below. Through engaging with the past, we can better navigate the struggles of today and tomorrow. We also encourage our members to speak with each other about their experiences in the labour movement. In doing so, we can learn from one another and therefore build a stronger union. Importantly, we highly recommend that members get involved with their union and the movement directly! This can take many forms; for example, going to your local meetings, joining the bargaining team, getting involved in unionization efforts, participating in solidarity marches with other unions, and attending COPE's workshops!

Finally, we ask our members to seek out organizing opportunities through their networks. Through actively growing our numbers we protect more workers and strengthen the very basis of COPE, our collective power.

Podcast: <https://workingclasshistory.com/podcast/>

The Canadian Office & Professional Employees' Union is a Canadian Union representing approximately 35,000 members in the private and public sector. COPE ONTARIO works with Ontario Health Coalition, Labour Councils and the Ontario Federation of Labour to protect healthcare jobs so that we retain and grow unionized jobs and create a stronger healthcare system that serves all of Ontario. Together we are stronger!

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