

Labour

1. Statistics Canada reports that unionized workers enjoy higher wages than non-unionized workers in the same line of work, as well as stronger pensions, superior health and safety standards, better health and drug benefits, and more rights in the workplace. **Does your party believe that unions play a positive role in our economy? If so, what policies will your party implement to create a climate that is easier for unions to organize?**

New Democrats believe strongly in the importance of unions in workers' lives, and for Ontario's economy. In our platform we have committed to a number of policies to make it easier for unions to organize, including 55% card check certification, first contract arbitration, ending contract flipping, and enacting "anti-scab" legislation and other measures to encourage swift resolution of workplace job actions.

2. With rising costs of food, rent and other basic goods, minimum wage and low-income workers in Ontario are struggling to make ends meet. **What will your party do to create a living wage for all workers in the province?**

An Ontario NDP government will raise the minimum wage to \$20 in 2026, with stable, predictable \$1-an-hour increases annually. We'll start by raising the minimum wage to \$16 on Oct. 1, 2022, then to \$17 on May 1, 2023, and then \$1 increases on May 1st annually until it reaches \$20, at which point it will be indexed to inflation.

New Democrats will also end Doug Ford's low wage policy by repealing Bill 124. And we will treat temp, gig and contract workers fairly, by ending misclassification and ensuring that any worker doing the same job as the worker next to them will get the same wage, protections and benefits.

3. Premier Ford's Bill 124 interferes with the collective bargaining process, a key feature of a free and democratic society. It suppresses public sector wages at a time of high inflation and enormous increases in corporate profits not seen for decades. **Will your party repeal Bill 124, and what actions will you take to protect free collective bargaining in the province of Ontario?"**

An Ontario NDP government will end Doug Ford's low wage policy by immediately repealing Bill 124. New Democrats are strong supporters of free and fair collective bargaining. We will always engage in good faith collective bargaining with public sector workers, and we will never bring in legislation to impose contracts and wage caps on workers like previous Liberal and Conservatives have.

Economics

4. According to opinion polls, a large majority of Ontarians support greater funding for social services like health care, childcare and education. **Will your party commit to ensuring these programs are properly funded? What will you do to end tax dodging by the super rich and create a more progressive taxation system where corporations and the very wealthy pay more in taxes.**

Yes. New Democrats believe strongly in providing the funding needed to have robust social services that people can rely on. We will ensure programs like health care, childcare, and education receive the funding they require – and to help make that happen, we will ask the wealthiest Ontarians and big corporations to pay their fair share in taxes.

5. The partial sell-off of Hydro One has been a boondoggle for Bay Street, Wall Street and the investment class, and a disaster for workers and consumers. Rates have skyrocketed for Ontarians, and the Ontario Financial Accountability Office stated that taxpayers would have saved \$1.8 billion if the government had taken on traditional debt to fund infrastructure projects instead of the sell-off. **Will your party commit to fully returning Hydro One back to full public ownership and democratic control?**

New Democrats strongly opposed the sale of Hydro One, and we have committed to stop further privatization and expensive private power contracts within our electricity system. We will also strike an expert panel which will draw on expertise from jurisdictions across Canada that have kept electricity prices low by focusing on delivering power at cost, instead of profit for private providers. The panel will include business and energy workers and it will focus on the best ways to restore public ownership, and maintain reliability and affordability.

6. Average housing prices in Ontario have *doubled* in the last eight years alone, even though housing starts are higher than ever before. What actions will your party do to help eliminate speculation and real estate bubbles, and will you commit to building affordable public, social and cooperative housing that working people can afford?

The Ontario NDP has released a comprehensive, doable housing plan, which you can [read in full here](#).

Here are just a few highlights of that plan, with respect to your questions:

- Establish a new public housing agency, Housing Ontario, to finance and build 250,000 affordable and non-market homes.
- Introduce an annual speculation and vacancy tax on residential property.
- Maintain the NRST at 20%, and close loopholes that let some greedy, wealthy speculators off the hook
- Dedicate all proceeds from housing speculation taxes to programs that deliver homes people can afford.
- Make government-owned land available for affordable housing with the creation of land trusts, in partnership with non-profit or co-op housing providers committed to affordable housing.
- Restore the co-op housing seed fund, immediately investing \$10 million in co-op homes you can afford.
- Work with the federal government and the co-op sector to support a Co-operative Housing Trust, which would expand the capacity of the sector with a goal of building 20,000 new co-op homes in Ontario over ten years.

Health Care

7. Our publicly administered, universal health care system is cherished throughout Ontario. More of our health services, however, are being de-funded and privatized. **What policies will your party implement to ensure that health care in the province remains under public control and is accessible to everyone?**

New Democrats strongly oppose privatization in our health care system, in any form. There is no place for profit when it comes to our health, or the health of our families. We believe strongly that care must be based on a person's needs, not their ability to pay.

Under successive Liberal and Conservative governments, we have seen cuts in health care spending create creeping user fees and privatization. These cuts take public support away from our health care system, and force health care providers to make up the funding shortfalls through growing fees to their patients and clients. Now, Doug Ford is trying to use the health care crisis created by the Liberals and made worse by the Ford government and the pandemic, including the surgical and procedural backlogs, to speed up privatization.

An Ontario NDP government will not only oppose and reverse privatization in our health care system. We will actually expand public health care, through our universal mental health, dental, and pharmacare plans, and by ensuring that our home and community care and long-term care systems are public and non-profit.

8. During the past two years, the COVID pandemic has clearly illustrated the failure of private, for-profit long-term care. Years of corner-cutting, cheapened service delivery, staffing shortages, price gouging and other forms of corporate profiteering have turned long-term care into an utter disaster for seniors. **Will your party commit to creating a publicly-administered, universal home care system in Ontario?**

Yes. An NDP government will immediately begin building a new, public and non-profit home and community care and long-term care system. We will phase out the current for-profit patchwork of services, and expand the public and non-profit system.

New Democrats will make a record \$1 billion investment into home care on top of what Ontario already spends, starting with a direct investment of \$235 million more in the first year. We will deliver a new, reliable, expanded basket of services to include things like transportation to appointments and meal preparation. And we will ensure seniors can rely on long-term, home and community care that reflects their cultural languages, food, and practices.

9. Drug prices continue to skyrocket for Ontarians, and more and more people have to choose between getting the medications they need and paying for necessities like food or rent. **Will your party commit to creating a universal Pharmacare program in the province that will guarantee coverage for all Ontarians?**

Yes, an NDP government will deliver Ontario's first comprehensive Universal Pharmacare program.

Education

10. **What specific policies will your party implement to hire more teachers and reduce class sizes in primary and secondary schools in Ontario?**

New Democrats have committed to capping class sizes at 24 students for Grades 4-8, capping kindergarten class sizes at 26 (while maintaining the Teacher-ECE team), and lowering class sizes for secondary students. To make this happen, and to ensure that students receive the support they need, we will hire 20,000 teachers and education workers.

11. The average university student debt in Ontario is \$26,480, and our province has one of the highest undergraduate tuition fees in the country, more than twice as high as Quebec. **What will your party do to lower tuition fees and reduce student debt?**

An Ontario NDP government will ensure a quality post-secondary education is accessible to all Ontarians who want one, and work towards a future where tuition is never a barrier to education. We will reverse Doug Ford's cuts to OSAP and ensure that students graduate debt-free by converting loans to non-repayable grants. We will also wipe out any student loan interest owed or paid to the province by any student or past student who still holds a provincial loan.

The Environment

12. **What policies will your party implement to reduce climate change and protect the environment, and how will you pay for them?**

The Ontario NDP has released the Green New Democratic Deal, which outlines our approach to achieving Ontario's most ambitious climate plan to date. All of the spending proposed in the Green New Democratic Deal is fully covered by the revenue generation that our plan will bring in. You can [read the full Green New Democratic New Deal here](#), but here are just a few highlights:

- Achieve net-zero emissions by 2050
- Create an ambitious retrofit program with the goal of retrofitting at least 5% of Ontario buildings per year to meet international energy efficiency standards
- Bring back a cap and trade system - with at least 25% of revenue dedicated to supporting low-income, rural and Northern Ontario families and to helping industries that have been disproportionately impacted by carbon pricing to adapt
- Expand the Greenbelt
- Create a Youth Climate Corps
- Plan one billion trees
- Create Ontario's first comprehensive Zero Emissions Vehicle Strategy
- Work with municipalities to electrify all municipal transit fleets by 2040.

13. One of the best ways to reduce our carbon footprint on the environment is public transportation. **What will you do to make public transportation throughout the province more affordable and accessible to Ontarians?**

New Democrats understand the importance of robust, accessible, and affordable public transit systems. Unfortunately, past governments have underfunded public transit for decades, leading to rate hikes and deteriorating service.

The Ontario NDP has a plan to fix this. We will restore provincial funding for municipal public transit and paratransit systems to 50% of their net operating costs. Working closely with municipal transit agencies, we will be able to use this investment to immediately improve service in communities across the province. This includes implementing a ten-minutes-or-better service guarantee on core routes across every major transit system in Ontario. We will work with municipalities to lower transit fees, especially for low-income people, so that everyone who needs transit can access it.

We will also work with municipal and industry partners to develop an Intercommunity Transportation Strategy to better connect communities across Ontario.