



We are the hotel sector

**ONE** union.  
**ONE** standard.





**MICHEL VALIQUETTE**

TREASURER, FÉDÉRATION DU COMMERCE-CSN



## MEETING REALISTIC GOALS



**T**he CSN's history in organizing the hotel industry shows that, together, we can significantly improve our working conditions and living standards. Since the early 1980s in Montreal, we have joined forces to coordinate our bargaining. From the beginning, we made a collective decision to share a common platform of demands, which all of us would defend at our respective bargaining tables. Each round of negotiations has allowed us to achieve gains that reflected the differing realities that we have faced over time. In Montreal and all over the province of Quebec, for the past 30 years, we have worked together so that each and every worker can enjoy the recognition and respect they deserve.

Workers in Toronto can win the same standards as their colleagues in Montreal. But in order to do so, they must rely on autonomous, fully democratic unions in which workers' rights are the only priority: unions that do not hesitate to build, through real mobilization, the balance of power necessary to achieve real gains for workers.

Although both the cost of living and hotel room prices in Toronto are much higher than in Montreal, it is normal for workers in Toronto to earn significantly lower wages—and this despite the fact that the employers are the same: Fairmont, Ritz-Carlton, Hilton, Delta, and others.

In 2023, Toronto hotel workers have a tremendous opportunity: to join THEU-CSN and thereby establish autonomous, truly democratic unions, where workers' voices take precedence over backdoor deals. At the CSN, we are proud to share our solid union experience in the hospitality sector with our colleagues in Toronto.

“One union, one standard” is a vision that we have been putting into practice for a long time. Take my word for it: it's well worth it!

United, we run the hotels!

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TREASURER, FÉDÉRATION DU COMMERCE-CSN  
TOURISM SECTOR POLICY MANAGER







## JOIN THE THEU–CSN!



**H**otel workers in Toronto and across the GTA need a union that puts us first. This has never been clearer than over the past two years during the pandemic.

That is why hotel workers have partnered with the CSN to form the Toronto Hospitality Employees Union (THEU–CSN).

This is a union in which we, the members, will make the decisions that affect our lives and work. This is a union that belongs to us. And that is why we are saying: “Be the U!”

### THE CSN – YOUR CENTRAL LABOUR UNION

*Fighting for workers’ rights for more than 100 years*

Since 1921, the CSN has participated in many struggles to improve the living and working conditions of millions of workers. Such efforts include struggles for free bargaining rights for all workers, a prevention-based approach in occupational health and safety practices, the right to a decent income for all retired workers, and much, much more. Today, the CSN (Confédération des syndicats nationaux) brings together more than 330,000 workers across the country, in both the public and private sectors.



## THE CSN HOTEL SECTOR

For the past forty years, the vast majority of hotel workers' unions in Quebec have joined the CSN, a Montreal-based union confederation bringing together 330,000 workers across the country, in both the public and private sectors. Today, more than fifty hotels, including some of the most prestigious, are unionized with the CSN, uniting nearly 10,000 workers in this sector.

These workers were tired of being controlled by American unions, whose representatives agreed to backdoor deals without consulting the members. Curiously, this past situation resembles that of hotel workers and their unions in Toronto today: representatives who take their directives from the United States, are unable to enforce collective agreements with proper legal means, and seek, above all, to pacify any impulse toward mobilization on the part of the members, which might bring real changes and affect the balance of power.

In such a context, the workers are two-time losers: not only are the conditions under which they work far from optimal, but they lack the means to express themselves and take action to improve these conditions.

The successes of CSN unions in the hotel industry speak for themselves. Indeed, they set the standard for all of North America:

- Significantly higher salaries
- An employer contribution to workers' pension plans equivalent to 8% of their annual earnings (including tips and premiums)
- Job security
- Group insurance
- Real protections against subcontracting
- Collective rights based on equity and seniority













## THE CSN MODEL

# PEOPLE POWER

**M**ontreal hotel managers are no more generous than those in Toronto: they represent the same private interests or investment funds that only respond to the law of profit. So, what explains this disparity?

Hotel workers in Montreal have been able to strike a balance of power and develop a dynamic model for union action.

**AUTONOMOUS, DEMOCRATIC UNIONS.** Only the workers can decide what is in their interest. They elect their own representatives, as well as the members of the negotiation committees that bargain on their behalf. These bargaining demands are also adopted by the members, after consultation. Finally, an agreement-in-principle must be approved to the satisfaction of the members; otherwise, the negotiations must continue.

**EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES.** Hospitality is a highly competitive industry. To remain competitive, hoteliers too often look to cut operating costs, of which labour is an essential component. To avoid this dead end for workers, CSN unions decided to coordinate their negotiations: there could be no question of accepting a bad deal, since all the unions in the sector would benefit from the same wage increases and benefits.

**MOBILIZATION TACTICS AND THE BALANCE OF POWER.** Of course, the CSN unions in the hotel industry had to fight to win these advantageous working conditions. With each negotiation, they have to start over in order to preserve their gains. They do not hesitate to use all the means at their disposal to keep the advantage at the bargaining table, including by informing their members about the state of the negotiations and mobilizing them in actions of disruption, to dial up the necessary pressure on employers to obtain satisfactory settlements.



CSN UNIONS IN THE HOTEL SECTOR

## THE BEST COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

### JOB SECURITY: A REALITY!

All CSN collective agreements contain one particular, very simple clause, but one that stands any test. **The work performed by salaried workers cannot be performed by anyone other than union members.**

Period. Thus, neither subcontractors nor even the managers themselves can replace us in the performance of our work tasks. Neither laundry nor valet services, for instance, may be outsourced. Our jobs are protected.

CSN collective agreements also include provisions to prevent the bogus abolition of positions and the merging of classifications. Severance payouts, of up to \$1,700 per year of service, have been introduced in cases where an employer terminates employment, such as: technological changes, legitimate abolition of classifications, closure of a department or a hotel, and repurposing of facilities.

This model of union action has born fruit: CSN unions now enjoy the best working conditions in the hotel sector across North America. In concrete terms, the rights of workers in these unions are protected by the most advantageous collective agreement clauses.





## SALARY: ONE STANDARD

	Toronto Royal York	Montreal Queen Elizabeth
👑 ROOM ATTENDANT	\$23.91/hr	\$28.26/hr
👑 HOST	\$27.93/hr	\$32.05/hr
👑 HOUSEPERSON	\$23.91/hr	\$27.78/hr
👑 FRONT DESK	\$26.36/hr	\$32.49/hr
👑 SERVER	\$15.50/hr	\$21.19/hr
👑 STEWARDING	\$24.02/hr	\$27.95/hr
👑 BELL	\$16.16/hr	\$23.80/hr





## STABLE, FULL-TIME JOBS

Employers like having a large pool of workers that they can assign anywhere they like, anytime it suits them. For workers, this kind of work flexibility too often translates into incomplete work weeks and disagreeable schedules.

In order to minimize inconveniences such as these, CSN unions have negotiated advantageous clauses:

- When a full-time position becomes vacant, it must be posted and filled as a full-time position. The employer cannot convert it to a part-time position. The number of full-time jobs is thus preserved.
- A minimum number of work hours is guaranteed for each worker, including part-timers.
- Work hours are allocated by seniority, in order to reduce the employer's arbitrary power.

All workers must also enjoy access to promotions or better positions. For this reason, CSN collective agreements stipulate that all workers can assert their seniority when a position is posted, regardless of the department, as long as they meet the normal requirements for the position.

## ROOM ATTENDANTS' WORKLOADS

Each room attendant's workload is limited to a maximum of 14 rooms per day. However, due to the specificities of the clientele on weekends and during the summer months, the maximum is reduced to 13 rooms for those periods (i.e., for approximately half the days of the year). Maximum numbers of suites, beds, and checkouts are also clearly set out in CSN collective agreements – even the maximum number of floors that a room attendant has to work on.









## LEAVE AND VACATION PAY

- Annual leave: 3 paid weeks after 3 years of service (6% of total income); 4 weeks after 7 years (8% of total income); 5 weeks after 14 years (12% of total income); and 6 weeks after 22 years (13% of total income)
- 13 fully paid statutory holidays per year
- 10 days of fully paid personal leave per year (for medical reasons, for reasons of family or work-life balance, or to take care of a relative)

## PENSION FUND

Employer contribution to the workers' pension fund is mandatory in CSN collective agreements. **The employer's contribution must equal 8% of a workers' total income**, including tips, premiums, and overtime hours. The employee's contribution can be between 8% and 10% of her/his income, **for a peak total pension plan contribution of 18%.**









# THE CSN MACHINERY



**T**he CSN is a century-old organization uniting nearly 1,600 unions. It provides a wide range of services and supports to more than 330,000 workers across Canada.

The Toronto Hospitality Employees Union provides its membership with extensive support. Our agreement with the CSN gives us access to unparalleled services, all of them included with our union dues.

## THESE SERVICES INCLUDE:

### **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND LABOUR RELATIONS SUPPORT**

An experienced CSN union advisor will be assigned to assist in our collective bargaining negotiations, to enforce the collective agreement, and generally to help strengthen our organization, the THEU–CSN.

With THEU–CSN, we finally have an opportunity to negotiate a real collective agreement, one that is based on our own,

democratically determined priorities. Every step in the process will be transparent for all members.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The CSN's Health and Safety Department has a team of more than thirty people who work in three different fields: promoting prevention, defending injured members, and addressing issues related to the work environment.

The department has union advisors who specialize in representing union members on workers' compensation issues, as well as industrial engineers, mental health professionals, and ergonomists.

All these kinds of assistance help make our jobs safer and ensure that our rights are respected, and that we are afforded all the supports to which we are entitled when we become sick or are injured. Each THEU–CSN member enjoys direct access to such professional advice.



## 🌿 LEGAL SUPPORT

The CSN has the largest legal department of any union in Canada—a team of about 25 lawyers who work only for the CSN and are dedicated to defending workers' rights. These lawyers plead cases before the courts in every province, up to and including the Supreme Court of Canada. We also retain external law firms for specialized matters.

## 🌿 MOBILIZATION SUPPORT

Experienced advisors provide support during bargaining talks. These advisors partner with our union officers and workplace committees to implement action plans and encourage broad participation by members in union affairs.

To be treated fairly at work, workers must be able to stand up to their employers. This is a core principle for CSN unions. We need the employer to know that when we come to the bargaining table, we're ready to back up our demands with action. The CSN ensures that we have the support we need to do so.

## 🌿 COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA RELATIONS SUPPORT

Specialized communications, public relations, and media relations advisors help raise awareness about our union demands in the media. They also support our internal communications and help us develop our social media presence.

## 🌿 STRIKE AND PROFESSIONAL DEFENCE FUND

The CSN's Professional Defence Fund is a unique collective tool that supports workers and their CSN union during strikes, lockouts, and organizing drives.

This fund is used to assist workers financially who belong to unions that are affiliated with or in the process of being organized by the CSN, and who have been dismissed or suspended for union activities related to organizing work, strikes, lockouts, or other union pressure tactics.



## EDUCATION

Members can benefit from education sessions on various practical subjects, such as grievances, duties of the shop steward, health and safety issues, mobilization, and more.

## AUDITING AND ACCOUNTING SUPPORT

CSN advisors provide accountancy and bookkeeping support, such as helping to prepare transparent financial statements and consulting on our union's financial health. Professionals are also available to work directly with our treasurer, if desired. In CSN unions, union finances are always transparent and open to the members.











# HOTEL SECTOR WORKERS: THE REAL STARS



**A**t the CSN, we have a symbol—an image of five stars—that represents hotel workers, as well as our pride in ourselves, our work, and our union.

**At the THEU–CSN, these five stars represent the A, B, C, D, and E of “The U.”**

## “A” IS FOR AUTONOMY

The THEU is an autonomous union. This means that we, the members of the THEU–CSN, make the decisions for our union, without outside interference or control.

However, this does not mean that we are alone. We are part of the CSN, a well-resourced union confederation with over 330,000 members, which gives us a powerful combination of tools, support, and allies to help us achieve the goals that we set.

## “B” IS FOR BARGAINING POWER AND STRONG BENEFITS

Thanks to their CSN collective agreement, workers at the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth are many thousands of dollars ahead of where we are today at the Fairmont Royal York in the following areas (among others):

- Wages
- Pension
- Vacation leave

Just a few decades ago, hotel workers in Quebec were in the same situation that we find ourselves in, here in Toronto today. UNITE HERE Local 31 was falling apart and unable to represent Quebec hotel workers effectively. However, when workers left that union to join the CSN, their standards began to improve!

## **“C” IS FOR COMMITTEE AND PARTICIPATION**

At the THEU–CSN, we know that a strong union has broad participation from its members. To achieve this participation, THEU–CSN leaders will work hard to encourage people to join the workplace union committee, so that there are leaders for every shift and every classification in each department.

The better our participation, the stronger our committee.

## **“D” IS FOR DEMOCRACY**

A democratic union is a strong union. The constitution of the THEU–CSN guarantees that members are the ones making important decisions. Elected leaders are required to implement member decisions.

All positions are elected by the members themselves: shop stewards, bargaining committee members, Executive Committee members, etc.

**At the THEU–CSN, we, the members, are in control of our union!**

## **“E” IS FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION**

Members of the THEU–CSN know that we are strongest when we stand together. We have come from all over the world to live and work in Toronto. We are of different religions, ethnicities, and sexual orientations.

We celebrate our differences and see them as a source of strength when we stand together. We will not allow ourselves to be divided by anyone! Diversity is one of the greatest things about Toronto. The same is true about our union.



## A SIXTY-UNION-STRONG HOTEL SECTOR

RITZ-CARLTON MONTRÉAL  
FAIRMONT LE REINE ELIZABETH  
FAIRMONT LE MANOIR RICHELIEU  
FAIRMONT ROYAL YORK HOTEL  
W MONTRÉAL  
MARRIOTT CHÂTEAU CHAMPLAIN  
MARRIOTT MONTREAL DOWNTOWN  
MARRIOTT RÉSIDENCE INN  
HILTON MONTRÉAL  
HILTON QUÉBEC  
DELTA QUÉBEC  
DELTA SHERBROOKE  
HILTON MONTREAL AIRPORT  
HILTON LAVAL  
HILTON MONT-TREMBLANT RESORT  
HILTON QUEBEC RESORT  
HILTON GARDEN INN  
HYATT PLACE MONTRÉAL CENTRE-VILLE  
HOLIDAY INN MONTRÉAL CENTRE-VILLE  
HOLIDAY INN LAVAL  
HOLIDAY INN LONGUEUIL  
OMNI MONT-ROYAL  
BONAVENTURE HÔTEL  
HÔTEL ESPRESSO MONTRÉAL CENTRE-VILLE  
HÔTEL PUR, QUÉBEC  
CENTRE INTERNATIONAL DE SÉJOUR DE QUÉBEC  
HÔTEL LE CONCORDE QUÉBEC  
CHÂTEAU MONT SAINTE-ANNE

HÔTEL CLARENDON, QUÉBEC  
HÔTEL CLASSIQUE, QUÉBEC  
HOTEL TRAVELODGE  
MANOIR DU LAC DELAGE  
HÔTEL CLARION, QUÉBEC  
LE MÉRIDIEN VERSAILLES, MONTRÉAL  
COMFORT SUITES DOWNTOWN  
COMFORT INN MONTREAL  
COMFORT INN DORVAL AIRPORT  
RADISSON HOTEL MONTREAL AIRPORT  
MOTEL IDÉAL  
HÔTEL RUBY FOO'S  
SUITES FAUBOURG ST-LAURENT  
QUALITY INN DORVAL  
DOUBLETREE BY HILTON MONTREAL  
HOLIDAY INN PLAZA LA CHAUDIÈRE  
AUBERGE DU LAC TAUREAU  
HOLIDAY INN TREMBLANT  
ERMITAGE DU LAC TREMBLANT  
LODGE DE LA MONTAGNE TREMBLANT  
PLACE ST-BERNARD TREMBLANT  
SOMMET DES NEIGES TREMBLANT  
TOUR DES VOYAGEURS TREMBLANT  
LE NORANDA HÔTEL ET SPA  
CHÂTEAU ROBERVAL  
ERMITAGE SAINT-ANTOINE DE LAC BOUCHETTE  
CENTRE DE VILLÉGIATURE JOUVENCE, ORFORD  
QUALITY HOTEL & SUITES SHERBROOKE





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