

ACTIONS FOR WORKERS



CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS

Want to get involved, but not sure where to start? Here are some ideas to take action on September 30 and beyond:

ON SEPTEMBER 30

Wear Orange on September 30

Wearing orange on September 30, The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day, is an act of remembrance and solidarity. This day honours Indigenous children who were taken from their homes, families and communities and sent to residential schools in Canada, many of whom never returned, and it acknowledges the survivors and their families who still face the impacts of the residential school system.

The orange shirt is inspired by Phyllis Webstad's story of having her new orange shirt taken away on her first day at a residential school. By wearing orange, workers can show their support for survivors and their own commitment to ongoing reconciliation.

Participate in An Event on September 30

Participating in events on September 30 provides an opportunity for learning and reflection. Many events of the day focus on educating settlers about the truth, history and impact of residential schools, which is an integral part of the reconciliation process.

Workers can find and participate in an event in their area, which might include vigils, memorial services or cultural ceremonies led by Indigenous communities; educational workshops on the history of residential schools; community gatherings, such as public rallies, walks; or exhibits, performances, and displays that reflect on the residential school experience and Indigenous cultures.

Participation in these events on the day helps non-Indigenous workers build awareness, foster a sense of community with their Indigenous neighbours, and show their commitment to supporting Indigenous peoples.

Attend Truth and Reconciliation Week

Organized by The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), Truth and Reconciliation Week is a time for education, reflection, and commitment to reconciliation efforts. This is a week of activities dedicated to acknowledging and addressing the history and legacy of residential schools. Visit <https://nctr.ca/> to participate.

Activities during Truth and Reconciliation Week include workshops, lectures, and panels discussing the TRC's findings, the Calls to Action, and ways to implement them; Indigenous cultural celebrations; memorials and ceremonies to honour survivors and the children who did not return home, and opportunities for dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to foster understanding and cooperation.

Participation in Truth and Reconciliation Week gives non-Indigenous workers the chance to gain a deeper understanding of the systemic issues faced by Indigenous communities and the steps needed to address them, and meaningfully show their solidarity and support for the reconciliation process.

BEYOND SEPTEMBER 30

Keep Learning

Commit to ongoing learning about Indigenous histories, cultures, and the current realities First Nations, Inuit and Métis people face in Canada.

Attend workshops, watch videos, read books by Indigenous authors, and follow Indigenous voices on social media.

Read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report, including the [94 Calls to Action](#).

Read the findings of the [Final Report by National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#), including the 231 Calls for Justice.

Support Indigenous-Led Initiatives

Identify and support Indigenous-led organizations in your own community, and encourage your employer or union to partner and collaborate with Indigenous community organizations on projects and initiatives.

Donate where you can to Indigenous-led organizations benefitting Indigenous communities, such as the [Indian Residential School Survivors Society](#). If possible, consider setting up monthly donations to provide sustained support.

Build and Strengthen Community Relationships

Participate in cultural events, workshops, and community programs organized by Indigenous groups, and support local Indigenous festivals, markets, and gatherings open to non-Indigenous people.

Build genuine relationships by attending meetings and events hosted by Indigenous-led organizations and groups in your community, get to know members and understand how you can support their goals.

Understand that building strong relationships is an ongoing process that requires continuous learning and adaptation.

Take Action

Write municipal, provincial, and federal politicians and ask them how they are implementing the TRC Calls to Action.

[Send a letter](#) letting your MP know that you want to see concrete action for justice for Indigenous communities.

Be an Active Ally

Use your position to support Indigenous rights and initiatives in your workplace and union and to amplify (and not speak over) the voices of Indigenous members.

Ensure Indigenous perspectives are included in workplace discussions, meetings, and decision-making processes.

Speak up against any instances of discrimination, anti-Indigenous racism, or microaggressions in the workplace.

Acknowledge the Land

Learn about the traditional land you live and work on and develop your own meaningful land acknowledgement that speaks to your relationship to this land and to the Indigenous peoples who have always called it home. Visit <https://native-land.ca/> to learn about the land you are on.

Include this land acknowledgment in meetings and events, in email signatures, and other communications.

Bargain for Fairness

Work together to develop language for collective agreements and workplace policies that include specific provisions for Indigenous workers, such as cultural leave, access to Elders and other culturally appropriate supports during meetings or grievances, anti-discrimination clauses, and support for professional development.

Push for the inclusion of Indigenous rights and reconciliation measures in bargaining agreements.

Advocate for fair hiring practices, equitable pay, and workplace environments that respect and incorporate Indigenous cultures and traditions.

Learn and Respect Protocols

Be aware of and respect cultural practices and traditions and educate yourself on and follow the appropriate protocols when participating in ceremonies, celebrations, or meetings.