

### **A fund which embodies solidarity the CSN way**

Since January 1st 1952, the grand day of its creation, the PDF has supported affiliated unions and their members by giving them the means to fight their battles.

The PDF is a fund like no other in Quebec's union landscape. It contributes to making our organization unique. It embodies solidarity the CSN way:

- 1) by supporting union mobilization;
- 2) by paying strike or lockout benefits to members of unions involved in labour disputes;
- 3) by allocating special allowances or budgets to unions involved in labour disputes;
- 4) by paying legal costs incurred during labour disputes;
- 5) by giving financial assistance to members of affiliated unions who have been dismissed or suspended without pay on account of their union activities.

*Members of the CSN share the conviction that nothing is gained without effort, that no victory can be won without putting in place the necessary conditions. The first of these conditions is solidarity: tangible, active solidarity that is constantly nurtured and enriched.*

### **A fund which supports the expression of tangible solidarity**

The first gesture of solidarity of each affiliated union towards all the others is the payment of its per capita to the CSN, part of which is allocated to the PDF.

### **Union's eligibility to PDF support**

An affiliated union has sole authority to decide, by secret ballot, on calling a strike. For a union to be eligible for PDF support, the following conditions must be met :

- 1) The union must be in good standing with the CSN, be not more than one month in arrears in its per capita and dues;
- 2) The union must work with staff representative for mobilization who will be responsible for advising it during the struggle;
- 3) The staff representative must attend the meeting at which the strike vote is taken and explain the PDF By-laws before the vote by secret ballot is held;
- 4) The union must adopt By-laws governing the members' participation in strike or lockout activities. Such By-laws must provide for cancellation of the benefits of members who do not observe them. The general meeting must see to it that members are informed of the PDF By-laws;
- 5) The union must send a copy of its By-laws to the CSN Executive Committee which verifies that they are in compliance.

### **A fund which supports unions' strike expenses**

During unlimited general strikes, allowances are paid to the union. They are allocated upon authorization by the CSN of a strike expenses budget (rooms, strike huts, canteens, patrols, etc.) and strike activity reports. This collective support also applies to the union, which must return to work as a result of procedures limiting its right to strike.

During unlimited general strikes, the allowance is paid to the union for each week of conflict during which at least 3 days of strike are exercised.

### **Allowances to unions for strike expenses**

<b>Number of members</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Up to 25	\$ 200
26 to 50	\$ 400
51 to 250	\$ 400 + \$ 4 per member from the 51st to the 250th member
251 to 500	\$ 1200 + \$ 3 per member from the 251st to the 500th member
More than 500	\$ 1950 + \$ 2 per member as of the 501st member

In the case of intermittent or sporadic disputes, unions have their strike expenses reimbursed by special mobilization budgets previously authorized by the CSN.

### **Members' eligibility to weekly strike benefits**

The following conditions in order to be eligible for weekly strike benefits :

- 1) Strikers must sign up to participate in the labour conflict by the method stipulated by the CSN Executive Committee. Refusing to do so means waiving PDF benefits;
- 2) Strikers must follow the By-laws governing the members' participation in the labour conflict adopted by the union and vetted by the CSN;
- 3) Strikers must have lost income because of the labour dispute;
- 4) Strikers must not receive income equal to greater than the weekly strike benefit during a given week. However, employment or pension revenues already received when the strike begins do not affect entitlement to benefits;
- 5) Strikers must not receive employment insurance, health or accident insurance benefits. In the case of retroactive payments, strikers must reimburse the amounts received from the PDF;
- 6) Striker must sign a register attesting receipt of each weekly payment.

### **Amount of weekly strike benefits**

For the first 3 months	\$ 315
After 3 months	\$ +25
After 4 months	\$ +50
After 5 months	\$ +75
After 6 months	\$+100

### **The payment of weekly strike benefits**

- 1) Each week of conflict in which there are 3 or more strike days entitles strikers to the weekly strike benefit;
- 2) Only one weekly benefit is paid per 7 day period;
- 3) The strike days may be consecutive or not;
- 4) In the case of intermittent strikes, 5 accumulated days of loss of work in a given labour conflict are equal to 7 days of strike.

### **Provisions for disputes in which unions must maintain essential services**

- 1) The PDF does not pay benefits directly to the strikers;
- 2) The PDF pays a weekly group benefit to the union;
- 3) The amount of the benefit is based on the percentage of total strike time for the striking workers;
- 4) The union redistributes the weekly group benefit to the strikers in accordance with PDF rules.

### **Sample of calculation of group benefit during a labour conflict with essential services :**

*A union with 100 members whose regular weekly schedules total 4,000 hours and whose weekly strike time totals 1,000 hours, or 25%, would receive a weekly group benefit of \$7,875, which it would redistribute to its members.*

Calculation:

100 employees X \$315 X 25% = \$7,875

### **End of labour dispute**

When a labour dispute ends, registered strikers who are not called back to work are entitled to weekly benefits until the first of the following events occurs:

- 1) Their return to work;
- 2) A period during which they are entitled to employment insurance, workers' compensation or insurance benefits;
- 3) The end of the fourth week following the end of labour dispute;
- 4) Strikers who are not called back to work and who are ineligible for employment benefits are entitled to 4 weeks of benefit after the end of labour dispute;
- 5) Under certain conditions, benefits can exceptionally be maintained for strikers who would normally be entitled to unemployment insurance benefits but are denied them solely because the workplace where the conflict occurred has resumed an insufficient percentage of activity.

*In a union, solidarity exists when each member feels responsible for all the other members. Likewise, in the CSN, solidarity exists when each union feels responsible for all other unions. The Professional Defence Fund is therefore the utmost expression of union solidarity.*

# **THE PROFESSIONAL DEFENCE FUND**

## **SOLIDARITY THE CSN WAY**

This flyer presents a summary of By-laws for the PDF. The official and complete text of these By-laws can be consulted on CSN's Web site.

Updated to incorporate the amendments adopted by the 67<sup>th</sup> Convention of the CSN



**Solidaire  
depuis 1921**