



CAW - CANADA

National Automobile, Aerospace, Transportation and General Workers Union of Canada.

The **Canadian Auto Workers** union (**CAW**) was founded in 1985 after the Canadian membership of the U.S. based United Auto Workers (UAW) decided to set up their own Canadian Union. Since that time, our Union has grown tremendously from 146,000 members to the present membership of over **260,000** strong, working men and women.

The CAW is the largest private sector Union in Canada and has a long history of fighting to establish decent wages, benefits and working conditions for its members. The CAW is also one of Canada's most progressive Unions and its members can be found in every major economic sector in Canada. We presently have in excess over 1900 collective agreements, with a wide range of large to small employers.

There are CAW members in the auto, auto parts, airline, manufacturing, railways, transportation, mining, health care, warehouse & distribution, retail, grocery, casino, hotels, clothing and textile, bakery and confectionery and hospitality industries. You will also find CAW members in offices, research and electronic laboratories, distillers, plastic, wood, paper and many other industries from coast to coast, all performing an amazing range of jobs.

This diversity has equipped the union to confront change and develop new strategies in the field of collective bargaining. The CAW is a leader in negotiating gains in wages, benefits such as health, dental and vision care, pensions and in workplace health and safety protection to name a few.

The CAW has extensive education programs featuring a wide range of topics and is available to all its members. The CAW education programs are second to none, and give workers the knowledge and tools to handle issues such as proper grievance handling, health and safety, collective bargaining, workers' compensation, substance abuse programs, labour standards and many more.

The CAW is a fully democratic union and is accountable in all aspects to all its members. Delegates from throughout the union meet on a regular basis at CAW councils and conventions to discuss and debate the policies and direction of the Union.

The rights of every CAW member are spelled out in the CAW's **National Constitution**. The Constitution is the highest authority governing the National Union, its Local Unions, subordinate bodies and people elected or appointed to any office in the union. Only delegates to a Constitutional or Special convention may amend the Constitution by a majority vote.

Being a strictly Canadian Union dealing with Canadian issues and concerns has made the CAW a leader in the trade union movement. The CAW has earned a reputation as a Union that is willing to go to great lengths to defend and fight for its members. The CAW is all about building better lives and communities for our members and their families.

CAW RESOURCES

The CAW employs capable and experienced full-time staff, who come from the membership ranks. Most of the staff are National Service Representatives who work directly with locals to help and assist them in collective bargaining, contract enforcement and working out local problems.

There are also other National Staff and Departments that have special skills and knowledge in the following areas:

EDUCATION – runs schools and courses for CAW members and National Staff on a wide variety of subjects of interest to trade unions at CAW's fully equipped education center in Port Elgin, Ontario and also local area training at CAW locals throughout the country. Training for new members, newly elected shop stewards, workplace health and safety representatives and officers is a priority.

RESEARCH – provides CAW negotiators with the facts and analysis they need to bargain effectively and also to lobby governments on workers rights & laws, trade issues, etc.

PENSION & BENEFITS – provides research and collective bargaining expertise for a wide range of negotiated benefits such as pensions, income security and health care benefits.

COMMUNICATIONS – keeps CAW members informed about the union's activities and policies and informs others about the CAW. Updates CAW's Internet home page for current news, opinions, facts and figures. CAW Internet address, www.caw.ca, where you can also send E-mails to the union president.

LEGAL – provides National Staff and Locals expertise in matters of law.

ORGANIZING – works with non-union workers who choose to join the CAW and thus building the strength of the Union by helping thousands of workers become members each year.

HEALTH & SAFETY – assists local health and safety committees with collective bargaining, training and problem solving in order to eliminate health and safety hazards in the workplace.

SKILLED TRADES – deals with the special needs of skilled tradesmen/women both in collective bargaining and regarding technological change. These experts help with apprenticeship training programs and in issuing journeymen's/women's card.

WORK ORGANIZATION & TRAINING – focuses on workplace change and responding to employer plans to reorganize work and increase workload. The department is also responsible for training and adjustment.

HUMAN RIGHTS – responsible for co-ordinating anti-harassment and anti-discrimination work within the union and working with community organizations to further the goal of eliminating discrimination in our society.

WOMEN – co-ordinates programs to develop women's leadership and to encourage women to fully participate in their union.

RETIRED WORKERS – along with the elected leadership of the CAW Retirees council, this department co-ordinates and plans activities, to protect pensions, health care benefits and housing for the CAW's retired members.