



## **TOGETHER FOR A BETTER NEW BRUNSWICK: 2018 NBFL Electoral ASKS**

### **What the political parties have to say about our Electoral ASKS**

(Questions submitted to the political parties on August 24)

#### **Workplace Health and Safety**

**Question 1: Does your political party support restoring balance at WorkSafeNB by sharing the surpluses in the accident fund (over 125% funding level) between the interests of employers and employees?**

**Green Party:** Yes

**Liberal Party:** Our Liberal government made it clear that we support workers. A re-elected Liberal Government will modernize various labour laws with the ultimate goal of ensuring that New Brunswick workers have at least the same protections as Canadians in other parts of the country. We will seek to partner with the Labour-Government Steering Committee and other stakeholders to modernize the Employment Standards Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Industrial Relations Act, the Public Service Labour Relations Act, and the Civil Service Act.

Over the course of its previous mandate, our government has made protecting workers a priority. In 2017, the Labour-Government Steering Committee was established to give workers a voice at the table when decisions are being made. As a result of that partnership, our government has accomplished the following over the course of its previous mandate:

- Caught up with the rest of the country by becoming one of the last provinces in Canada to have first contract arbitration legislation;
- Provided paid leave and job protection for victims of domestic, partner and sexual violence who need to take time off of work;
- Added workplace harassment and violence protections to the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- Supported enhancements to the Canadian Pension Plan;
- Expanded pay equity to all parts of the civil service by December 2018;
- Created a Family Day holiday in February.

**NDP:** No, the NDP does not support an arbitrary split of surpluses to support “employer and employee” interests. The legislative purpose of worker compensation is to create safe workplaces and to provide compensation for injured workers. The cost of these goals is to be paid wholly through employer assessments. There should not be a distribution of any surplus which would depart from these essential goals.

**People’s Alliance:** No answer provided

**Progressive Conservative Party:** No answer provided

**Question 2: Will your political party commit to eliminate the three-day waiting period to receive workers’ compensation benefits?**

**Green Party:** Yes

**Liberal Party:** We were pleased to see this recommendation included in the WorkSafe NB task force report and have every intention of supporting this recommendation upon re-election.

**NDP:** Yes, the NDP will immediately eliminate the three-day waiting period.

**People’s Alliance:** No answer provided

**Progressive Conservative Party:** No answer provided

**Protecting Public Services**

**Question 3: Does your political party support using public private partnerships to build public infrastructure?**

**Green Party:** No

**Liberal Party:** Our party does not believe that an ideological lens should be applied to private public partnerships. We believe that there are times where these partnerships make sense and benefit New Brunswickers, and there are times where they don’t. We evaluate projects’ merits and make evidence-based decisions.

**NDP:** The NDP does not support 3P arrangements. Public spending on government services and infrastructure should be in public hands and under public administration.

**People’s Alliance:** No answer provided

**Progressive Conservative Party:** No answer provided

**Question 4: Does your political party support transitioning community care services from the private sector into our public system?**

**Green Party:** Yes

**Liberal Party:** We are committed to looking at all possible options to enhance and improve community care services in New Brunswick.

**NDP:** Yes, the NDP supports the movement of community care sector into the public domain under provincial control where there can be accountability, standards and proper education and training of staff. In addition, the workers in community care should be public servants under union contracts. We have specifically proposed this in our platform for community care and for home care support services. We propose a transition period where people working for the hundreds of community care operations would move to a new provincial agency.

**People's Alliance:** No answer provided

**Progressive Conservative Party:** No answer provided

**Question 5: Will your political party commit to raising the wages and working conditions, annually, for the community care sector?**

**Green Party:** Yes. The Green Party would raise wages for service workers by \$1.25 an hour in each of the next four years.

**Liberal Party:** In March, our Liberal Government was proud to invest \$12 million to increase the wages of human service workers. Going forward, we are committed to raising the wages for the community care sector and public sector workers.

**NDP:** Yes, the NDP in particular will raise the minimum wage for all workers to \$15 over four years and apply pay equity to community care sector during the second year of our mandate. In the meantime, we will increase the wages of all community care sector workers by \$1 per hour in April 1, 2019

**People's Alliance:** No answer provided

**Progressive Conservative Party:** No answer provided

**Question 6: Will your political party commit to cancelling the agreement with Medavie and reintegrate extramural care and Tele-care back into the regional health authorities?**

**Green Party:** Yes. The Green Party will immediately cancel the extra mural and Tele-care agreements with Medavie and also initiate an inquiry into how to bring ambulance services under public administration.

**Liberal Party:** As mentioned before, we evaluate these services and decisions on a case by case basis, rather than from a one size fits all approach. There are times where certain partnerships make sense and benefit New Brunswickers, and there are times where they do not. As stated earlier, we evaluate these projects' merits and make evidence-based decisions. In this particular case, we believe this partnership benefits New Brunswickers.

**NDP:** Yes, the NDP will cancel the EMP and Tele-Health transfer to Medavie and return control back to the province.

**People's Alliance:** No answer provided

**Progressive Conservative Party:** No answer provided

## **Pay Equity**

**Question 7: Does your political party support adopting pay equity legislation to cover private sector employees?**

**Green Party:** The Green Party would amend the Pay Equity Act to include private sector employees.

**Liberal Party:** Our Liberal Government believes in building a positive workforce for everyone, which is why we are committed to supporting pay equity in the private sector. During our previous mandate, we launched various programs to incentivize the private sector to fully adopt pay equity. A re-elected Liberal Government will impose pay equity upon local governments and organizations in the quasi-public sector by 2020, and to large businesses in the private sector by 2022.

**NDP:** Yes, we are committed to introducing pay equity to the private sector and we will start with the community care sector.

**People's Alliance:** No answer provided

**Progressive Conservative Party:** No answer provided

## **Basic Labour Standards**

**Question 8:** Does your political party support revising the Employment Standards Act to improve minimal employment standards (where employers: pay overtime rate after 40 hours of work per week, provide five paid sick days per year, provide free uniforms to employees who are required to wear them)?

**Green Party:** Yes, the Green Party would support these initiatives.

**Liberal Party:** A re-elected Liberal Government will modernize various labour laws with the ultimate goal of ensuring that New Brunswick workers have at least the same protections as Canadians in other parts of the country.

We will seek to partner with the Labour-Government Steering Committee and other stakeholders to modernize the *Employment Standards Act*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the *Industrial Relations Act*, the *Public Service Labour Relations Act*, and the *Civil Service Act*.

**NDP:** Yes, we agree to the proposed changes to employment standards. We will undertake a comprehensive review of both employment standards and collective bargaining legislation to improve the lives of all workers and to make it easier for unions to organise

**People's Alliance:** No answer provided

**Progressive Conservative Party:** No answer provided