



2023 Core Member Engagement Team Frequently Asked Questions

Program Overview

HSA's Core Member Engagement Team is an intensive member program that supports the skills and leadership development of HSA members working towards a stronger union. The program combines training in organizing, team building, on-the-ground mobilizing, and personal reflection to prepare union activists to work together on solutions to the challenges facing our union members in their workplaces, their communities, and globally.

The team consists of six to eight Core Member Engagers recruited through an open application process. The team will be booked off from work for four days of initial training and orientation followed by a six-week period to do engagement work with HSA chapters.

Contact Taylor Desmarais at taylor.desmarais@hsabc.org to sign up for an online information session which will be held virtually on Webex on Thursday, June 8, 2023 at 6:30 pm PST.

The deadline to submit your application is Sunday, June 11 at 11:59 PM PST. [Click here to submit your application online.](#)

Core Program Components

The Core Member Engagement Team is focused on training, teamwork, and outreach.

Key components of the program include:

- An initial four-day organizing training, orientation, and team building;
- A six-week long intensive full-time book-off period;
- Ongoing assessment and reflection, team check-ins, and one-on-one support from HSA staff organizers; and
- On-the-ground member mobilization focused on orienting members to the union, and the importance of member participation in union decision-making about contract negotiations, up to and including going on strike to support contract changes.

What will Core Member Engagers do?

Core Member Engagers will:

- Learn about the labour movement, and the role of unions in increasing equity;
- Undergo intensive training and orientation to organizing and mobilizing;
- Participate in campaign planning and execution;
- Work with experienced staff organizers who will support outreach and campaign efforts;
- Engage with other HSA members, activists, and stewards to help make your union stronger;
- Participate in weekly team meetings and regular team check-ins;
- Mentor stewards and worksite leaders to support increased engagement of members and recruitment and development of fellow union activists; and
- Set collaborative goals and track progress.



The team uses a “ladder of engagement” framework that identifies a series of escalating actions for members to develop a deeper commitment and engagement in the campaign. Members will learn and use engagement tactics including in-person conversations, phone calls, and mapping and charting of worksites in addition to participating in chapter meetings and drop-in membership information sessions.

By the end of the campaign period, engagers will have helped to identify and train union activists and leaders who can help build solidarity and develop their local chapters. These activists will understand the value of member engagement and have the tools to build and organize around important issues and campaigns in their workplaces.

Who should apply?

Core Member Engagers should:

- Be deeply committed to collectively building a stronger, and more participatory union;
- Have an interest in and previous experience with outreach and engagement, with getting others to take action on an issue or campaign, either within HSA or another organization;
- Have a demonstrated commitment to anti-oppression, cultural humility and decolonization;
- Be comfortable holding conversations with members and activists they may not have met before; and
- Be available for the full duration of the program including the six-week book-off period, four-day training, and some follow up meetings.

Examples of engagement work could include:

- Growing and training a list of active volunteers for a sports team;
- Striking up conversations with your neighbours and moving them to action on a community issue;
- Working with members of your faith community to provide services to your unhoused neighbours; or
- Listening to your colleagues and advancing their concerns in your workplace.

What does the application process look like?

The deadline for applications is Sunday, June 11 at 11:59 PM PST. From there, applications will be reviewed and short-listed, and a selection committee will conduct interviews. All applicants will be notified by mid-July if they have been approved for the program.

What is the time commitment?

For the majority of Core Member Engagers, this will be a full-time intensive experience. Full-time availability is important to the success of campaign activities and leadership development. Availability for the four-day training and six-week full-time book off period are mandatory for participation in the program. Accommodation may be made for participation with reduced or part-time hours.

What kind of training and support can I expect?

A four-day training and team orientation will take place from September 11 – 15, 2023 at the HSA office in New Westminster. The team will learn important outreach and engagement skills and techniques from experienced HSA staff and other labour activists.



Core Member Engagers will meet as a group at the beginning of each week for a briefing, debrief regularly with the team, and debrief individually with a staff organizer each week. The team may also participate in webinars and other learning opportunities for continued education.

What are the key dates?

- May 15: Application period opens
- June 8: Virtual Information Session at 6:30 pm via Webex
- June 11: Application period closes at 11:59pm
- Late June: Applications will be evaluated and a selection committee including a member of the HSA Board of Directors, Member Engagement Team graduate and HSA Organizer will conduct interviews
- Mid July: Successful applicants will be notified
- September 11 - 14: Four-day team training, orientation, and team building
- October 16 - November 24: Six-week full-time book-off period

Will HSA reimburse my wages and expenses?

Yes, Core Member Engagers receive wage replacement and expense reimbursement. Any travel and accommodation costs related to the work will be covered by HSA. Engagers may be required to travel and be available to meet with other members outside of standard work hours (9 am to 5 pm).

What about COVID-19 and physical distancing?

The Core Member Engagement Team will be considerate of physical distancing and other safety measures. Site visits, walkabouts, and other in-person meetings may not be appropriate. Core Member Engagers may have to use alternative methods to conduct member engagement such as:

- Video conferencing
- Group and text messaging apps and tools
- Phone calls
- And other online digital organizing and social media tools

Do I have to be a steward?

No, you do not have to be a steward to apply. Any member can apply.

HSA is working towards equity and encourages people who experience marginalization (including but not limited to Indigenous peoples, people of the global majority, women, young workers, people with disabilities, LGBTQ2SIA+, immigrants and refugees, and diverse faiths) to apply for the HSA Core Member Engagement team.

Do I have to live in the Lower Mainland?

No, this opportunity is open to all members living across the province.



Still have questions?

An online information session will be held on Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at 6:30pm PST. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Taylor Desmarais at taylor.desmarais@hsabc.org.

You can also contact HSA Organizers Bobby Chavarie at bchavarie@hsabc.org or Benson Ho at bho@hsabc.org with any questions regarding the 2022 program.