

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting  
January 14, 2025  
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Hi everyone. My name is Glacier Effs-Samuel, recorder of your union. It's great to see so many members joining us for our first town hall general membership meeting for 2025. Happy New Year to everyone. We're excited to welcome you to our town hall where we provide you with relevant and important information about your union. We have lots of news and exciting opportunities, whether it be scholarship programs or free online courses to share with you tonight. Plus, if you stay on the line with us for the entire call, you have a chance to win a Samsung tablet or a set of Toronto Maple Leafs tickets. We'll have more details on that later on. We've dialed thousands of members from different workplace sectors and cities, so thank you for your patience while we connected with everyone. Tonight, we'll be hearing from President Wayne Hanley about the latest union news and initiatives. We'll also hear from Rick Young, the local union's health and safety representative about our union's campaign to stop public abuse. This initiative was launched in response to increasing incidents of public and customer abuse.

Tonight we'll also hear from you, so telephone operators are standing by to take down your questions and pass them on to us. To ask a question, just press star three on your phone keypad. Make sure you give your full name where you work and the operators will pass your question onto us. Again, press star three to ask a question. Questions about individual workplace issues will be forwarded to your union representative who will contact you no later than tomorrow night. And as we've done in the past, we'll post an audio file, meeting transcript and meeting minutes of the meeting on our union website. Now, during each telephone town hall general membership meeting, the members vote to adopt the minutes from the previous meeting, so let's get started. The first vote will be, I will be taking the vote for the adoption of the minutes of the telephone town hall general membership meeting, which was posted on our local union's website and held on November 20, 2024.

Use your phone keypad to participate in the vote and the question that you're voting on is, do you approve of the minutes of the telephone town hall general membership meeting held on November 20th, 2024? Press one if you approve of the minutes on November 20th, 2024 meeting or press two if you do not approve of the minutes of the November 20th, 2024 meeting. Once again, press one if you approve of the minutes or press two if you do not approve of the minutes. As we wait for the results, I'd like to remind you our scholarship program is open for application. Every year our members and or their dependents are eligible for one of 42, 1006A union 42 scholarships worth \$1,006 to cope with the escalating costs of post-secondary education, so every penny counts. 1006A is always about building a fair world for all. The list of the 2024 scholarship recipients are now on our website, so congratulations to our most recent recipients and applicants who were not selected are encouraged to apply again this year.

Thank you to everyone who applied. Now the results are in and the minutes for the November 20th, 2024 meeting have been approved, 89% approved. As a quick reminder about our membership contest, members who stay on the line for the entirety of the call will have a chance to enter a draw to win a Samsung tablet or Maple Leafs tickets. I want to congratulate Lenora from Swiss Chalet in Ancaster who was our contest winner from our November meeting. Again, stick around for a chance to win. Now it's my honor to introduce the president of our union, Wayne Hanley, for the state of the union.

Wayne Hanley:

Well, thank you Glacier, and let me welcome everybody as well to our first town hall meeting of 2025. And on behalf of the executive board and staff, I wish you a happy new year and all the very best for 2025. I'm proud to start by saying that 2024 was a successful year for our local union as we made a huge difference in the lives of thousands of our members and their families. We improved working conditions

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting  
January 14, 2025  
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

and our members' rights at workplaces across Ontario, and I expect that in 2025 our union will continue to grow and evolve. Now, since our last town hall meeting in November just a few weeks ago, I'm pleased to report that our negotiating committees have continued to work hard and have achieved concrete wins for our members at the bargaining table. During Swiss Chalet negotiations, our negotiating committees exceptional work and the support of the membership help us achieve a new union contract with strong gains for our members working at Swiss Chalet.

Members voted to accept their new contract or application meetings that were held across Ontario from November 15 to the 28 in 2024. And our membership prevailed in the face of difficult negotiations where we had an employer come to the table demanding major concessions and the union did everything in our power to achieve that fair contract for our membership over eight days of negotiations and one day of conciliation with the Ministry of Labour. Despite many challenges our members achieved strong gains. And I would ask that if you work at Swiss Chalet in our full-time, make sure that you enroll for the benefit package in your union contract. And if there's members on the call here tonight who are part-time or full-time at Swiss Chalet, make sure you tell other full-time members at work who may not be on the call here tonight. They can enroll in the health and welfare benefit package simply by contacting our union representative or the union office for further information.

Our negotiating committees worked hard to achieve fair contracts with various large and small bargaining units across the province. I'm proud to congratulate our members at Elbee Meats in Toronto , the Comfort Hotel Airport North in Toronto, the TownePlace Suites in Oakville have a new contract and the Quality Inn in Sault Ste. Marie. All these new contracts secured gains and improvements from the previous years and have evolved over the recent weeks. Thank you to all of our members who continue to participate in negotiation, whether it's by filling out a proposal form or attending a ratification meeting or showing the support for your negotiating committee. Membership support has always been the key to fair union contracts because it demonstrates to the employer that the membership is united strongly and committed to do so and do what it takes to achieve that fair contract. I also want to thank all of our negotiating committee members for participating and then thank them for their hard work and dedication on behalf of our membership. Believe you me, we are and you are making a huge difference.

Now, our stewards training programs is one of Ontario's best education experience for our members who have taken the next step to getting more involved in becoming union stewards. Stewards are the heart of the union's strength and success. Our program trains new seasoned stewards and provides them with the skill set to better help members and the challenges that they encounter at work. And in 2025, our spring stewards programs will take place in late April and May. And registration for those courses will open within the next couple of weeks and I encourage our stewards to take part in this amazing opportunity. Every year, we hold our annual stewards conference and those who have participated know what a special experience this is. Stewards have an opportunity to come together for an empowering day filled with inspiring speakers and educational presentations. The event provides the opportunity to meet fellow students from workplaces across Ontario and connect with union staff.

The date for this year's conference is September 20, and it'll be held at the same hotel as last couple of years, the Hilton Suites out in Markham, which is represented by 1006A, those are our members who will be serving us. And I encourage all stewards on the call here today to mark that date on your calendar. And that date again is September 20. We would love to see all of our stewards attend. At our local union we also help empower young members to become activists and stewards in our union and communities. I'm proud of the strong participation we saw this year from 1006A members who participated in UFCW Young Workers Internship program sponsored by UFCW Canada. This unique training and education program is designed for young workers interested in labour and social justice

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting  
January 14, 2025  
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

issues. And I'd just like to take a moment now and turn things back over to Glacier to have her share the experience of one of our members who took part in Phase 2 of the program last year. Glacier.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Thank you, Wayne. Last year, Marc Visca, a member who works at a Toronto grocery store, joined other young UFCW Canada activists in participating in the Young Workers Internship Program Phase 2, which was in the Vancouver area. The focus was on helping young workers develop new skills while building solidarity. In Phase 2, Marc gained the knowledge and experience of campaign building and political lobbying. He also participated in the political campaigns during BC's most recent provincial election, helping with canvassing door knocking and leafletting constituents.

Speaking about the program, Marc said the following, "It was really eye-opening. I gained a much better view and insight to how the Canadian political system works. I learned about the union's effort to help not only workers they represent, but everyone in all communities across the country. UFCW is a family and a community that always has open arms to help and guide everyone alike, no matter their limits and boundaries. It was truly a blessing to be given the opportunity to help my union and help the communities in BC. To pass on the knowledge to others and to help others is just the best feeling." We appreciate Marc taking action and participating in the program and for sharing his experience with us. I'll turn it back over to you Wayne.

Wayne Hanley:

Thanks, Glacier. It's great to see our members and our stewards actively participate in their union. The political activism that our members like Marc participate in does make a difference and it is now more relevant than ever as we enter period of political uncertainty in our country. And I say that because in the coming year we'll see major shifts federally and perhaps even provincially. Federally, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced this week that he'll be stepping down after a new liberal leader is elected by the party. That means an election will be taking place probably later this year, that sooner than later. Provincially, the next election is set to take place on or before the summer of 2026. However, it is likely to see Doug Ford call a snap election, which could take place as early as sometime near the end of February. Everybody's guessing right now, although I haven't seen the six o'clock news, but everybody's pretty confident there's going to be a quick election called by Doug Ford. But these two events are consequential elections for our members and we'll have impact on the workers' rights and livelihoods.

As with every election cycle, I would encourage you to look at the various parties' platforms. You will no doubt be inundated with memes on social media. However, I urge you to visit independent news sources like CBC, CTV, Global News, Toronto Star, Globe and Mail to find out what each party is proposing as these policies if enacted, then quite frankly will a significant impact on you and your family. Now more than ever, Canadians are subjected to targeted videos and social media posts that seem organic and independent, but are often simply propaganda put out by parties and their supporters. Those frequent commercials on YouTube and conventional television and sadly paid by in some cases by your tax dollars, are targeted advertising by those with big pockets filled with money aimed at protecting their interest and not yours. In these times, it's vital to be critical about the information you're receiving and thinking about what party is addressing the real issues that you were facing. Don't just look at one issue that a candidate or a leader might say that might benefit you.

Look at the entire package and the bigger impact it will have on you, your family and your country. Whatever you do, the most important thing is to get informed, get good information, and of course get out and vote. As many of you know, the recent strike of Canada Post took place as union members

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting  
January 14, 2025  
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

advocated on the picket lines for good jobs, fair wages, and a strong public post office, and we stood in solidarity with the postal workers. Our magazine, which is normally delivered to members' homes in December, was delayed this year due to the strike. Now that the strike and postal service has resumed, the strike is over, you can expect to see the magazine at your door in the coming weeks.

On a sad note, I'm sad to advise and wanted to talk about one of our members from a No Frills store who we're not going to name out respect for him and his family, but our member passed away after suffering a critical injury while at work. Our membership at the store, as you can imagine, is devastated and in deep mourning even three weeks after the event.

The union is working hard to support our members' family and our membership during this difficult time by being there for our members and ensuring mental health support is available for them. Our thoughts and prayers of course are with the member's families and friends and the coworkers during this time, but let this tragic incident be a reminder how important it is and how important health and safety is at our workplaces. Never take your health, your safety for granted while at work. Our union also continues to do vital work to protect the health and safety of all of our members. And the reality is that many of our workers, including our members, face and service customers in the public daily, and they are facing increasing incidents of abuse. All workers deserve to be safe while at work. All workers deserve to be treated with respect and dignity and there are no exceptions to this, and that's why we as a union have launched a campaign to stop public abuse.

And now I'm going to turn things back over to Glacier for an important conversation with Rick Young from our health and safety department, who will talk about this new campaign being launched by your union. Glacier.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Thank you, Wayne. Many members have unfortunately experienced or seen public customer abuse. Last year the local union launched an important new public and customer abuse campaign. In the last few town halls, we discussed various elements of the campaign and today we'll hear from Rick Young on this important issue. Thanks Rick for joining us.

Rick Young:

Well, I appreciate being here, so thank you to both you and Wayne for having me. I'm really happy to be able to address this issue with you.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Rick, how big of a problem is public abuse and what industries does it impact?

Rick Young:

Unfortunately, public abuse is a growing reality faced by too many of our members across all of our public-facing industries. Our union represents workers in retail, groceries, hotels, restaurants, as you'd know in public transit, workers at the airport, social services amongst others. And many of our employers have been really slow to respond to the reality of increased incidents out of fear of losing market share to their competitors and are therefore slow to react to our members' concerns when they bring them forward. Customer abuse can encompass verbal, emotional, or even physical attacks directed at our members. These behaviors can and have ranged from unwarranted yelling and profanity to manipulation and threats.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

January 14, 2025

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

It can also occur as online harassment, and I don't think it's going to come to a surprise to anyone that the pandemic, the rising cost of groceries, inflation, the rising cost of housing and the chronic underfunding of social services has exacerbated the issue. Rather than taking proactive measures like zero tolerance policies or hired security, most of our employers would rather put the onus on our members by asking them to take on the role of management and asking them to deescalate the situation or to continue to provide services offering solutions, discounts or free meals. De-escalation has its place but only so far that our members can remove themselves from the situation safely so that it can be handled by management.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Rick, it's disturbing how widespread public and customer abuse has become. I see it on a day-to-day and hear it from our members, but can you tell us about the psychological and physical toll of public abuse on our membership?

Rick Young:

Yeah, of course. You're right, it is really disturbing and I'll start with one really small piece of good news and it is a small piece and that is, is that we're actually pretty well-equipped physically and mentally to handle stress, but only in really small doses. It's when the stress becomes long-term or chronic that it can have serious effects on our bodies. That's why it's important to deal with the emotional stress of having to deal with an abusive customer as soon as possible. Emotional stress has a negative impact that affects all of our systems in the body, physically and mentally, including the musculoskeletal, gastrointestinal, our endocrine system, our respiratory system, cardiovascular and nervous systems, and even our reproductive systems. For example, when we're stressed, a physical manifestation is, is that our muscles tense up to protect us from suffering and pain. Stress and strong emotions also affect our respiratory systems by causing things like shortness of breath or rapid breathing.

People without respiratory issues or disease won't have so much of a problem with that short-term, but this kind of emotional stress can compound breathing problems for workers that may have pre-existing respiratory conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or asthma. And repeated acute stress can also contribute to inflammation in the circulatory system, specifically in the coronary arteries. The negative impact of physical stress and acute chronic stress, they're endless and they're well documented. Acute and chronic emotional stress can also cause a number of psychological issues. The symptoms can be irritability, distress, anxiety, avoidance of similar situations, isolation, poor sleep, feeling emotionally numb and detached from others, so it's really important to watch for the symptoms and look and ask for help if you recognize them in yourself after an incident. Our union, UFCW 1006A, has a number of resources on our website for anyone that believes that they may need professional help and your employer should have an employee assistance program that can also be used.

I would encourage if any of our members is not comfortable speaking to their employer directly, they should contact their shop steward, their joint health and safety committee member in the store, their full-time union rep or myself at the local health and safety department.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

That's a lot of symptoms that I'm sure everybody on this call has experienced at some point or the other. But I have another question for you, Rick, 1006A started a campaign to raise awareness about the problem of public abuse. Can you tell our members about this campaign and why it's so important?

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting  
January 14, 2025  
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Rick Young:

Yeah, so we started working on the campaign to roll it out last year and in September of last year, the local began the initial phases of the campaign by educating our full-time union servicing staff on the topic of public abuse, the reporting tool that we'd be providing to our members, how to support, and this is really important, how to support our members facing abuse when they contact the union. And we also provided strategies to staff on how to deal with problematic employers. At our stewards' conference in September, a presentation was given to all stewards in attendance to educate them on the new campaign and to provide them with the same information in tools as the staff reps. In November of 2024, an information poster was prepared and posted on the union boards of all public-facing units that contained a QR code that will link to a confidential reporting tool that will initiate a direct response to the members concern from the union directly.

Also, we prepared business-sized cards that have been distributed to the union reps for distribution to members in their workplaces. If a rep hears of an incident while on site so that any affected member can use the card to make the report. And it's important for the union to know about these incidents of abuse for a number of reasons. First and foremost, we just want to be able to offer support directly to the member when they're experiencing any workplace issue as soon as possible. Another reason why this is important is that this issue has been going on as long as there's been a service industry. Unfortunately, the prevailing attitude of the customer is always right, has been internalized by us as workers. It's been demanded by the public and it's always been encouraged by employers. Obviously there's no place for any kind of abuse of our members, and the first step to ending it is knowing when and where it's occurring.

The final reason this campaign is so important is that the data that we collect through this reporting tool, although it's confidential, it can help us identify problem employers. It'll help us file effective grievances, create stronger collective agreement language, and give us an ability to provide statistical data when advocating for greater rights with policymakers like the WSIB and the Ministry of Labour.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

And can you tell our members more about this reporting tool? Specifically, how can members use it and what has been the response to this tool from our members so far?

Rick Young:

Of course, so we did just roll this out and we've been able to effectively deal with a number of issues successfully. And if a member experiences public abuse, they can use their phone to scan the QR code that is available on the union board at their workplace and file again, a confidential report that's going to go directly to the union's health and safety department, which will then be sent to the union rep. The report consists of a number of questions that act as internal incident reports that will not be shared with the company without the permission of the individual filing the report. When the local receives the report, the union will contact the worker within 24 hours, 48 hours if it's received on a weekend, and the rep will begin working with the affected worker on a resolution if one's required.

If any injury was sustained by the worker as a result of the occurrence, the rep will also be able to provide valuable information in regards to WSIB reporting and support the worker if needed in reporting the incident to the employer if they've not already done so. I would like to emphasize that no incident is too minor to be reported. We encourage all members to use the tool to report any incident no matter how minor they believe it might be or how effectively it was responded to by management. The

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting  
January 14, 2025  
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

information gathered by collecting our members' stories is of great use to the local for the reasons mentioned earlier. The more we know, the greater and more effective programs and strategies we'll be able to create to combat the issue.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

And what will be happening with this campaign in the new year?

Rick Young:

I'm really excited about that. On February 12, we're going to be running a beta test of an all-day online virtual seminar for stewards from the London area specific to this campaign and to customer abuse. This is going to be the first of many training seminars to ensure that stewards across the province that would like to receive further training on the abuse campaign will have the opportunity. Following our February session, we'll be rolling out the training that will go on throughout the year for all the stewards that represent our members in public-facing units and sectors.

The training is going to give our stewards the tools they need to help support their co-workers when faced with abuse, teach them strategies on dealing with their employers with the aim of preventing similar incidents and instruct them on how they can use the Occupational Health and Safety Act as well as their joint health and safety committees to hold their employers accountable. I'm always encouraged by our stewards' eagerness to participate in our health and safety seminars, and I'm looking forward to hearing their stories and inputs on ideas on how to best support our members and grow this campaign.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

Thank you, Rick, for joining us today to discuss this very important topic. It's time that we bring this customer abuse situation to the forefront because it is getting out of hand. And if you experience any form of public or customer abuse, please contact our union rep, as Rick mentioned, or your union rep as Rick mentioned, or you can contact our office, the Health and Safety Department and use our reporting tool. Thank you again, Rick.

Rick Young:

Thank you.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

I'd like to remind folks to stay on the line for the entire call and you'll have a chance to enter a membership contest. The winner will receive either a Samsung tablet or a pair of Maple Leafs tickets. And so I'm going to turn this over back to Wayne. I'm not sure if there's any questions available or that have been sent in, Wayne, that you want to discuss right now. I'll remind the callers that if you did want to ask a question to press star three on your phone keypad, but right now I'll pass it back over to you, Wayne, for any questions that you might want to answer.

Wayne Hanley:

Sure, Glacier. And just before I address the questions, I want to thank Rick for his informative presentation as useful and helpful as always, so thank you Rick. And just to reiterate what you've already heard, customer and public abuse is never acceptable and we'll continue to do everything in our power to keep our members safe. And I encourage you to check out your union bulletin boards for more

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting  
January 14, 2025  
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

information. As it relates to the questions, Glacier, we do have a number of questions. As is our practice questions that are specific to one workplace or a member's one specific issue we pass on to the reps later this evening or first thing in the morning.

And as is our practice, those calls and questions will be answered or at least we'll reach out to you and try and connect with you within 24 hours. Let me just finish by saying that in 2025, your union is committed to continue to work hard and to make life better for you, and our members, and your families. And if at any time you have any questions or concerns or face any problems at work, I encourage you to reach out, contact your union representative for help. We are here for you. Glacier.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Thank you, Wayne. And again, for those with questions that weren't answered, your union rep will get back to you within 24 hours. If you don't know who your union rep is, you can visit our website at [www.ufcw1006a.ca](http://www.ufcw1006a.ca) and just click on the find your rep button. Also, remember that an audio file and transcript of tonight's meeting will be posted on our website for your convenience, as well as the minutes of tonight's meeting will also be posted for your review and to be adopted during the next meeting, which is scheduled on April 16th, 2025 spring, yay. The date again for our next meeting is April 16th, 2025 and it will be at 7:00 PM. Now let's go to the membership contest before we wrap up for the night. And our last poll question will enter you into the draw to win either the Samsung tablet or the Toronto Maple Leafs tickets.

To enter, just press one on your phone keypad now and the winner will be announced on our website tomorrow by 3:00 PM. Once again, to enter the membership contest, press one on your phone keypad and the winner will be announced tomorrow by 3:00 PM. Again, our website is [ufcw1006a.ca](http://ufcw1006a.ca). Once again, that's [ufcw1006a.ca](http://ufcw1006a.ca). And for those who would like to leave us a question or a comment, please stay on the line and you can leave it at the end. And I want to thank you all for joining us tonight for our first general town hall meeting for 2025 and hope everyone has a good evening and stays warm.  
Meeting adjourned. Thank you.