

For Immediate Release

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CUPE Nova Scotia calls for consultation and balanced approach to implementation of vaccine mandate

HALIFAX – The union representing more than 11,000 health care workers and 4,800 education support workers in Nova Scotia is calling on the provincial government and employers to take a balanced approach to implementing the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, announced today by Premier Tim Houston and Dr. Robert Strang.

“CUPE has always placed a priority on our members’ health and safety. Our members have the right to be safe at work, and people have the right to receive public services in a safe environment,” says CUPE Nova Scotia President Nan McFadgen.

“The government has decided that a vaccine mandate is necessary, but it will be difficult, and we’ve asked our locals to reach out to employers to let them know that the union expects to be consulted ahead of time,” says McFadgen. “Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodations for employees who cannot be vaccinated for medical or religious reasons.”

“Aside from protected human rights grounds, where employees are not vaccinated (or choose not to disclose their vaccination status) we anticipate that there may be employment consequences,” adds McFadgen. “As a union, we recognize our obligation to all our members, including those who are not vaccinated, and we’ll address employers’ actions on a case-by-case basis.”

“We will continue to encourage our members to get vaccinated, as soon as possible, and we’ll continue to work with employers in the rollout of this vaccination mandate,” says McFadgen.

About CUPE Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia Division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is the second largest union in the province, representing over 19,000 members who provide quality public services in schools, hospitals, nursing homes, municipalities, child care, universities, community services, home support, transition homes, and more.

In **health care**, CUPE represents more than 11,000 members who work in hospitals, nursing homes, home support, and community services. CUPE’s **education** locals, known collectively as the Nova Scotia School Board Council of Unions, represent over 4,800 members working for all seven Regional Centres of Education and the Conseil scolaire acadien, in all public schools across Nova Scotia.

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