



2021 Nova Scotia Liberal Party Leadership Questionnaire

1. How does your leadership style set you apart from Stephen McNeil and the other candidates?
2. If elected, will you commit to implementing a living wage? For reference: <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/living-wages-nova-scotia-and-new-brunswick-2020> . Why or why not?
3. If you answered yes above, what do you see as the obstacles to implementing a living wage for all Nova Scotians? How would you overcome these obstacles?
4. Poverty is a major issue throughout Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia's level of child poverty has been trending in the wrong direction. What is your plan to reverse this trend and ensure no Nova Scotian children go to bed hungry?
5. What is your stance on increasing the current income assistance rates and what will your government do to reduce the growing levels of economic inequality in the province?
6. Have you ever had to worry about not having a place to live? Many Nova Scotians were experiencing the threat of evictions and uncontrolled rent increases of 20%, 40% and 90%. This meant vulnerable people faced the choice of going without food or medications and potential homelessness.

Government recently capped increases at two per cent per year, retroactive to September 2020. The cap will remain in place until Feb. 1st, 2022, or whenever the COVID-19 State of Emergency is lifted. The issue of affordable housing existed before COVID-19 and will last well after.

As Premier, what would your government do to address this issue on a permanent basis?

7. Chronic health care understaffing has been affecting our health services long before COVID-19: Emergency Departments are regularly over-capacity; ambulances and paramedics wait with patients for treatment; and Emergency Departments throughout Nova Scotia a forced to close regularly. Many of these issues in can be traced back directly to chronic understaffing. What is your plan to fill longstanding full-time vacancies?

8. What are your top three priorities regarding dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic in Nova Scotia?
9. Home Care in Nova Scotia as in Long Term care is currently privatised either in not for profit or for profit enterprises. This has led to a fragmented system of operations with varying degrees of capability. The NSGEU believes that home care is health care, and should managed and delivered as such with Nova Scotia Health. What is your stance on home care reform?
10. Nova Scotia's Long Term Care and Home Care sector is currently privatised, run either as a not-for-profit or for-profit enterprises. This has led to a fragmented system of operations with varying degrees of capability. The NSGEU believes that home care is health care, and should be managed and delivered as such with Nova Scotia Health. What is your stance on long-term care reform?
11. With the redevelopment of the QEII being a P3 project, the NSGEU is greatly concerned for our members' jobs, especially those in maintenance, trades, and plant operations. How will you move forward with projects like this and ensure that people in these positions will be protected?
12. Following seven years of almost constant labour strife, do you plan on respecting the collective bargaining process, or will you continue to bring the threat of legislation with you to the bargaining table?
13. NSGEU has over 1,100 members working in Nova Scotia Liquor Commission facilities throughout Nova Scotia. NSGEU members pride themselves on practicing the highest standards of customer service and social responsibility. These jobs are very important to many communities, especially in more rural areas. What is your plan for the NSLC and alcohol/cannabis sales in our province?
14. You and your competitors have said that this is the time to work on relationships with labour. What is your plan to accomplish this?
15. In 2019, the federal government initiated a gradual enhancement to the Canada Pension Plan. Over time, these enhancements are meant to eventually replace up to 33% of an individual's average work earnings upon retirement. This has been implemented to ensure Canadians receive more CPP benefits in retirement.

The trustees of the Public Service Superannuation Plan Trustee Inc. (PSSPTI) are currently examining two proposals in response to the CPP enhancements:

The first proposal would see no modifications being made to the way the current PSSP works. It will see an increase in the contributions and the benefits it provides upon retirement.

The second proposal would see reductions made to the PSSP offsetting the scheduled benefits of the enhanced CPP when people retire.

The NSGEU firmly believes that it is in every member's best interest to maintain the PSSP as it currently exists, including the enhanced CPP as it was intended.

Information received as to why government is supportive of making a change to the PSSP is described as a fiscal decision, to save the employers money. The Trustees of the Plan have a fiduciary responsibility to plan members not tax payers. While the proposed change may help today's balance sheet for government, such changes should be viewed in the long-term. In the past, pension changes made to assist in the short term have ended up hurting plan members over the long term.

As Premier, what would your plan be to protect and expand pensions to benefit Nova Scotians upon their retirement?

Thank you.