



The Professional Institute
of the Public Service
of Canada

14 questions about
dues increase you were
too embarrassed to ask

www.pipsc.ca

14 questions about dues increase you were too embarrassed to ask

1 What's the point of my dues anyway?

Your dues pay for quality services. They are an investment in protecting your jobs and your livelihood.

2 Ok great. If I'm already paying for quality services, why should I pay more in dues?

Our dues have not kept up with inflation, let alone with the growing demands on a union of our size. Even though the new government is a great improvement over the previous one, we still have to negotiate hard, mobilize and strengthen our communications and government relations in order to secure a good deal.

Until now, we've paid for all of our additional services by tapping into our savings. Without this dues increase, our savings will be depleted by the end of 2017. We will be forced to review some of our most successful initiatives and campaigns.

3 What will you do with the additional funds from the dues increase?

We will replenish our reserves which have sustained the Institute through five years of deficits. We will also invest in areas that have long been ignored, like communications, mobilization and engagement with members. We'll have sustainable funding for government relations. We will strengthen the union for the next round of negotiations.

4 Can't we just tighten our belts instead of asking for a dues increase?

We have done that already. Since 2012, the Institute's operating budget has increased by only 1.33%. But cumulative inflation has been 6.93%. In that same period, member services have expanded in new horizons of campaigning and government relations. While we will always look for ways of working more efficiently, we want to avoid cuts to services that members like you rely on.

5 Hmm, are you sure we're not just spending too much money on staff?

We're spending 34.9% of our budget on staff salaries which is in line with industry standards. For example, our colleagues at PSAC spend 37.1% of their budget on salaries. In fact, in 2015, we saved more than \$200,000 on our budgeted staffing costs (salaries, overtime, training, travel, etc).

6 What's this "member participation" line in the budget? Maybe we're spending too much there.

When members like you volunteer their time to serve as stewards, join bargaining teams, attend meetings, etc., we replace their salaries and pay for their participation. Again, our expenses on this line item are in line with other unions.

7 Wait a second - why are our legal fees going up so much in this budget?

The Olymel lawsuit. This is a law suit against the union because of the actions of a number of our members fifteen years ago. We expect that lawsuit to come to a settlement this year. We have to project the maximum cost of the lawsuit in our budget which is approximately \$3.3M.

8 Ok, so your point is that we need more money. What about our building? Let's raise the rent on our tenants.

Our equity has grown significantly. The building has certainly been a worthy investment. Due to market conditions, we currently don't have a tenant in the building. That could mean a cashflow deficit of \$1.67 million if the market conditions don't improve in 2017. A new tenant may also require leasehold improvements that could also mean more upfront costs. There will be savings down the road when market conditions improve. But that wouldn't be enough to pay for the growing demands on a union of our size.

9 Here's an idea. Interest rates are so low these days. Why not go into debt?

When we have a deficit in our budget, we have to pay for it by selling off our investments and spending our savings. That's not sustainable.

10 How can other unions manage themselves without asking their members for more in dues?

Among the 11 NJC unions, representing all federal government employees, our dues are the fourth lowest but our services are among the best. With this dues increase, we would still pay the fourth lowest dues among our NJC colleagues but we'd also be able to make significant investments in improving our services.



.....

**11 Ok, so our union dues are lower than all our federal counterparts.
But what about our provincial counterparts?**

PIPSC members in provincial jurisdictions pay less in union dues compared to their counterparts in their jurisdiction. PIPSC's members in provincial jurisdictions pay between \$5 to \$127 less in monthly dues than other provincial workers.

12 Let's get down to business. What happens if I voted no? What if I voted yes?

NO: we run out of our reserves by the end of 2017. That forces us to cut services that our members rely on.

YES: we make the essential investments that we need in order to secure the future of professionalism in public service. We also replenish our funds so that by the next round of negotiations, we will be the strongest we've ever been.

**13 Hmm, ok. I accept that we need a dues increase.
Why does it have to be an additional \$10?**

We looked at a number of options and arrived at \$10 as the bare minimum we need in order to do two things over the next four years:

1, to replenish our savings, and

2, to make strategic investments that will put our union on a strong footing for the next round of bargaining.

An increase below \$10 will not be enough to put us in a position to meet these two goals. We'd be back into deficit before we can replenish our funds to make any major improvement to our union.

**14 I'll be honest with you, I skipped to the bottom of the document.
Can you tell me in 50 words why I should support this dues increase?**

These additional \$10 are an investment in protecting your job and your livelihood. Without them, we would have to cut back on our services. With them, we could strengthen our union as we fight to protect professionals in public service. This is your chance to program for success.



For more information

www.pipsc.ca

or call us at: 1-800-267-0446



The Professional Institute
of the Public Service
of Canada