
2021 Federal Election Questionnaire

Themes:

- Mandatory vaccination
- Post-pandemic economic recovery plan
- Public debt
- Teleworking/remote working
- Return to the workplace, and health and safety issues
- Employment equity
- Official languages
- Federal interpreters/translators
- Mental health and safety in the workplace
- Diversity and inclusion/harassment and discrimination
- Artificial intelligence and digital transformation
- Environmental responsibility
- Retention and recruitment – Canadian federal public service

Questions:

- 1. In August, the government announced that it will make vaccines mandatory for all federal employees or face penalties.**

Q. a) What is your party's official position on mandatory vaccination for essential and non-essential public service employees?

b) What types of accommodation is your party willing to consider for unvaccinated public service employees?

- 2. The Covid-19 global pandemic led to unprecedented government spending measures to protect the health and safety of Canadians.**

Q. What are your key priorities in a post-pandemic economic recovery plan?

- 3. Canada's public deficit is estimated to stand at \$155 billion in 2021 and \$60 billion in 2022-23, according to an April 2021 Global news [article](#).**

Q. How will you address the public debt while ensuring continued public services to Canadians?

4. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, most public service employees have been working remotely/teleworking since March 2019. As part of Public Services and Procurement Canada's "pathfinder project", 200 public service employees recently volunteered to participate in a pilot project that "will inform a broader plan for a return to the workplace."

Q. What will your party do to ensure the health and safety of federal public service employees?

5. The review of the *Employment Equity Act* is currently underway – something that has not happened since 1995.

Q. What does your party see as key changes necessary to the current Employment Equity Act and how do you propose making those changes come to fruition?

6. Raymond Th  berge, Commissioner of Official Languages, in the tabling of the 2020-2021 [annual report](#), wrote that "profound changes [are] needed in the federal public service to ensure effective bilingual services to Canadians."

With the dissolution of Parliament, all bills, including Bill C-32, an *Act for the Substantive Equality of French and English and the Strengthening of the Official Languages Act*, died on the order paper.

Q. Given the critical importance to modernize the Official Languages Act, do you commit to introduce/reintroduce a bill to strengthen the Act to bolster the capacity of the public service to defend and promote our linguistic duality within the first 100 days of forming the government

7. The Federal Court of Appeal recently ruled that federal agencies cannot violate an employee's right to work in French "by forcing them to communicate daily with monolingual Anglophone specialists...". This ruling came after a retired public service employee took his employer to court in 2019 because he had to work predominantly in English, as his work required "daily contact with monolingual English-speaking colleagues...". He failed in federal court in 2019 and appealed the ruling.

Q. How would your party ensure the rights of Francophone public service employees are protected when carrying out official duties?

8. The federal government is recognized as the national champion of the promotion and protection of Canada's official languages. However, the quality and uniformity of translation and interpretation are in constant decline: Since 1995, not all translations have been quality-controlled by a central body. The lack of quality and uniformity of communications in the two official languages has resulted in significant financial costs. (Translation Bureau – *Economic Assessment of the Service Delivery Model*. PWC. September 2018.)

During the Government's review of the *Official Languages Act* of 2019, CAPE recommended making the Translation Bureau the Federal Government's Official Language Centre of Excellence and to expand the pool of employees as a way to address the quality and uniformity of the language and to reduce those excessive costs.

Q. Do you commit to seeing this recommendation through if you were to form the

Government? Yes or No. Explain.

- 9. Through its participation on the Joint Task Force on Mental Health and other working groups and committees, CAPE has invested time and effort to keep government's attention on the mental health of its employees, advocating for more and better measures to support employees struggling with mental health issues.¹**

Q. What would your party do to strengthen current mental health initiatives and what additional measures will you support to address the severity of this problem, especially considering the extra challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic?

- 10. A total of 188,786 employees in 87 federal departments and agencies responded to the 2020 Public Service Employee Survey, for a response rate of 61%. Overall, 11% of survey respondents reported facing harassment, and 7% reported facing discrimination.²**

Q. What measures will your party put in place to address racism, sexism, and overall discrimination in the workplace, whether from supervisors or colleagues.

- 11. In recent years, there has been a heightened awareness of harassment and discrimination cases in the federal workplace.**

Q. What specific measures will your party undertake to address these issues?

- 12. In June 2021, the Government of Canada announced a [Digital Government Strategy](#) to digitalize the government to better serve Canadians.**

Q. What is your party's stance on artificial intelligence and digital transformation in the public service?

- 13. Federal leadership is critically needed to address environmental degradation and global warming. Public programs and budgets are needed but the federal government must also lead by example, internally.**

Q. What does your party propose to make sure government operations are greener and sustainable?

- 14. Canada's public service is one of the most effective and highly performing in the world. It is nimble, adaptable and attracts competent professionals that are the backbone of our federal government.**

Q. What is your party's plan to create a work environment that continues to attract and retain excellence within the federal public service?

¹ <https://www.acep-cape.ca/en/news/world-mental-health-day>

² https://nouvelle.news/2021/07/the-reality-of-discrimination-harassment-in-canadas-public-service-op-ed/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=the-reality-of-discrimination-harassment-in-canadas-public-service-op-ed

15. A wide range of issues affect the performance and effectiveness of federal public service employees.

Q. What does your party consider the most pressing issue affecting public service employees and why?

16. In May 2020, the federal government announced that SAP (a German multinational that creates business management software) had been selected to work on a replacement for the beleaguered Phoenix pay system – the bane of existence for thousands of public service employees due to persistent problems.

Q. What lessons has your party learned from the financial and technological disaster of the Phoenix pay system and how will you ensure that public services employees will not be subjected to similar or new problems with a new system?

NOTE! Completed questionnaires must be returned to Mr. Dina Epale, CAPE's Senior Advocacy and Public Affairs Advisor at depale@acep-cape.ca on or before **Thursday, September 2 at 11:59 pm EST.**