



Resolutions Guide

CUPE BC Division Convention

May 19 – 21, 2021

PLEASE REVIEW BEFORE SUBMITTING A RESOLUTION TO CONVENTION

INTRODUCTION

CUPE BC's annual Division Convention is the supreme authority for CUPE BC. Delegates attending convention make decisions about policies that will guide and govern the Division. Members decide whether or not our constitution will be amended.

All this is done through resolutions that are debated on the convention floor. Every year more than 100 resolutions are put forward. Not all of them make it to the convention floor.

This document attempts to outline how the resolution process works and to provide some advice to help in the drafting of resolutions.

WHO CAN SUBMIT A RESOLUTION?

Resolutions can be submitted to the CUPE BC Convention by an affiliated organization and the CUPE BC Executive Board. All committees appointed by Executive Board can submit resolutions.

DEADLINES

A local or other affiliated organizations can submit a resolution before the deadline to ensure greater success in having the resolution brought forward on to the convention floor.

Resolutions and constitutional amendments must be received to the Division office no later than sixty days (March 22, 2021 at noon PST) prior to the opening of the convention.

Resolutions submitted after this date are considered "late resolutions." Late resolutions are prioritized below resolutions submitted on or before the deadline. Late resolutions will be debated after all other resolutions have gone forward and been addressed.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

After the resolution deadline has passed resolutions on emergent issues may be submitted to the CUPE BC Executive Board for consideration. The issue prompting the resolution must have occurred after the resolution deadline indicated above. If the Executive deems the submitted resolution to be critical, it will be added to the list of resolutions to be debated.

Resolutions submitted to Convention must be approved by the President and Secretary of an affiliated organization, or by the Chair of a committee appointed by the Executive Board.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU WRITE A RESOLUTION

Resolutions are classified in two ways:

1. **Constitution** – which add, delete or amend the CUPE BC Constitution and require two-thirds of delegates to vote in favour to adopt, or
2. **General** – which require more than half of delegates to vote in favour to adopt. General resolutions are further broken down after convention by the Executive Board into either:

Policy Resolutions: Add, delete or amend the policy manual; or

Action Resolutions: instructs CUPE BC to carry out a specific action.

When writing a resolution first decide whether you want the resolution to change the CUPE BC Constitution, change the policy manual, or direct CUPE BC to do a specific action. The resolution should clearly show the intent of.

The first line of your resolution can provide a clear direction on the intent of the resolution. The follow examples show how resolutions should be written.

When submitting a **constitution** resolution:

“CUPE BC will: amend article X of the constitution...”

When submitting a **policy** resolution:

“CUPE BC will: Add the following to the policy manual....or amend section X of the policy manual to include....”

When submitting **action** resolution:

“CUPE BC will: launch a campaign on X issue...or lobby the BC Provincial government to increase funding for X.”

Please avoid submitting resolutions that try to merge policy and action. These resolutions will be likely default to become action resolutions. Resolutions outlining the intent will provide a clear direction to the CUPE BC Executive Board on how to implement the resolution following convention.

Keep the resolution brief and concise. Ideally, Policy or Action resolutions should not be longer than 150 words. Constitution resolutions are typically longer, as changes to the constitution must show all articles being amended.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR RESOLUTIONS?

All resolutions received on time are first reviewed by CUPE BC staff for minor spelling and grammatical errors. These changes will be made in advance to resolutions being sent to affiliated locals.

All resolutions submitted for the CUPE BC Convention are referred to one of two committees: the Resolutions Committee or the Constitution Committee. The Executive Board appoints these Committees. They are made up of CUPE members with convention experience and are advised by one or more staff representatives.

As their names suggest, the Constitution Committee deals with resolutions that would amend the CUPE BC Constitution and the Resolutions Committee deals with all other resolutions.

The Resolutions Committee

The Resolutions Committee receives all resolutions, with the exception of resolutions pertaining to the constitution. Resolutions for the 2021 Virtual Convention will be sorted and presented under the following groups:

- Equity
- Sectoral
- Standing
- Constitution (presented by the Constitution Committee)
- General

The Resolutions Committee reviews each resolution to determine if it is clearly written and communicates its intent. If there are minor problems, the Committee has the authority to make changes to the resolution on a “Minor Amendment Sheet” which is presented to the convention. Some examples of these sorts of problems are outlined later in this paper under the heading “Problems with Resolutions.”

The Committee reviews all the resolutions to determine if any of them are substantially similar and/or if they are complementary to one another. If so, resolutions will be combined into “composite resolutions.” Please note that if plain language resolutions and traditional resolutions are combined to a composite resolution, the Resolutions Committee will present the composite resolution in the plain language format.

In the case of any minor amendments or composite resolutions, the party that submitted the resolution will be invited to respond to the suggested changes. If you have submitted a resolution to convention, you may be contacted prior to convention. Upon registration please check to see if you are required to meet with the Resolutions Committee to approve any minor amendments to the resolution. If you will be a late registrant to convention, please delegate a member of your local or committee with the authority to approve minor amendments or composites.

To facilitate this process for an online convention, CUPE BC staff or the Resolutions Committee will contact the submitting party in advance of convention to review and approve the suggested changes.

Please note: if the submitting party is not able to meet with the Resolutions Committee in a timely manner, the CUPE BC Secretary-Treasurer will sign off on any minor amendments recommended by the Resolutions Committee.

The Resolutions Committee will also establish the priority for each resolution put forth on the Convention floor. Below are examples of factors that may determine the priority of the resolution:

- Whether or not more than one local, affiliated body or committee has supported the resolution demonstrating widespread support.
- Whether or not the intent of the resolution is easily determined from reading it.
- Whether or not there are existing resolutions in the policy book pertaining to the same issue (particularly in recent years).
- The Convention agenda and the relevance of a resolution to a speaker or a report.

The Constitution Committee

The Constitution Committee goes through much the same process as the Resolutions Committee but primarily deals with resolutions that would affect the Division's constitution.

Due to the importance of a constitutional resolution, they require a two-thirds majority vote of delegates to pass whereas ordinary resolutions require only a majority of votes cast. An amendment to the CUPE BC Constitution cannot conflict with the CUPE National Constitution.

A resolution amending the constitution must include the exact language in which the constitution is to be modified. It must clearly show how the actual new clause will appear in the constitution.

A resolution to amend the Constitution must clearly set out the specific wording to be amended and the proposed amendment. (see Constitutional Resolutions under section "Problems with Resolutions").

If a resolution to change the Constitution does not include the exact language of the proposed amendment, the Constitution Committee can simply treat it as an ordinary resolution and refer it to the Resolutions Committee. If it is passed as an ordinary resolution, it may be treated as "policy" but it does not affect the Constitution.

All proposed changes to the Constitution must receive final approval by the CUPE National President's Office. Any resolution passed by CUPE BC convention, but not approved by CUPE National will not be implemented.

WHAT IF YOUR RESOLUTION DOESN'T COME TO THE CONVENTION FLOOR?

It is common for submitted resolutions to not be put forth on the convention floor due to the volume of priority resolutions up for debate and vote. Resolutions that are not debated and voted on are considered abandoned at the end of convention and would need to be resubmitted at a future convention.

This process ensures that CUPE BC’s Annual Division Convention remains the supreme authority for CUPE BC and no other body determines the fate of resolutions intended to be debated and voted on by delegates of convention.

If you submitted a resolution that was not heard at Convention we highly encourage you to resubmit next year!

HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

Resolutions submitted to convention must use plain language and should not use abbreviations.

The following are examples for your information:

Example Resolution	Explanation
<p>CUPE BC WILL:</p> <p> Create policy requiring CUPE Locals to use plain language when submitting resolutions to convention and to limit resolutions at 150 words or fewer.</p> <p>BECAUSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventions run more smoothly when resolutions are worded and laid out correctly; and • The Resolutions Committee needs proper signatures to know the resolutions come from a chartered organization; and • CUPE prints and processes more than 100 resolutions. 	<p>This section is where you clearly describe what change to the constitution or policy you want, or what action you want CUPE BC to take.</p> <p>Only the text in this section moves forward and edits the constitution, Policy manual or creates an Action.</p> <p>The purpose of the “BECAUSE” section is to influence delegates to support the resolution. This text in this section does not get added to constitution, policy or become an action item.</p>

PROBLEMS WITH RESOLUTIONS

The following are examples of resolutions that contain problems that would be corrected.

Abbreviations

Frequently, people writing resolutions will make heavy use of abbreviations. These abbreviations are used by the writer because they have context and knowledge of the reference. Readers may not be privy to that knowledge or context to infer the reference being made by the abbreviation. Please note that resolutions with obscure abbreviations typically get referred to on the Minor Amendment Sheet.

Incorrect Format	Correct Format
<p>CUPE BC WILL:</p> <p>Update the Policy Manual to oppose the globalization agenda of the WTO and the IMF.</p> <p>BECAUSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other unions such as the BCGEU and the USW have taken a strong stand against the WTO's evil trade agenda, and • The IMF has supported this agenda of globalization 	<p>CUPE BC WILL:</p> <p>Update the Policy Manual to oppose the globalization agenda of the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund.</p> <p>BECAUSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other unions such as the BC Government and Service Employees' Union and the International Woodworkers' of America have taken a strong stand against the World Trade Organization's evil trade agenda, and • The International Monetary Fund has supported this agenda of globalization <p>Note that CUPE has been left as an abbreviation. This is a CUPE convention. We know what it means.</p>

Make it crystal clear on 'who' you are referring too.

Resolutions should be clear when referring to a body or person. Identify the formal name of the organization and use the official name to avoid confusion.

Incorrect Format	Correct Format
<p>The government The Trudeau government</p> <p>CUPE</p>	<p>The BC Government <i>or</i> The Federal Government</p> <p>CUPE BC <i>or</i> CUPE National <i>or</i> the National Union</p>

Remember CUPE BC is a provincial body, and not a national or international organization.

Often Locals will submit resolutions to CUPE BC calling on the provincial division to lobby the Federal Government, or other international organizations. If locals are seeking action at those levels they can do so by writing the resolution under the Action category requesting CUPE BC to submit a resolution, or make a request to CUPE National for a specific action.

Incorrect Format	Correct Format
<p>CUPE BC WILL:</p> <p>Survey all municipal locals across Canada to identify opportunities for contracting in our work.</p> <p>BECAUSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contracting out municipal services is bad for our communities, increases costs for all Canadians and reduces our power at the bargaining table. 	<p>CUPE BC WILL:</p> <p>Submit a resolution to the next CUPE National convention calling for a survey of all municipal locals to identify opportunities for contracting in our work.</p> <p>BECAUSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contracting out municipal services is bad for our communities, increases costs for all Canadians and reduces our power at the bargaining table. <hr/> <p><i>Note: this resolution goes further and suggests concrete things that CUPE BC can do.</i></p>

Constitutional Changes

Most resolutions to CUPE BC are policy resolutions. They set general policy directions for the Division and must pass with 50 per cent plus one vote.

Constitutional resolutions are very different. They change the fundamental framework of the way CUPE BC operates. They require a two-thirds vote to pass and must be very specifically constructed. Constitutional resolutions must set out the exact language they want to amend in the constitution.

If the constitutional resolution fails to set out the exact language, it will be considered a policy resolution. Policy resolutions are easier to pass, but do not have any constitutional implications.

Sometimes the Constitution Committee may rewrite a submitted resolution. This is at the discretion of the Constitution Committee and is considered based on the significance of the issue being brought forward.

Incorrect Format	Correct Format
<p>CUPE BC WILL:</p> <p>Create a standing committee on golf.</p> <p>BECAUSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golf is a matter of great concern to the CUPE membership 	<p>CUPE BC WILL:</p> <p>Amend section 5.6 (a) of the CUPE BC Constitution by adding a new subsection 8. reading as follows:</p> <p>5.6 (a) 8. Golf Committee.</p> <p>BECAUSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golf is a matter of great concern to the CUPE membership.

Final points to consider before you begin to write resolutions

- Consider the costs associated with your resolution. Conferences, committees and campaigns can be very expensive. The CUPE BC Executive Board is responsible for balancing the outcomes of resolutions with the financial well being of the Union. Balancing the two can be difficult if the cost of adopted resolutions exceeds the financial capacity of the organization. To discuss the financial implications on the organization of your resolution, please contact the CUPE BC Secretary-Treasurer prior to submitting the resolution.
- Use the term “BC Government” or the “Federal Government” rather than just “government”.
- Use the term “CUPE BC” or “CUPE National” rather than just “CUPE” or “Union”.
- Be aware that the more campaigns CUPE BC is tasked with in a single year the more spread out our resources will be on each of those campaigns. If you want a big campaign try to coordinate with multiple locals and district councils to put in one resolution.