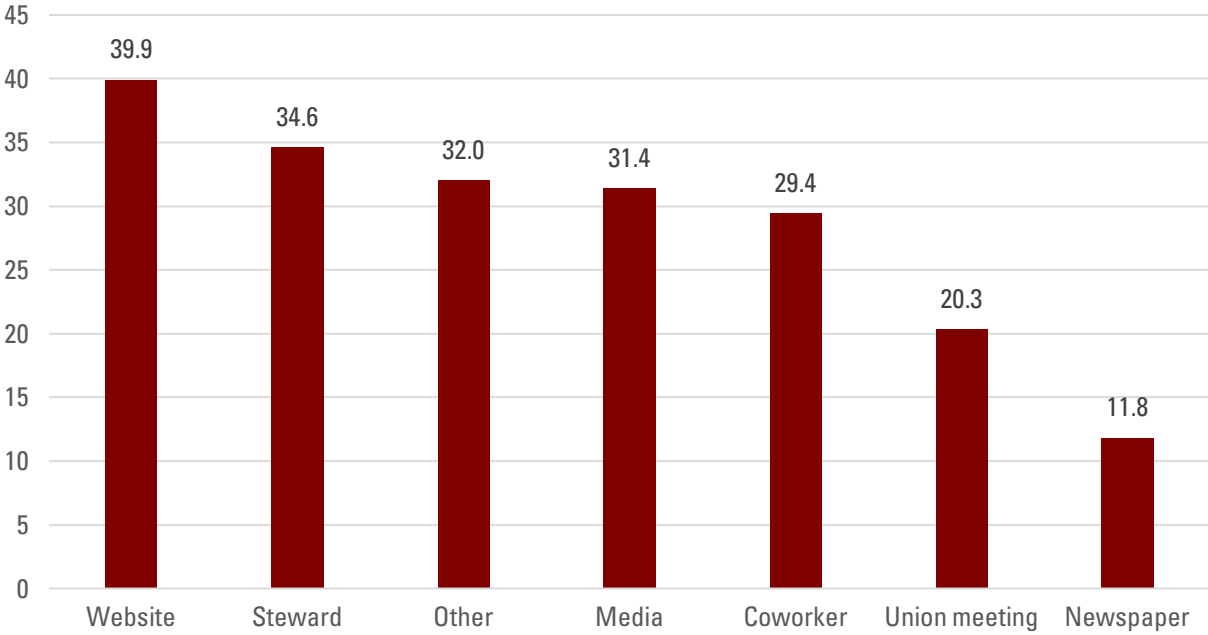


Union Advocacy During COVID

A major difference between unionized and non-unionized workplaces is that unions provide workers with a collective voice to speak up about workplace concerns without fear of reprisal. Unions also provide a vehicle for distributing information to members about workplace issues and what the union is doing to represent worker interests. Our survey results show that unions have been active during COVID, keeping their members informed and advocating for their interests.

Most union members had some information about what their union was doing during COVID. The union’s website and stewards were the two most common sources of information. Less than 10 percent of respondents said they had not heard anything from their union about COVID related workplace issues.

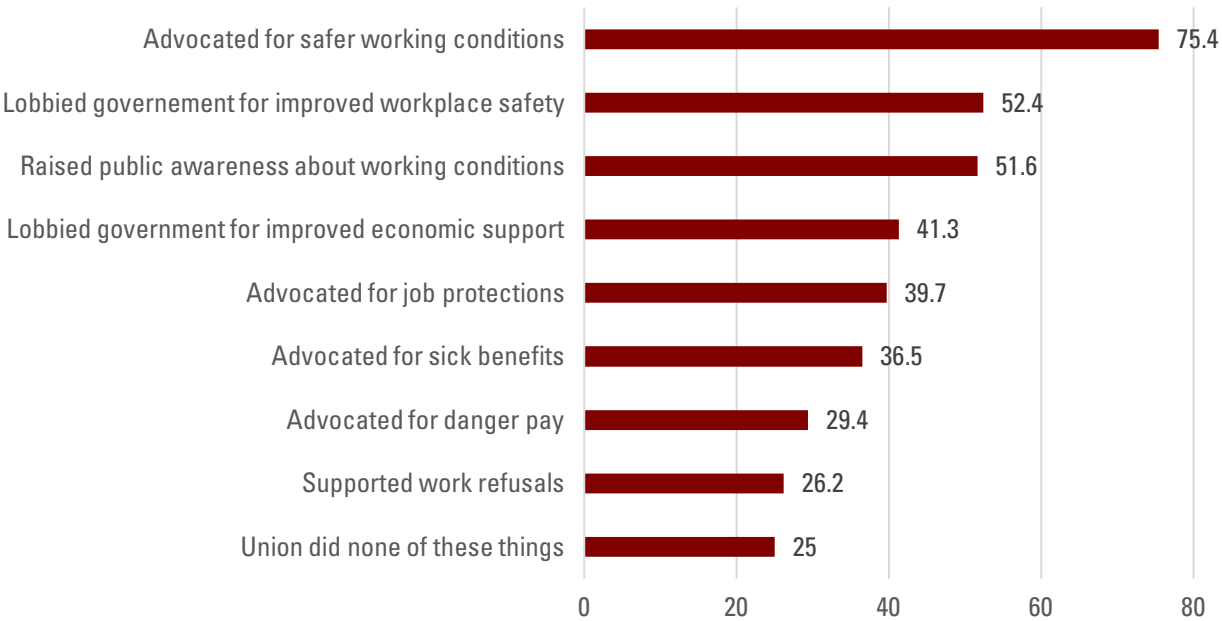
Chart 1: How were unionized workers informed about work-related COVID issues? (%)



n=153

Most union members were also aware that their union was active on their behalf during COVID. A majority reported their union advocated for safer working conditions. Their unions were also active lobbying the government and raising public awareness.

Chart 2: What did your union do in response to COVID? (%)



n=126

I am absolutely counting on my union ... to ensure that our (federal, public sector) workplace will be safe for any future return to in-person employment — Middle-aged unionized man in the public sector

I have struggled with our unions not being in effect as our employers made us work 3 different jobs which impacted my mental health and there were times I didn't feel safe in the roles we were asked to do — Middle-aged unionized woman in the non-profit community sector

This factsheet is co-authored by Mohammad Ferdosi, Dr. Peter Graefe, Dr. Wayne Lewchuk and Dr. Stephanie Ross, who are the co-investigators in the **COVID Economic and Social Effects Study (CESES)** at McMaster University. CESES is a collaboration between the School of Labour Studies, the Department of Political Science, and the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, and is supported by funding from MITACS and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. For other factsheets in the series, go to the CESES project website: <https://labourstudies.mcmaster.ca/research/covid19-impact>



School of Labour Studies



Department of Political Science