

May Day Toolkit



waging
ahead

A graphic element consisting of the word "CUPE" repeated multiple times in a stacked, slightly overlapping arrangement. The text is in a bold, sans-serif font and is colored in a dark red or magenta shade. The arrangement of the words forms a shape that resembles a stylized arrow or a cluster of text pointing upwards and to the right.





What is May Day?

May Day originated from a peaceful protest for an eight-hour workday in 1886, which ended tragically in bloodshed. Labour organizers led thousands of workers in the first May Day parade, with up to 350,000 workers striking.

Police and scabs clashed with striking workers at the McCormick Harvester factory, resulting in deaths and injuries. Subsequent events, including the Haymarket Square protest, further escalated tensions between workers and authorities and state sanctioned violence against working people.

Because of this struggle, May Day became a pivotal moment in labour history, highlighting the ongoing need for workers' rights and fair treatment. It serves as a reminder of the challenges faced by workers, including stagnant wages and unsafe working conditions, and the need for continued activism.





Day of Action: Celebration of Workers

Let's celebrate the hard-fought victories of workers past and present. Without their efforts, we wouldn't enjoy weekends, access to medical care, or workplace safety standards. Every protection we have, we owe to their struggles.

Use this guide to plan your own event in your region for May Day! Solidarity!





Community Engagement Action Ideas

Among the best ways to raise awareness about the work we do and struggles we face is through **Community Engagement Actions**.

Such actions may include:

- Leafletting
- Tabling at a farmer's market, local festival or community event
- Rally
- Town Hall meeting
- Door to door canvass or leaflet / doorhanger drop
- Ads
- Social media posts
- Op-Eds in the local news
- Picnics or social events: a celebration of workers
- Banner drops
- Vehicle cavalcades
- Marches





Member Engagement Event Idea

Social and fun events are a great way to learn more about union issues. For May Day we suggest the theme a Day of Action: A Celebration of Workers

Such actions may include:

- BBQ or Picnic in the park
- Arena rental family fun night
- Pool rental family fun night
- Labour Movie Night (ideas include *Norma Rae* or *Newsies*)
- Town Hall meeting
- Office open house
- Food / coffee / ice cream truck outside worksite(s)
- Take a break on the union Kit Kats
- Hand out M+Ms (More Money)
- Have a social with union made snacks





How to Organize an Event:

If your event is to go smoothly and to accomplish its purpose, you'll need to organize it carefully. Consider:

- Planning, planning, planning
 - Lead time
- Communication
 - Follow-up

Planning: Have a to-do-list. Having a to-do-list, and checking it every time your planning group meets, is the best way to stay organized. Have your main planner responsible for keeping track of it and making sure everyone has a copy as it is updated. Your to-do list should have a list of the things that need to get done for your event, it should note the person responsible, the due date, and status. Put together a planning committee to oversee the to-do list.

Lead Time: To plan successfully, be realistic about what you can achieve. Avoid overreaching, and you'll likely accomplish your goals. For May Day, make sure you plan something that will be effective and doable in the time you have. Book any vendors immediately.

Communication: Good communication before, during, and after the demonstration is crucial. Organizers need to communicate with each other, participants, and the crowd, especially in large outdoor areas. This includes explaining program changes, giving instructions on traffic flow or trash pickup, and handling emergencies. Organizers should have cell phones or other quick communication methods. Consider appointing "runners" to carry messages and run errands during the event. Good communication can make or break a demonstration.

Follow-up: Include time to investigate what went well, what didn't, how things can be improved for next time - because there WILL be a next time!





How to Organize an Event:

Event Promotion:

The easiest way to promote the event is by sending mass emails with the basic details. Start with a brief personal note connecting the event to your life, such as "I was shocked by the UCP Government's cuts to x service" or "I've been inspired by CUPE Members' fight for workplace safety and vision for properly funding Alberta's public service." This personal touch can help others connect emotionally. **Submit your event to larab@cupe.ca to be included on the Waging Ahead website.**

Include the event's basic information at the top, including time and place, and add a link to your website if applicable.

Phone Outreach:

Live conversations, either in person or on the phone, are highly effective in engaging people. Use your Local's member list and other contact lists to call and invite people to the event. Explain the event's objectives and let your enthusiasm show. Check out the Waging Ahead Guide on One-on-One Conversations. **Contact ehenry@cupe.ca if you'd like to be trained on CallHub.**

Photographs:

If there are no photos, did the event really happen? Yes, but much of the impact occurs when people see the event online. That's why good photos are crucial. A skilled photographer moves around, getting close to capture people's faces alongside banners, signs, or landmarks (like the sign on an MLA's office).

Bonus points if the photographer engages with the subjects, frames the shot well, and gets close—the photos will be much more compelling. **And don't forget to send all photos of the event immediately to larab@cupe.ca.**





How to Organize an Event:

Organizing Roles:

Define roles when organizing with volunteers. Ask friends and allies to take on responsibilities to ensure a well-rounded team. Having a clear schedule is crucial, with one or two organizers ensuring the schedule is followed. They should also be prepared with a schedule of events, a list of speakers, activities such as colouring sheets, and engaging chants.

Event Roles:

- **Emcee or Host:** Keep things flowing, lead chants, introduce speakers, and deliver applause lines. Be prepared ahead of time, know the speaking order and duration.
- **Photographer:** Capture impactful photos of the event, focusing on faces, banners, signs, and landmarks. Engage with subjects to make the photos more compelling.
- **Media Spokesperson:** Be prepared to speak to journalists, conveying key points about the event. Answer questions concisely and stay on message.

Conclusion:

By following these steps, you can effectively promote and organize your event, ensuring it runs smoothly and achieves its goals. Planning a Rally? Check out our Rally Toolkit!





To-Do List

Initial Steps

- Form an organizing team
- Schedule regular meetings
- Assign roles
- Set Date / Time / Location

Event Flow

- Agenda
- Speakers list
- Playlist
- Activities

Roles

- MC/Host
- Volunteers
- Media Liaison
- Photographer(s)
- Set up / take down team
- _____

Logistics / Materials

- Sound System
- Permit
- Parking / Transportation
- Flags / Banner
- Placards / Posters
- Food
- Event Staging
- _____

Promotion

- Draft an event "blurb"
- Outreach plan - members
- Outreach plan - allies
- Social media
- Media release





Union Made Snacks

Chocolate

- Cadbury Dairy Milk
- Caramilk
- Mr. Big
- Wunderbar
- Crunchie

BBQ

- PC Hamburgers
- Maple Leaf Hot Dogs
- Olymel Wieners & Hot Dogs
- Freybe Smokies
- Grimms Wieners and Smokies
- Safeway Bakery
- Dempsters
- Wonder bread

Chips + Snacks

- Covered Bridge Chips
- Humpty Dumpty Chips
- Old Dutch Chips
- PC Decadent Chocolate Chip Cookies

Drinks

- Coca Cola
- Naya Natural Spring Water
- Pepsi
- Schweppes
- Happy Planet
- So Clear Sparkling Water

For a full list:

<https://gounion.ca/your-union/unionized-goods/>

https://ufcw.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=32352&Itemid=2434&lang=en





Food Trucks



Using a local food truck is a simple way to organize food for a social event. A list of food trucks across the province is available along with this guide.





Template Social Media Shareable



**WAGING AHEAD
RALLY**

JOIN US TO TAKE A STAND FOR
RESPECT AND FAIR WAGTES

DATE
TIME
LOCATION

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Template Poster

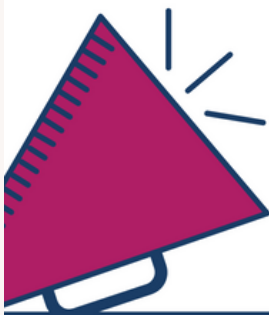


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