

What Is ETFO's Professional Relations Services? How Can They Assist Me as An Educator?

Professional Relations Services

Staff in Professional Relations Services (PRS) are available to provide information, advice, support, and intervention for members who are experiencing professional difficulties.

This service is confidential, and no action will be taken without the member's knowledge and permission.

Local presidents and workplace stewards are encouraged to contact PRS staff at the provincial office when assistance is needed to advise and support members.

PRS staff at the provincial office may involve legal counsel with members in accordance with ETFO Policy Guidelines.

Member Protection

Here are some of the employment and professional issues that arise in which PRS staff provides support and advice. Below are some reasons local leaders and members may wish to reach out to ETFO.

- Annual Learning Plans/Professional Learning Plans/ Continuous Professional Learning Plans
- Any issue with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) or the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE)
- CAS/Criminal allegations related to employment responsibilities
- Conflict resolution
- Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) Program
- Designated early childhood educators (DECE) performance appraisals (DPA)
- Difficulties with students, other staff, parents, and school administrators
- Duty to report and obligations under the Child and Family Youth Services Act
- Employment Insurance (EI)
- Ethics and professionalism
- Evaluations and occasional teacher evaluations
- Health and safety
- Human rights/harassment/discrimination
- Long term disability (LTD)
- Mental health and sick leave
- Pregnancy and parental leaves
- Professional boundaries
- Professional judgement
- Professional support personnel (PSP)/educational support personnel (ESP)
- Resignations and terminations
- Return to work/accommodation issues
- Teacher Performance Appraisals (TPA)
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board matters (WSIB)

PRS staff are available to provide assistance and advice when you call the ETFO provincial office.

Member Education

Preventing professional difficulties is a major objective of ETFO. PRS staff have developed a broad range of resources, conferences, and workshops to assist members in understanding their rights and responsibilities.

PRS Matters Bulletins

PRS Matters is a regular publication devoted to topics which affect members – for example, professionalism, professional boundaries, allegations, conflict resolution, performance appraisal, bullying and cyber bullying, reporting workplace accidents, voluntary extra-curricular activities, electronic communication. *PRS Matters* is mailed to all local presidents and school stewards and to members through the ETFO *e-newsletter*. *PRS Matters* can also be accessed by going to etfo.ca.

Children’s Aid Society/Criminal Allegations

If you are contacted by the police or Children’s Aid Society (CAS) regarding an allegation against you:

1. Do not participate in or consent to an interview.
2. Make no statement to anyone regarding the allegation/charges.
3. State that: “I am willing to cooperate, but I am unable to comment until I contact my Federation and legal counsel.”
4. Call ETFO PRS staff at 416-962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836 and state that your call is urgent.

“After hours” Emergency Assistance

What Is an Emergency?

- Police (or CAS) are on the scene
- You are facing criminal charges for an alleged criminal offence directly related to the performance of your professional duties
- You are at risk of being arrested or incarceration

What Should I Do?

Call the numbers listed below – a voice message will provide the necessary instructions to put you through to an operator. You will be asked a few quick questions and where appropriate, a criminal lawyer will be contacted, and you will be connected immediately.

Remember PRS Staff are available to assist members on a wide range of topics.

JM:PHW:TB:SM