



WORKING, YET POOR IN ONTARIO

March 2006

COMMUNITY ACTION GUIDE

This guide contains ideas for ways that **YOU** can take action in your community on the information provided in "*Working, Yet Poor in Ontario: A Call for Fair Wages and Working Conditions*".

SHARE AND DOCUMENT STORIES

Hold a workers' rights event in your community.

- ✓ Invite a speaker from a legal clinic to talk about workplace rights or a speaker from your local labour council to talk about organizing to improve wages and working conditions.
- ✓ Document the experiences of workers in your community. Are people earning adequate wages and working in safe and respectful jobs? What are the problems?
- ✓ Write up your findings and use it as a tool to work for change. Use the first-hand experience of workers to encourage your political representatives and local employers to make needed improvements.

ORGANIZE!

Talk to workers in your community who are affected by low wages and poor working conditions.

- ✓ Outreach to low-wage workers at Employment Insurance offices, Employment Resource Centres, Job Finding Clubs, mosques, churches, and community centres in low-income neighbourhoods.
- ✓ Invite workers to a community meeting to plan a collective strategy to improve wages and working conditions.
- ✓ Ask legal clinics, labour councils or social justice groups to work with you.

Expose illegal workplace practices in your community.

- ✓ With the permission and involvement of affected workers distribute information at workplaces where workers are experiencing violations of their rights.
- ✓ Call on the Ministry of Labour and demand that they investigate and take action.

MEET WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Meet with your city councillor.

- ✓ Use first-hand experiences and the information in the "Working Yet Poor" bulletin to highlight how workers in your community are being affected.
- ✓ Organize to pass a resolution at city hall that calls on the provincial government to improve and enforce the *Employment Standards Act*.
- ✓ Organize actions to show the impact of poor wages and working conditions and follow-up with your demands to ensure they are met.

Lobby your local MPP.

- ✓ Let your MPP know that workers in your community need the *Employment Standards Act* to be updated and enforced.
- ✓ Use the list of demands and worker's stories to educate your local MPP and get his/her support for resources to make changes to the law and to ensure that the law is enforced.

RESOURCES

- For information about your rights at work, contact a community legal clinic or labour council. To find a legal clinic in your area go to the Legal Aid Ontario website at www.legalaid.on.ca
To find information about your rights at work go to the Community Legal Education Ontario website at www.cleo.on.ca
- For information about labour councils and how to form a union contact the Ontario Federation of Labour website at www.ofl.ca
- For a copy of the "Working Yet Poor" bulletin, contact Ontario Campaign 2000 at www.campaign2000.ca
- For information about your rights at work and for organizing ideas the Workers' Action Centre website can be found at www.workersactioncentre.org