

CPSU Campaign Fund:

Information for donors



What is the CPSU? The Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) is a trade union representing the interests of around 55,000 employees, mainly in the Commonwealth public sector. We cover a wide range of industries including the public sector, public broadcasting, science, research and telecommunications. As well as seeking to protect the pay, conditions and workplace rights of our members, we take a leading role defending the public sector from Government attacks and promoting the essential services it provides to the community including through Medicare, Centrelink, the CSIRO and the ABC. The broader CPSU also includes state public sector unions, who campaign for jobs and services in those areas.

Why are we setting up a Campaign Fund? Right now we are asking for donations to help some members who are losing income because they are taking industrial action to try and win a fairer agreement in Commonwealth Government. This Campaign Fund will continue beyond that immediate need, to support CPSU in fighting for decent public services, fair workplace rights and secure jobs – outcomes that will benefit all CPSU members and the broader community. The establishment of this Campaign Fund will help us to engage directly with other community groups and individuals who also value fair workplaces and public services like Medicare, Centrelink, the ABC and the CSIRO. It will also ensure our campaigning remains on an effective and sustainable footing.

Who can contribute to the Campaign Fund? Donations to the Campaign Fund are welcome from members of the CPSU, members of other unions, members of the public and other entities or organisations. Where necessary, funds from the CPSU general revenue will be transferred to the Campaign Fund, in line with governance and Rules requirements.

What is the purpose of the Campaign Fund? Your donation will be used to help CPSU campaigns for jobs, rights and services - including our Safeguard campaign in Commonwealth Government – now and into the future. For example, it could include:

- providing financial support for union members in some circumstances who have lost pay through taking significant and sustained strike action or being stood down without pay for imposing work bans
- paid advertising, online campaigning, research, polling, letter-boxing and other campaign expenditure designed to protect public sector jobs and services.

What sort of payments could be made from the Campaign Fund for industrial action? In some circumstances, including where significant and sustained industrial action is underway, union members may be able to apply for payment from the Campaign Fund. This could include where members have lost significant pay through:

- taking significant and sustained strike action
- being stood down or having their pay significantly reduced for imposing work bans.

Please note that almost two thirds of CPSU members have been eligible to take some form of industrial action during this Commonwealth bargaining dispute and so not all members who have undertaken any form of industrial action at any time will be eligible for payment from the fund.

What sort of payments could be made from the fund for other campaign expenditure? While we're starting with supporting workers taking industrial action, the Campaign Fund can also be used in meeting expenses which directly support CPSU campaigning including but not limited to paid advertising, online campaigning, research, polling, letter-boxing, campaign materials and other campaign expenditure designed to protect public sector jobs and services, workers' rights, conditions and living standards.

Who made the decisions to establish a Campaign Fund? The Governing Council - the highest decision-making body of the union comprised of 65 elected honorary delegates representing members from the employers we cover - made an in principle decision in October 2015 to establish a Campaign Fund. This was then further developed by the Executive Committee – a directly elected team of seven full-time officials responsible for the management and administration of the union – in consultation with Governing Councillors, with decisions made under the CPSU Rules to establish the fund.

Who makes decisions about payments from the Campaign Fund? The Executive Committee will consider all applications to pay members taking action - and for other campaign expenditure - then determine, in its absolute discretion, whether and in what amount to make a payment from the fund, by and in accordance with the CPSU rules.

Does this Campaign Fund comply with legal and governance requirements and standards? Yes. The CPSU has sought extensive legal, taxation and auditing advice to ensure that the setting up and operation of this Campaign Fund is compliant with reporting and accounting requirements contained in the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act* and Regulations, as well as CPSU's own high governance standards. The Executive Committee will report on the fund to the Governing Council and to members. The Campaign Fund will be subject to thorough audit, integrity and governance processes. All donations will be paid into a separate fund of the CPSU. The Campaign Fund will be audited and reported as part of the CPSU General Purpose Financial Report.

What overall governance arrangements are in place in the union? The CPSU has many rigorous processes in place to ensure our members funds and all union resources are used ethically and effectively. We are deeply committed to financial transparency and integrity in the interests of our members and to ensuring we have effective governance structures, policies, processes, values and culture. Detailed information on these governance and financial accountability arrangements is available to members.

What happens if the Campaign Fund is wound up in future? This is a long-term initiative however, if circumstances change the CPSU Campaign fund could be terminated at the discretion of the Executive Committee at a time of its choosing. If there are any residual funds left after all payments are made, they would be paid into the general operating funds of the CPSU, to be used for the furtherance of the objects of the CPSU in accordance with the union's Rules.

More information

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