



Jerry Earle, President
NAPE
330 Portugal Cove Pl.
St. John's, NL
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September 24, 2025

Dear Mr. Earle,

Thank you for reaching out to me and my team with your questions. I always enjoy the opportunity to discuss our policies and ideas that will improve the lives of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

As a party committed to worker rights and solidarity, our approach is always governed by the basic principles of dignity, equity, inclusion, and human rights. I hope that my responses below demonstrate that commitment.

Question 1: The Economy and Cost of Living

If elected, how will your party grow the economy in a way that makes life more affordable for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians? How will you balance economic development with the protection of public services, and what specific actions will you take to reduce the cost of living for working families?

The NL NDP believes in a society and an economy where no one is left behind, and where governments invest in and protect workers, their families and the communities where they live, love, work and play through decent, fair and safe work, investments in a strong public sector, and quality public services, supporting local businesses, sustaining local communities, and investing in real climate action.

We must also foster a more equitable society by implementing inclusive policies that guarantee access to employment, and essential services like healthcare, education and social protection for all workers, and especially vulnerable and underrepresented communities. We believe in rights-based laws and inclusive decision-making processes to ensure no one is left behind.

The NLNDP platform outlines many ways we can and will balance economic development and the protection of public services, as well as tackle the growing cost of living crisis in our Province. Here are some highlights:

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The NL NDP will:

- Implement 10 paid sick days a year.
- Increase WCB's Income Replacement Rate (IRR) to 90% from 85%.
- Oppose all forms of privatization of public services.
- Continue to fight for a fully universal, public early learning and childcare system, where ECEs are fairly compensated – including benefits and pensions.
- Create a Crown corporation called N.L. Homes, which would focus on the growing waitlist for affordable housing across the province.
- Restore funding to public post-second Institutions and bring tuition levels back to pre-2022.
- Lobby the Federal Government to comply with the Canada Health Act by halting privatization, ensuring that public health dollars are spent only on public health, and to the federal share of funding so that provinces like NL cannot justify using the private sector to fill in the gaps in the public system.
- Work towards a universal publicly funded and delivered health system that includes dental care, pharmacare, long-term-care, home care, and mental health care.

The NL NDP has long advocated for a complete modernization of the province's labour legislation to reflect and protect workers' right to organize and strike. This includes implementing card check certification. We know that when workers choose to join a union, they do better - in wages, benefits, job security, and working conditions. This union advantage also pumps millions of extra dollars into our local economy every single pay day. We all do better, when the people around us do better. The NLNDP will always stand up for basic rights for all workers. If a majority of workers in a workplace want to be unionized – then they should simply be given that right – period!

The NLNDP knows that tariffs put pressure on the local economy by making our goods and services less competitive in their markets. Reduced demand for our products means that jobs and businesses in our province are under threat. That means negative impacts on our economy if we don't have a plan.

The people of NL deserve answers from a provincial government that explains in detail what will be done to protect them and their families.

The NLNDP will engage with labour, industry and other stakeholders to prepare workers and their unions to weather the storms ahead. Together, and in parallel with the federal plan, we will strategize and put together a comprehensive plan to support workers. Our plan must protect workers, industries, communities and our economy, and ensure that good, well-paying, unionized jobs stay right here; especially in industries like fishing, mining, energy and forestry, and in the public services that workers rely on.

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Paramount is the need to ensure adequate support measures for impacted workers and industries. We need to create and support good local businesses and jobs.

While we will do everything possible to protect local jobs, we need to have a back-up plan.

The NLNDP will provide direct financial support as necessary to those who lose their jobs at businesses that are significantly harmed by tariffs.

We will, if necessary, use part of the contingency fund to provide laid-off workers in businesses affected by tariffs with financial support.

Nobody should work 40 hours per week and still not be able to afford the essentials. That's why the NL NDP supports raising the minimum wage to \$22/hour over the next four years.

Although more recent research by CCPA, shows a 2025 liveable wage is somewhere between \$25 and \$28/hour, it may be necessary to give businesses time to adjust to the wage increases, so they can plan and absorb the costs gradually.

We also think that many other NDP policies – such as an expansion of affordable housing, taking the HST off home energy and children's goods, universal pharmacare, or expanding \$10/day childcare – will help decrease the cost of living for people, thereby reducing the affordability crunch from the other side of the equation, not just through improved wages.

The NL NDP position on any major new economic projects, especially in the resource sector, is that:

- our province receives the greatest financial value possible in royalties and dividends,
- Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are hired first,
- there be solid, comprehensive community benefits agreements; and
- strong environmental and labour standards be upheld.

The NL NDP will invest today in the jobs needed tomorrow by increasing funding for training and skill enhancement in the trades. We'll make the right investment choices because we will also develop a labour market strategy in partnership with labour and business, and appropriate partners, to determine where funding needs to go.

We will pull every lever possible to create good, union jobs and fill them with Newfoundlanders and Labradorians



Question 2: Climate Change and Protection for First Responders

What are your party's priorities when it comes to addressing the climate crisis? If elected, will you commit to ensuring first responders, particularly wildland firefighters, have the protections they need – including presumptive cancer coverage – as adverse weather events become more common?

Climate change is real. In Newfoundland and Labrador, we've seen record heat, snowfalls, storm surges, and wildfires in recent years.

Responsible governments have a duty to act, and that's why you'll see climate action throughout our platform.

An NL NDP government will set up a municipal climate fund to help communities rebuild better after storms and floods.

We'll protect communities from wildfires by repairing our fifth water bomber and hiring prevention staff year-round.

We'll build a regional public transit plan to cut emissions, while also reducing travel costs, and improving access for the entire province.

We'll partner with Ottawa to invest in renewable energy, and green industries that create good jobs, and benefit everyone in NL.

Our Climate Transition Secretariat will bring workers, employers, Indigenous governments, and all relevant voices to the table now, to set targets and build opportunities.

The NL NDP supports labour's campaign to address excessive heat stress in workplaces, and will, with further consultation with them, work towards legislation and policies to that end.

Wildland firefighters are firefighters, period. As such, an NL NDP government will provide wildland firefighters with presumptive cancer coverage.

Question 3: Healthcare and Public Services

If elected, how will your party support healthcare workers and reinvest in the public healthcare system? Will you commit to strengthening public delivery, including bringing



homecare into the public system? And how will you address chronic understaffing, and the working conditions faced daily by our healthcare workers?

New Democrats fully support a universal, publicly funded health care system. We believe that there is no room for profit in our public system and have called on the federal government to ensure that any health funding to Provinces/Territories come with the condition that it goes to public health care, and that the Canada Health Act be clear on ensuring our Public Health Care system remains public.

We will continue to advocate for our Public Health Care system to be expanded to include Dental Care, Pharmacare, Long Term Care, Home Care, and Mental Health Care.

For years, this province has struggled not only to recruit healthcare workers of all types, but also to keep the ones we have. Since the pandemic, the shortage has become critical, threatening the stability of our public system.

An Access to Information Request in February 2025 found that there were 1,500 job vacancies in the healthcare system across the province. This didn't just include doctors, nurses, or personal care attendants, but everything from psychologists to social workers to speech language pathologists and lab technicians, Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) and all the other workers in the health care system that work behind the scenes and keep the system running. What's worse is that some of these positions had been vacant for far too long!

Our public system cannot function without a full staff complement. Long-term vacancies mean more people have to travel for specialized care or wait longer for treatment while their health deteriorates. We need a serious, determined plan to stop the bleeding from our healthcare system and recruit all kinds of health professionals to fill the gaps.

That's why the NL NDP will address staffing shortages in the healthcare system by recruiting 1,000 additional health care workers over the course of four years. Our target of 1,000 is over and above the need to replace retiring workers. We will remain engaged with workers in the health care sector throughout this process.

Our NL Cares Plan has two parts:

The first will help us keep the healthcare professionals we already have and make the Newfoundland and Labrador Health Service (NLHS) a more attractive place to work. These include:

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- Setting up an independent Health Sector Safety Council, especially to deal with workplace violence and other safety issues in the health care sector.
- Making shift flexibility a reality by allowing health care workers, where appropriate greater power to self-schedule.
- Committing to a review of the Job Evaluation System applied to allied health professionals in 2015; and
- Giving frontline workers a seat at the table when the decisions being made affect how they work.
 - Healthcare workers of all sorts repeatedly say that they “feel unheard” by their employer and that government “isn’t listening” when they come forward with cost-effective solutions to the healthcare crisis.
 - We’ll rely on those voices by having management work collaboratively and consult regularly with frontline workers, and their unions to improve work environment, quality of life, and patient care.

To recruit new health professionals, and fill the gaps in our system, the second part of the NL Cares plan will:

- Reduce the burden on nurses and health care professionals within the system by making it a priority to recruit allied health professionals and others to reduce workloads.
- Make primary care more accessible in rural and remote areas by expanding the nurse travel locum program province wide.
- Create 20 new seats at Memorial’s Medical School.
- Implement support and mentorship systems for new health professional graduates
- Restore the full-time recruiter position in the MUN Medical School for physicians and hire two additional ones, one devoted to nursing and the other for health care worker vacancies in the College of the North Atlantic.
- Merge the new recruiters and those in the regions of NLHS into a single Office for Medical Professional Recruitment, so that they avoid duplicating effort and work together on common goals while sharing expertise and resources.

- Start recruitment initiatives early, by building relationships with medical and nursing students in their first year; and
- Create bursaries and accommodations allowances to ensure that vacant seats in smaller nursing schools outside St. John's and Corner Brook are filled every year.
- Work with health care unions to establish which training courses and curricula are needed, and ensure adequate seats, and appropriate courses are available in the province's public post-secondary Institutions.
- If we expect nursing, pharmacy, paramedicine, and PCA students to remain here after graduation and work in the public system, then the public system must show appreciation for the work they do and act like an ideal employer. That begins with paying students for their work terms. Not only is that fair, but it's also a sensible recruitment and retention strategy for the healthcare system.

This also means the NL NDP will engage with health care unions to examine what other health care educational courses, etc. need to be introduced, and/or expanded in post-secondary institutions.

Question 4: Privatization of Our Public Services

If your party forms the next government, will you commit to protecting the following public services from privatization:

- **Long-term care?**
- **Acute care services (dietary, maintenance, housekeeping, security) currently delivered publicly?**
- **Highway snow clearing and maintenance (currently delivered publicly)**
- **Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation (NLC)?**
- **Motor vehicle registration services?**
- **Registry Services (deeds, companies, and securities)?**
- **Provincial ferry services?**

Please provide your position and additional details regarding your party's approach to privatization.

The NL NDP says we've had enough of selling off what our tax dollars built, just so that private companies can make a profit from it.

We pledge a moratorium on any further privatization of our public services and assets. On day one, we'll evaluate all existing P3s to make sure that the people of this province are really getting the best value for their money.



We support and commit to protecting the following public services from privatization:

Long-term care, acute care services including dietary, maintenance, housekeeping, security, highway snow clearing and maintenance, Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation (NLC), motor vehicle registration services, registry Services - deeds, companies, and securities, and the provincial ferry services.

We will continue to fight for a fully universal, public early learning and childcare system, where ECEs are fairly compensated – including with benefits and pensions.

We will create a Crown corporation called NL Homes, which will focus on the growing waitlist for affordable housing across the province.

We will restore funding to public post-secondary institutions and bring tuition back to pre-2022 levels.

We will lobby the Federal Government to comply with the Canada Health Act by halting privatization, ensuring that public health dollars are spent only on public health, and maintaining the federal share of funding so that provinces like ours cannot justify using the private sector to fill in the gaps in the public system.

And we will work towards a universal publicly funded and delivered health system that includes dental care, pharmacare, long-term-care, home care, and mental health care.

The NL NDP is opposed to all attempts to privatize our cherished public services, including using public-private-partnerships (P3s). Research clearly shows that when profit is the main driver of any public service, something else gives – usually working conditions/staffing levels, or services, and often both – as employers look for ways to cut costs and increase their profit margins.

These secretive deals, and the government's lack of transparency have no place in our democracy. Yet the Liberals and the PCs before them have lined their donors' pockets with lucrative government contracts that belong in the public service.

There is a place for the private sector – but not in the operation and maintenance of our public services.

Question 5: Workplace Violence

What concrete steps will your party take to address workplace violence in Newfoundland and Labrador, and how will you ensure that workers are safe, protected, and respected on the job?



The NL NDP understands that there has been an ongoing and widespread issue of harassment and violence at work, and that too many workers are experiencing it daily. Governments have a responsibility, working with unions and employers, to address this very serious and growing issue which needs a comprehensive solution, embedded in laws, policies, and regulations. ILO Convention 190 recognizes the right of everyone to a world of work free from harassment and violence and has established global standards to this end.

Violence in the workplace, like violence outside the workplace, is against the law and should be dealt with as such by government and criminal legislation, apart from the OHS Act and Regulations. From a government perspective, the NL NDP will work with unions and employers to combat workplace violence, including pushing for amendments to OHS Legislation and Regulations and the federal Criminal Code to include assault on workers as a serious aggravating circumstance, promoting violence prevention frameworks and policies, funding violence prevention infrastructure and supports, and strengthening staffing levels to improve safety.

We recognize violence in the workplace as an occupational hazard that requires strong and enforceable legislation to address it.

We will also work to strengthen intimate partner violence leave legislation to ensure it meets the needs of the workers who rely on it.

We recognize that cuts to health care workers and staff shortages exasperates this problem, and the NL Cares plan for healthcare will fill the gaps in staffing, support an independent Health Sector Safety Council, and deliver shift flexibility, giving frontline health care workers a seat at the table when decisions are being made about their working conditions.

Our workplaces are changing and the NL NDP believes that ensuring healthy and safe workplaces is paramount. We need to ensure all appropriate laws, policies, and regulations reflect changing work environments, including gig and other precarious and dangerous types of work, shift work, working in changing climate conditions including extreme heat or cold, responding to climate emergencies, working from home, working in violent, discriminatory, or other dangerous situations, etc. However, laws and regulations are only as strong as they are enforceable. We also need to ensure that when workers become injured or sick on, or because of the job, that they receive adequate compensation while they are recovering. If a worker pays the ultimate price for an unsafe or unhealthy workplace and is killed or seriously injured on the job, then employers must be held accountable. If employers are found to have been negligent, then they should face criminal charges. We need strengthened laws and regulations, along with increased enforcement to hold employers accountable and prevent tragedies, because every worker deserves to return home to their loved ones at the end of their workday.

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Employees have the right to know if their workplace is safe. The NL NDP will push for the following measures:

- make it mandatory to publish all Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) inspections on the provincial government website,
- heed the call of labour groups, the NL Health Accord Task Force, and the last WCB Statutory Review to push for the creation of an Occupational Health Clinic, so that workers injured on the job, or who work in dangerous workplaces get quality, timely and preventative care as needed,
- strengthen legislation/regulations to protect workers against violence in the workplace,
- work with unions to determine workplace injuries and illnesses that should be determined presumptive under the WCB Act for claims and benefits.
- increase WCB Income Replacement Rate (IRR) from 85% to 90%,
- eliminate the requirement for doctors' sick notes,
- fight for a minimum of ten (10) paid sick days a year,
- ensure no project is exempt from federal or provincial regulations that safeguard workers' rights, environmental standards, and community well-being, and
- reject any harmonization of Occupational Health and Safety, or public safety laws or regulations that weaken worker or public safety.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to share our message with you and your members. We fully support the work that you do to uphold labour standards and fight for the rights of all workers.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jim Dinn'.

Jim Dinn
Leader, NL NDP, Candidate for St. John's Centre