



Ottawa & District Labour Council

Conseil du travail d'Ottawa et du district

Statement from the Ottawa and District Labour Council Regarding Occupation in Downtown Ottawa

The Ottawa and District Labour Council is calling on elected officials including Ottawa City Council to ensure the health and safety of workers and of residents impacted and affected due to the ongoing occupation of several downtown streets including Wellington Street. In addition, several workplaces in the immediate area of the occupation have closed or shut down leaving employees without work and/or compensation.

Our Labour Council's history dates back 150 years. Throughout that time, we have organized and participated in thousands of demonstrations, protests, picket lines, assemblies, and ceremonies in the city of Ottawa. Our intention always was and continues to be one of peace and safety for those participating and for the general public. While there have been occasions when situations escalated, we worked diligently to ensure the impact minor and the safety of all preserved.

Unquestionably the occupation has brought with it a double standard of how those participating are treated. This is not a blanket statement borne through emotion, but one made through fact.

Media reports of the occupation and those of others have included reports of hate symbols, vandalism, threats, harassment, intimidation and a number of other illegal or questionable activities by some of those participating in the occupation, in direct relation to workers and to the public. The situation is completely unacceptable.

We remind our Ottawa city councillors and Mayor that they were elected in part to help ensure the safety of all of those who live and/or work in the city of Ottawa.

Workers are tired, workers are frustrated, workers have lost jobs, workers are being harassed, workers are being bullied, workers' mental health is being impacted. Brought on in part through a pandemic but further heightened by the occupation and many of its supporters.

We expect our health and safety to be protected at workplaces, free of harassment and discrimination of any kind, a culture of respect, free of mental health abuses and free of hate. That expectation exists and must be so in our community as well.

We are humble, at first, with our expectations and asks as we have always been.

To our elected officials including the mayor in the city of Ottawa we implore you, "Do your job".