



# STANDING COMMITTEES

A guide for members



*Updated September, 2021*

This guide will give you a general overview of how standing committees work. See our Policy and Procedures Manual for additional details and information.

We acknowledge that our workplaces are located on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territories belonging to the Indigenous peoples of what is now known as British Columbia.

# Congrats!

Congratulations on being appointed or elected to one of FPSE's standing committees. You probably have questions.

## How Standing Committees Connect Your Locals to Presidents' Council and the AGM

Our standing committees advise Presidents' Council, FPSE's decision-making body between annual general meetings (AGMs).

As your local's representative on a committee, you'll share issues and information from your local's perspective, and discuss further solutions and initiatives. Your committee chair will report on the committee's work at Presidents' Council and at our AGM.

**Participation on a standing committee gives your local a voice on key issues**



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# Committees

Bargaining Coordination Committee .....	BCC
Climate Action Standing Committee .....	CASC
Contract Administration Review Committee .....	CARC
Decolonization, Reconciliation & Indigenization Standing Committee.....	DRISC
Disability Management & Rehabilitation Committee .....	DMRC
Education Policy Committee.....	EPC
Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee .....	HRISC
Non-Regular Faculty Committee.....	NRFC
Pension Advisory Committee.....	PAC
Private Sector Policy Committee .....	PSPC
Professional & Scholarly Development Committee.....	PSDC
Women & Gender Equity Committee .....	WGEC
Workplace Health, Safety & Environment Committee.....	WHSEC

See [fpse.ca/committees](https://fpse.ca/committees) for committee details.

# Standing committee roles

## Local Representative

Your job is to represent your local on the committee, and share information and experience from your local in discussions.

You'll provide advice, information, research and recommendations to Presidents' Council (via the chair and executive liaison). Connect with your local president to find out how to check in with them and/or your union executive regarding what the committee is discussing and working on.

### Tips

- Come prepared. Consult your local executive, president, and members on key issues identified in committee agendas BEFORE coming to meetings.
- Support your local's position at meetings.
- Participate in committee decision-making.
- Join ad hoc and sub-committees.
- Follow the chair's direction when meetings are in session.
- Act on direction from Presidents' Council.
- Report back to your local executive and president on all issues debated and decided at committee meetings.

## Chair

You'll ensure meetings are conducted fairly and respectfully. You represent the committee at Presidents' Council (if needed) and at AGM.

### Tips

- Develop meeting agendas with input from local representatives, the executive liaison, and the staff representative assigned.
- Assist committee decision-making through facilitation.
- Remind local representatives that they represent their local and should act and vote in accordance with their local's positions and direction.
- Orient new committee members.
- Make inquiries when a local doesn't appoint a representative to your committee.
- Ensure meetings follow FPSE's constitution and by-laws.
- Submit an annual committee report to Presidents' Council in spring.
- Attend the AGM and report on behalf of the committee.





## Executive liaison

You're the conduit between your committee and Presidents' Council. You represent Presidents' Council at the committee.

### Tips

- Inform the committee of FPSE developments or initiatives relating to the committee's responsibilities in each executive liaison report.
- Advise your committee if their work is duplicating or contravening FPSE policy.
- Inform the executive and Presidents' Council of committee advice and recommendations, and of problems the committee has encountered.
- Report and speak for the committee at Presidents' Council (unless the chair is present).
- Provide input on the committee agenda.
- Take minutes in the absence of FPSE staff.
- Assume the chair in the absence of the committee chair.

## Local president

Ensure your local is represented on each committee. Ensure local representatives are informed of your local's position before meetings. Consider procedures to ensure representatives understand the local's position on committee agenda items. Some locals invite their committee reps to attend executive (or board or council) meetings.

## FPSE staff representative

Your assigned staff rep will support and advise your committee and chair.

### Tasks

- Give input on meeting agendas.
- Take minutes, highlighting motions to Presidents' Council for review.
- Support sub-committees.
- Arrange guest speakers and workshops.
- Ensure staff and executive officers are updated on the committee's needs and activities.
- Assist the chair, executive liaison, and committee members as required.
- Summarize resolutions and actions, and forward to committee members in a timely manner.

## FPSE support staff

Support staff assigned to your committee will handle meeting logistics.

### Tasks

- Update contact lists.
- Book hotel and meeting rooms, order catering.
- Help with travel arrangements if required.
- Organize and distribute meeting material.
- Assist the chair, executive liaison, staff representatives, and members as required.

# Choosing a chair

## Selection

- Chairs are elected for one or two year terms, according to the committee's terms of reference.
- Elections take place at the last committee meeting held before the AGM, except in the case of the Non-Regular Faculty Committee, which elects a chair at their fall meeting.
- Committees should nominate a chair who has served on the committee for at least one term.

## Function

- Chairs ensure committee meetings are run efficiently and effectively. The chair should remain neutral as much as possible, but is also a local representative, and should express their local's point of view.
- Chairs ensure meetings follow FPSE's bylaws and that the committee acts within its role as an advisory body to Presidents' Council. Chairs can observe and speak at Presidents' Council meetings, but cannot vote.
- A duly elected chairperson can complete their term, even if they cease to be a designated local representative.

## Tasks

- Give direction to assigned FPSE staff on committee operations and meeting preparations.
- Set meeting agendas, in consultation with committee members, the executive liaison, and their assigned staff representative.
- Open and close meetings.
- Ensure there is a speaker for each agenda item.
- Keep discussion focused on the agenda.
- Keep the meeting respectful.
- Welcome and orient new members.
- Run meetings democratically.
- Vote as a local representative.
- Ensure members understand meeting procedures and their duty to represent their local's views.
- Ensure resolutions and actions follow FPSE bylaws and are consistent with the committee's advisory role.
- Ensure decisions are understood by all and responsibility for carrying them out is assigned.
- Ensure committee decisions and initiatives are implemented.
- Find out why locals may not have appointed a representative to your committee, or why the representative fails to attend.
- Call for volunteers for ad-hoc or sub-committees.



# Meeting Guidelines

- One person speaking at a time
- Allow everyone to contribute
- Respect each other's views
- Be aware of triggers (self and others)
- Ask questions to clarify
- Willingness to push boundaries and go outside comfort zones
- Be mindful of confidentiality
- The right to “pass” on commenting
- Contribute by sharing ideas and asking questions
- Acknowledge all types of diversity and experiences

# Questions (and answers)

## Virtual meetings

### When will my committee meet?

Standing committees typically meet twice a year. Meeting schedules are posted at [fpse.ca/committees](https://fpse.ca/committees) and updated as needed.

### Where will we meet?

FPSE uses Zoom for virtual meetings. If you haven't used this platform before, please review the Zoom New User Guide before the meeting. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360034967471-Getting-started-guide-for-new-users>

### What about meals?

Meals/per diems are not provided for virtual meetings.

### How much time will it take?

Friday afternoons and Saturdays are set aside for virtual meetings. Your committee may discuss preferred meeting time(s), or a time may be set based on various committee members' availability.

### Can I get release time?

Check your collective agreement to see if your employer will cover release time to travel to and attend union business. Or, check with your local president to see if the union will cover substitution costs.

## In person meetings

### When will my committee meet?

Standing committees typically meet twice a year. Meeting schedules are posted at [fpse.ca/committees](https://fpse.ca/committees) and updated as needed.

### Where will we meet?

Meetings will take place in Vancouver at our provincial office or, at a hotel. We will let you know the meeting location ahead of time.

### How do I get there?

Accommodation and travel will be covered for members traveling from out of town. We'll send details to you ahead of the meeting. Read our policy and procedures manual for specific information about our travel policy: [fpse.ca/about/governance/policies-procedures](https://fpse.ca/about/governance/policies-procedures).

### What about meals?

Lunch or dinner is provided at most meetings; the cost of breakfast and other meals may be claimed through our expense form, available at [fpse.ca/committees](https://fpse.ca/committees).

### How much time will it take?

Committee meetings usually take place over two days, starting Friday afternoons and resuming Saturday morning.

### Can I get release time?

Check your collective agreement to see if your employer will cover release time to travel to and attend union business. Or, check with your local president to see if the union will cover substitution costs.

# Resources

## Committee Workplans

Each year, Committees are asked to investigate or report on various topics related to our overall priorities as a federation. This direction comes in the form of a workplan letter.

If you have any questions about the elements of your Committee Workplan, don't hesitate to seek clarification from the FPSE Executive Liaison at the committee.



# FPSE Standing Committee Policy

## III. STANDING COMMITTEES

### **Intent, Operational Policies and Procedures, and Participant Roles**

Statements of policy and responsibilities found within the Terms of Reference for Standing Committees are set within the context of section 7.10 of the FPSE Constitution, where Presidents' Council is mandated as the governing body between AGMs. Standing Committees are therefore responsible to Presidents' Council and to the AGM. They report to Presidents' Council and to the AGM on all matters within their purview.

As the needs of FPSE develop and change, Presidents' Council may from time to time direct specific tasks to Standing Committees or form new Standing Committees to deal with new issues.

Standing Committees are subject to the operational policies of FPSE as interpreted and administered by Presidents' Council and the President. Any Presidents' Council action to stand down a committee for reasons other than non-representation cannot take effect until such action is confirmed by the AGM.

### **INTENT**

Within the operational context of being responsible to Presidents' Council, Standing Committees are intended to provide forums for the exchange of information and advice amongst FPSE locals. They provide a means to increase both the capacity and potential of FPSE and its locals to plan, prepare for and take informed action on vital matters of concern to our membership. Standing Committees can also provide or be asked to provide specific advice or recommendations to Presidents' Council and/or the FPSE President on topics within their purview.

### **OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

The Terms of Reference for each Standing Committee set out each committee's operating policies. Internal Policy 1.17, Standing Committees, provides additional guidance. Failure to comply with policy 1.17.4 on required representation may lead to a committee being stood down.

### **PARTICIPANT ROLES**

#### **Committee Chairs**

Chairs ensure that committees adhere to the FPSE Constitution, that they are aware of the relevant approved FPSE policy parameters for their work, and that committees work to fulfill their advisory functions for Presidents' Council and/or the FPSE President.

#### **Executive Liaisons**

Executive Liaisons act as conduits of information and decisions between Presidents' Council and the Standing Committee to which they are appointed. They may provide input to committee Chairs in the development of committee agendas. Executive Liaisons represent Presidents' Council to committees. In the absence of the Chair, the Executive Liaison will assume the chair and may represent their committee to Presidents' Council.

#### **Committee Members**

Members are expected to share informed local perspectives with their committees and, in turn, keep their local executives informed of committee work, discussions and decisions. Members are representatives of their locals in any committee decision-making processes. They are therefore advised to seek necessary guidance from their locals.

#### **Staff Representatives and Support Staff**

Under the direction of the President, staff support the needs and work of committees.

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