

Dear AMAPCEO members,

Over the next few months, all employees who currently work in the Macdonald Block complex will be moving out to new work locations, while that building undergoes extensive reconstruction.

AMAPCEO has been involved in this project for almost two years, advocating for members' interests around the physical space at the new work locations, successfully securing a new location for the Queen's Park Childcare Centre, which had been threatened with closure, and persuading the Employer to include this project as one of the "pilot" sites for the Community Benefits Program, as part of the Long Term Infrastructure Project.

We know that for many employees, this project has felt like a distant event. After almost two years of preparation, moving day is finally right around the corner.

I am writing to let you know about what AMAPCEO is currently doing to advocate for you through this process, to welcome you to your new space, and to share with you information about how to access information and services.

The Employer is undertaking this project because the Macdonald block is in desperate need of updates to its mechanical and life systems. At the same time, they are also taking the opportunity to consolidate real estate, and, unfortunately, to reduce the size of the physical work space allotted to each employee. The employer has adopted the trend of open-plan workspaces. This style of work space, while popular in the tech sector, is already falling out of favour. AMAPCEO has advocated for improvements to work spaces, though ultimately, it is management's right to decide. We have strongly advocated that each employee be assigned a desk, rather than the Employer's earlier plan for virtually all staff to "hotel" at a different desk each day. In most ministries, the Employer has determined to assign desks to each employee.

As part of our discussion with the Employer, AMAPCEO has taken the opportunity to push for the employer to finally embrace the promise of flexible work, as set out in its own Flexible Work Strategy. We've been clear that this should mean flexibility for employees who want to take advantage of telework or compressed work arrangements – not flexibility for managers to force these arrangements on employees. So far, the employer has been much more receptive to flexible work in the last few months. If you are interested in flexible work, either in the form of working from home on one or more days of the week, or a "compressed work week", or a combination of the two, you can learn more about the options, and submit a request to your manager through the AMAPCEO website at: <https://amapceo.ca/flexwork>

AMAPCEO is your union – and we are only as strong as our members. In this new environment, we will need to redouble our efforts to be present in the workplace. We rely on a network of hundreds of activists across the OPS. Whether it's as a "Bulletin Board Coordinator, as a Delegate to our convention and a member of our District Executive, or as a Workplace Representative or Health and Safety Representative, please consider volunteering to get involved in your union. You can learn more about volunteer opportunities at www.amapceo.ca/volunteer.

Over the next few weeks, we will be hosting "welcome" meetings over the lunch hour at each of the new work locations. I want to encourage you to attend one of these meetings – it's an opportunity to meet your neighbours, to ask questions, and to learn more about opportunities to get involved.

AMAPCEO's website has a wealth of resources. You can find "fact sheets" on a wide range of workplace issues, including job security, hours of work, pregnancy and parental leave, dependent and elder care leave, and personal harassment on the website at www.amapceo.ca/factsheets. You can always contact a volunteer Workplace Representative about a workplace concern. To find a workplace representative, visit <https://amapceo.on.ca/workplace-reps>. If you want to become more involved in the union, or learn more about how our democratic organization works, contact a local delegate or your District's director. If you currently work in Frost or Hepburn block, your Director is Cesar Furtado (furtado@amapceo.on.ca). If you currently work in Mowat or Hearst Block, your Director is Angela Freeman (freeman@amapceo.on.ca). If you currently work in Ferguson or Whitney Block, your Director is Maryanna Lewyckyj (maryanna@amapceo.on.ca).

In the mean time, if you have any questions or comments to share, please feel free to email me at watt@amapceo.on.ca.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Watt, Vice-President