



Public Service Alliance of Canada  
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada

WE ARE  
**ALL**  
AFFECTED

# We are all affected

Our members know that an attack on public service workers is an attack on all Canadians. That's why this summer PSAC members will be building alliances in communities across the country to demonstrate that cuts to public service workers and the jobs they do affect all Canadians.

## The goals of this campaign

- Build a visible community of solidarity and support for members who are “affected” and facing job losses. They need to know they are not alone.
- Make new allies and build a broad-based community of support for public services, and mobilize broader opposition to the cuts.
- Gather stories we can use to demonstrate that all Canadians are affected and that we are not alone in opposing these cuts.

## What you can do

- It starts with you! Wear a button, post posters, and put a sticker in your car window or on your bike. Use our postcard to start conversations and encourage your co-workers, family and friends to do the same. Buttons, stickers, postcards and other campaign materials are available from PSAC regional offices and on the [weareallaffected.ca](http://weareallaffected.ca) web site.
  - If you have a Facebook page, consider using the “We are all affected” logo as your profile pic. Update your status to say why you’ve done that, and encourage your Facebook friends to visit [weareallaffected.ca](http://weareallaffected.ca) to do the same.
  - Share the message. Our postcards will help you start conversations with potential allies in your community. Think about the people who rely on public services or the small businesses in your community who count government workers as their customers. Encourage them to wear a button and pass some on to their friends. Ask small business owners to wear a button and display a sticker on or near their cash register and in their window.
  - Help us gather stories from people who are affected by the cuts. We’ve included information in this kit about the kinds of stories we need to demonstrate that all Canadians are affected by public service cuts.
  - Visit [weareallaffected.ca](http://weareallaffected.ca) and tell us your story too!
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# Help us gather stories about how Canadians are affected by the cuts

As federal government workers, PSAC members know that cuts to public services affect all Canadians. They hurt people who rely on public services and they hurt our economy – both locally and nationally. Our government doesn't want to talk about the impact of these cuts, so we are asking Canadians to tell us how they are affected. Here's how you can help.

## 1. First, think about who to reach out to.

- What work do you do for Canadians and who are the people who rely on this work? Do you know someone who might tell us about how cuts have affected the services they rely on? Is there a local or regional organization that represents people like them? For example, the fishing community and other mariners depend on local search and rescue to keep them safe. The Canadian Legion organizes to support veterans who depend on federal public services.
- Think about who is affected in the community where you work. How about the small businesses near your workplace? Is there a coffee shop or restaurant that depends on you and your colleagues for its bottom line? How about a nearby drycleaner, or corner store?
- Think about who is affected in the community where you live. How are you being forced to spend less? Are there businesses or non-profit associations who will be losing you as a client?
- How are you personally affected? Have you been told you could lose your job? Or are you watching your colleagues lose theirs? What does that mean for your family or theirs?

## 2. What are we asking for?

We need very brief simple statements from people about how they are affected by the cuts. We want them to tell us their name, where they live and work and what they do. Then we want them to say no more than a couple of sentences about how they have been affected by the cuts. Here are some examples of what these stories should look like:

*My name is Yves Plouffe, and I run a small coffee shop in Ottawa near where a lot of federal government employees work. Our business has been down by about 40 per cent since those workers started getting notices. I am worried about whether we will be able to stay open, and if we do, how to absorb that loss in business.*

*My name is Sally McDonald, and I am a senior who depends on the Guaranteed Income Supplement to get by. For the past few months I have been having a lot of trouble getting through on the phone to Service*

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*Canada to ask questions about my application. I always get a busy signal. I am affected by these cuts because there aren't enough people working to get the job done and to ensure people like me get the service we need.*

*My name is Bob McIntyre and I am a Veterans Affairs worker in Charlottetown. I have been doing my job for 25 years and I've never felt like there was a "slow" day. Now I'm told I am "affected" and could lose my job. Are they saying that all that work I have done didn't matter? I am worried about where I will go, but even more so, I am worried about the old and new generation veterans who are going to have a hard time getting the services they need.*

*My name is Mylar Hinton, and I live in Vancouver. My son recently received his letter saying he has been "surplussed". He is young and just started what he thought would be a career in the public service. I worry he'll have to move away to find work, and I worry about all the other young people like him who can't find work. What kind of a message does this send to younger generations?*

### **3. Think about your approach.**

- This is all about making friends and starting a conversation, one person at a time. A first step might be just starting up a conversation, and seeing what they have to say.
- For example, a first step with small business owners might be to ask if they have noticed a downturn in business lately.
- If they seem open to talking about how they are affected by the cuts, tell them that people like you across the country are looking for stories for PSAC's "We are all affected" web page and Facebook page.
- Reassure them by letting them know you are only looking for three or four sentences.
- This should be reciprocal. Ask if they are on Facebook, and tell them that you'd be happy to "like" their page, and that you will ensure your colleagues know about their message.
- If they seem open to talking with you and say they are happy to share their story, ask if you can take a picture of them to go with their story.
- Either way, ask them to fill out the attached form, or even leave it with them so that when they have a minute, they can fill it out for you to pick up later.
- Alternatively, if they are on Facebook, you can encourage them to post their own story to the PSAC national Facebook page.
- If they would rather not participate, thank them for listening and considering what you had to say. Be polite. They may change their minds later as the impact of the cuts becomes more obvious.

### **4. Send in the stories you collect**

- Once you have a story to share, please go to [weareallaffected.ca](http://weareallaffected.ca), click on "Tell us your story" and fill in the form. We'll make sure they get posted on our national web site and Facebook page.

# Affected by the cuts? Tell us how.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Where you live (city, town): \_\_\_\_\_

What you do: \_\_\_\_\_

How the cuts affect you:

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Can we post your story to our PSAC's web site and Facebook page?

\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_ no

Can we post your photo with your story to PSAC's web site and Facebook page?

\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_ no

Can we contact you to learn more about how you are affected?

If so, please provide contact info:

Phone (with area code): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



# What do you mean when you say “we are all affected”?

When federal government workers lose their jobs, they aren't the only ones affected. Their families struggle to cope with the loss of secure income and are forced to cut spending on everything from food to education. Canadians find it harder to access the services they need and may not even realize that programs have been cut until after they are gone. Local economies suffer when government workplaces are shut down and small businesses lose their customers. The national economy suffers as job losses in the public sector lead to more job losses in the private sector.

## ***Isn't the government saying front-line services won't be affected?***

The government may not want to talk about it, but it is cutting a lot of services Canadians need. Here are just some examples:

- All of us rely on food inspectors to keep us safe. But instead of strengthening food safety this government has cut frontline inspectors and food safety funding in its latest budget. It has also cut a program that tracks and monitors meat imports, eliminated the Consumer Protection program's role in food label verification and ended a program that verifies accuracy of meat product labels before they are put on store shelves.
  - This government is shutting down search and rescue centres in St. John's, Quebec City and Vancouver, putting the lives of people who live and work along Canada's shores at risk.
  - Even before this year's cuts seniors were waiting longer for their Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement applications to be processed and finding it almost impossible to reach anyone on the phone for help. Now the government is eliminating hundreds more positions at Service Canada and leaving even more people without services.
  - Canada's veterans are losing access to the services they deserve and need. The government is shutting down nine of the Veterans Affairs district offices that provide face-to-face service. Veterans in PEI, for example, are losing their only service centre and will have to travel hours to Saint John, New Brunswick for help. For a veteran facing health challenges, the four-hour drive from Charlottetown to New Brunswick will be a significant barrier to the services they need.
  - All Canadians depend on transportation safety to ensure air, marine, rail and road safety. But the government is cutting Transport Canada's budget by more than 10 per cent at a time when previous reductions already mean less safety oversight, such as less inspection of aircraft.
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- Cuts to environmental protection and changes to regulation will affect everything from air quality to fish stocks. That affects everyone, including future generations.
- Border security is being compromised too: the government is cutting the jobs of hundreds of plain clothes front-line officers who work with police forces on electronic and physical surveillance and search and seizure, and regional intelligence officers watching for dangerous and illegal substances at our borders, airports and ports.

### ***But isn't this just about streamlining "back office" jobs?***

When you take the "back office" out of services you take services away from Canadians. For example, Canadians are waiting longer for Employment Insurance benefits because so-called "back office" Employment Processing Centres are being cut from 120 to 19.

Eliminating the so-called "back office" processing of immigration claims has meant more than 280,000 people who have been on a waiting list to have their applications processed will soon be cut from the list, with no reasonable justification.

Back office work is essential to running the government and ensuring Canadians get timely access to the services they need.

### ***How many jobs are we talking about?***

The government said that its 2012 budget would cost 19,200 jobs, but when you add that to cuts still rolling out because of previous spending reviews, we are looking at a loss of 35,200 federal government jobs by 2015.

Government spending cuts also mean an estimated 37,000 additional jobs lost for contractors and organizations dependent on government funding, including crown corporations like the CBC.

Those numbers don't include the thousands of term employees who are seeing their employment end with no notice or transitional support. In 2010, the federal government employed 26,000 of them. Many of those term workers are young, and already feeling the brunt of a "real" youth unemployment rate of 19.7%

### ***Why are you saying these cuts are bad for the economy?***

There are thousands of small and medium sized businesses that count public service workers as their customers. The loss of more than 70,000 jobs is going to hit local economies hard.

Economists estimate that the government spending cuts will lead to tens of thousands more jobs lost in the private sector for people like sales clerks, workers in the construction industry, cooks and servers in the food service industry, accountants, architects, taxi drivers and hairdressers.

For many small communities public service jobs are an important part of the local economy and municipal tax base. As these jobs are lost and people move out of the community, everyone suffers.