

A GOOD RESOLUTION...

- uses clear simple wording;**
- is concise and focused – respects the word limit (i.e. 150 words for the PSAC Convention);**
- deals with just one topic (problem) and has one major objective;**
- clearly identifies the problem;**
- specifically outlines the required action;**
- builds in accountability i.e. deadlines, who will be responsible for implementing the proposed action, what resources will be required;**
- ensures the action proposed is within the jurisdiction of the organization to implement;**
- isn't something that is constitutionally dealt with in another way (i.e. bargaining demands)**
- allows for flexibility in implementation - it's the end result that accounts;**
- is submitted on time (is not a late resolution);**
- isn't about something that is already enacted;**
- applies the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHY and HOW test.**

An example of a resolution:

Traditional Format:

TITLE: MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS: EXPANDING THE DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION

WHEREAS human rights have evolved and expanded since Section 5 of the PSAC Constitution was last amended; and

WHEREAS family status, social and economic class, and gender identity are recognized as prohibited grounds of discrimination in human rights legislation in at least some jurisdictions in Canada; and

WHEREAS PSAC has adopted an expansive definition of human rights and has taken leadership positions to protect members from discrimination based on family status, gender identity and social and economic class:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Section 5 (b) of the PSAC Constitution dealing with Membership Rights be amended as follows to include family status, social and economic class and gender identity among the enumerated grounds against which members are protected from discrimination:

SECTION 5 MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS

Every member in good standing as defined in Section 5, Sub-Section (2) is entitled:

...

- (b) to be free from any act or omission on the part of the Union, or other members, that would discriminate against the member on the basis of age, sex, colour, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, marital status, family status, criminal record, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, political belief, social and economic class or employer;

Clear language format:

TITLE: MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS: EXPANDING THE DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION

The PSAC will amend the PSAC Constitution dealing with Membership as follows to include family status, social and economic class and gender identity among the enumerated grounds against which members are protected from discrimination:

SECTION 5 MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS

Every member in good standing as defined in Section 5, Sub-Section (2) is entitled:

...

- (b) to be free from any act or omission on the part of the Union, or other members, that would discriminate against the member on the basis of age, sex, colour, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, marital status, family status, criminal record, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, political belief, social and economic class or employer;

Because human rights have evolved and expanded since Section 5 of the PSAC Constitution was last amended; and

Because family status, social and economic class, and gender identity are recognized as prohibited grounds of discrimination in human rights legislation in at least some jurisdictions in Canada; and

Because PSAC has adopted an expansive definition of human rights and has taken leadership positions to protect members from discrimination based on family status, gender identity and social and economic class.



RESOLUTIONS SUMMARY

What are resolutions?

Resolutions are proposals put forward at conventions to develop new positions on various issues or to change existing positions or policies. Resolutions usually provide explanations or rationales outlining a particular position and then the resolve is focused on the solution or outcome desired.

Resolutions can be written in two formats; the **traditional format** using “Whereas”, to state the problem and “Be it resolved” to state the solution, or the **plain language format** using “The PSAC will,” to state the solution”, followed with a “Because,” to state the problem (see sample resolutions).

- In writing resolutions always consider what you want to change with the resolution, and when you want that change to occur.
- The solution or action identified in the resolution must fall within the jurisdiction of that convention. For example, a Component convention would not be able to implement a resolution that gives direction to a Regional Women’s Committee.
- Resolutions about bargaining demands are out of order. The PSAC has other constitutional processes for bargaining demands.
- If a resolution is calling for action in a specific local OR committee it is better dealt with at the local or committee level and would not usually be considered appropriate business for a convention.
- If you want to change the bylaws of the region, a Component or the PSAC Constitution, the resolution must be submitted to the appropriate convention because only conventions have the authority to change the constitution or regional/Component bylaws.

- Often, only a small percentage of resolutions submitted to convention get prioritized by committee and debated on the convention floor. It is important therefore to be strategic about the number of resolutions you submit to ensure your priorities are emphasized for convention committees.
- Those resolutions not debated at convention get referred to the appropriate bodies for follow-up (*i.e. Component or Regional Council Executives; National Board of Directors; Standing Committees, etc.*). No resolutions calling for a dues increase can be adopted after convention.

How to write resolutions

Resolutions should be kept simple, stating the problem and the solution with enough information to identify how the resolution could be implemented.

How do resolutions get to the conventions?

At the local union level, resolutions can be developed and tabled for discussion at a local meeting. If a majority of the members agree with the resolution and it is adopted, then the resolution can be sent to the appropriate body for handling.

Each convention call sent out in advance of a convention sends requests for resolutions and provides the deadline date for the submission of these resolutions. Resolutions are usually grouped according to topic. In the case of the PSAC convention, there is a pre-convention meeting where the resolutions are reviewed by the appropriate committee.

There are by-laws governing this process that establish who has the authority to submit resolutions to its convention.

Tips for Resolution Debate

BE PREPARED:

- Research your issue in advance.
- Obtain information, statistics and examples that will support your position.
- Talk to other union members and find out their perspective.
- Anticipate the opposition and develop arguments to deal with their concerns.
- Find out if this issue has been dealt with before - and in what context. Be prepared to identify why it is important to deal with the issue now.
- Draft speakers' notes in point form, on file cards or small sheets of paper.
- Practice your presentation to ensure you are able to clearly articulate key points well within the **3 minute** timeframe allotted.
- Be flexible and open to changing your notes in response to discussion that may take place at convention.
- Make your case when you speak to the resolution on the floor. Be prepared and make sure you make the key points within the time frame permitted.



Public Service Alliance of Canada Structure Map

