

Steward News...

a publication for CUPE Activists in Alberta
Spring/Summer 2004

In this issue: Steward Duties

Stewards can help members deal with the following kinds of workplace problems:

- Abusive supervisors or co-workers;
- Sexual or racial harassment;
- Non-payment of overtime or shift work;
- Discrimination or favouritism in overtime assignments;
- Vacation and holiday scheduling;
- Being passed over for training and promotions;
- Workplace health and safety problems;
- Discipline or dismissal;
- Dissatisfaction with something the union did or did not do.

Stewards also help the union executive communicate with and respond to the concerns and priorities of the members they represent.

MAKING THE UNION STRONG

Stewards can definitely assist in the Union's organizing efforts - for current members and potential new members who want to join a Union. Most stewards have made the decision to become stewards because they are active in the workplace or in the community. You are aware of the kind of protection and benefits that come with a collective agreement. You also know that new members are the life-blood of any union - everyone benefits. You can:

- ✓ meet with new members, provide them with a copy of their collective agreement and other union information. And invite members to participate in union activities;
- ✓ let all members know they can come to you with questions or problems;
- ✓ pass the word about the value of working under a collective agreement instead of an individual contract of employment ;
- ✓ keep your ears and eyes open as a steward and be open to any trouble or questions in the workplace;
- ✓ when you hear a worker in your community expressing the desire to belong to a union; where you have relatives or close friends in an unorganized workplace or where there are independent unions or staff associations who want to join CUPE, let your Area and Regional Office know about this interest in joining our union;
- ✓ as a steward, you can assist in the actual organizing campaign, once it is started, especially where you are in the community or have links with the people being organized.

CUPE has prepared informative literature which can be adapted to any working situation, and can be easily distributed wherever you think it might arouse interest in our Union.

CUPE also has an Organizer on staff who is highly experienced in their jobs. For further information, contact your nearest CUPE Office (call collect):

Calgary - (403) 235-6955
Edmonton - (780) 484-7644
Grande Prairie - (780) 538-1669
Lethbridge - (403) 329-0266
Medicine Hat - (403) 526-5239
Red Deer - (403) 343-3353

or call toll free - 1-800-YES-CUPE
(937-2873)



GRIEVANCE FORM

Case No Check with Executive to see if there is a numbering system Local No Your local number

Employer Employer of the grievor

Employee Grievor's Name

Department Department the grievor works in Classification Grievor's classification and/or job title

Supervisor The first level of management that a verbal grievance goes to. Employee # Grievor's employee #, if they have one.

To: A The management level that a written grievance goes to. Seniority Date Grievor's employment date as defined in collective agreement.

Phone # (H) Grievor's # (W) Grievor's #

Grievance Level 1 2 3 4 Address/ Grievor's address
Level grievance filed at adresse

I/We the undersigned claim that Je/Nous soussiigne(e)s affirme(ons) que On or about (date) the employer violated the collective agreement
by not (state here what they did wrong)

OR

On or about (date) the employer violated Article(s) (do not list sub articles eg 20.03) and any other related articles by not (state here what they did wrong)

Therefore I/we request that Donc je/nous demandons que I receive full redress including (pick appropriate items eg lost wages, overtime, shift and/or weekend premiums, seniority, benefits) and any other appropriate resolve (harassment training, etc).

Signature of employee(s) and/or union officer
Signature de l'employe(e) ou des employe(e) et/ou d'une(d) dirigeant(e) syndical(e)

Grievor Grievor needs to sign if an individual grievance Date: _____
Plaintif/plaintive

Union Officer Does a union officer need to sign? Check with Executive and/or By Laws or Collective Agreement. Date: _____

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BE AN EFFECTIVE STEWARD

ESTABLISH YOURSELF

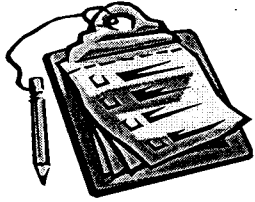
Everyone you represent should know who you are, how to get in touch with you and why they should get in touch with you. Establish yourself with all ages of workers. Every member from our young workers to seasoned workers have something to contribute to our Union.

LOOK FOR PROBLEMS

Stewards need to seek out members experiencing problems at work who do not bring the problems to the attention of the union.

INVESTIGATE EVERY PROBLEM YOU FIND

Stewards should investigate every problem brought to their attention. This means:



- Recording all of the facts.
- Knowing how those affected would like the matter resolved.
- Knowing what (if any) laws or contract provisions have been violated.
- Find out what those not directly involved are prepared to do to help resolve an issue.

TRY TO RESOLVE EACH PROBLEM BROUGHT TO YOUR ATTENTION

This means working out a strategy to resolve each problem brought to your attention using one or more of the tools available to stewards. It also means bringing problems that you cannot resolve on your own to the attention of your local's executive so that they can be dealt with at labour management meetings or during the next round of bargaining.

INVOLVE THE MEMBERS IN RESOLVING PROBLEMS

Many problems can only be resolved with the help and support of those experiencing a problem and their co-workers. For this reason, stewards need to encourage those affected to help resolve the issue, in other words, do it **with** the members not **for** the members.

WORK WITH YOUR EXECUTIVE

Stewards work with the executive of their locals to help keep the members informed and to encourage involvement in union activities.

WHAT STEWARDS NEED TO KNOW

To carry out their duties, stewards need to know:

- How to encourage everyone you represent to bring problems to your attention;
- How to research and document the problems brought to your attention;
- The procedures used by your local to deal with problems;
- How to encourage members to get involved in the resolution of problems;
- The role that stewards play in bargaining, political action and in keeping the members informed about the actions taken by the executive and other stewards;
- The role that stewards play in communicating the concerns, interests and priorities of the members they represent to the executive of the union;
- Who you can turn to for help, support and additional training.



KNOWING HOW TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS IS KEY
TO THE SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES.



Canadian Union of Public Employees – Alberta Region

A QUICK STEWARD'S QUIZ

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|---|--|
| <p>1 The steward should be able to recite any section from memory.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>True</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>False</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>1. <i>False.</i> Nobody could be expected to memorize the agreement. However, the steward can be familiar with the contract and understand how it has been interpreted by past grievance settlements and arbitration decisions.</p> |
| <p>2 The steward can only process those grievances brought to his/her attention by workers, rather than observing and filing grievances.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>True</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>False</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>2. <i>False.</i> The steward can and should act to file grievances when he discovers a violation of the collective agreement by the employer. The steward is the Union's first line of defense to protect the collective agreement.</p> |
| <p>3 The steward should have the grievor participate in all steps of the grievance procedure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>True</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>False</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>3. <i>True.</i> Keeping the grievor involved in all steps of the grievance procedure is the best way to gain a favorable settlement and avoid charges that the union did not fairly represent the grievor. The grievor should understand the decisions made on his/her grievance.</p> |
| <p>4 When asked a question about the last union meeting, the steward should reply: "If you would attend the local's meetings, you would know what is happening".</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>True</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>False</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>4. <i>False.</i> Sure, the members should attend the meetings, but many don't and the only way they'll learn what is going on is if the stewards share information with them. Stewards are a communicator a well. Share information with as many members as possible.</p> |
| <p>5 The steward must remain an impartial participant in the resolution of all grievances and cannot favour one grievor over another.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>True</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>False</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>5. <i>True.</i> The steward should be impartial. They set examples of fairness and evenhanded treatment to all members.</p> |
| <p>6 The steward should be familiar with the standing committees of his/her local union.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>True</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>False</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>6. <i>True.</i> Stewards who know the leadership of the local and understand the workings of the union committees and how the union operates know the different things the union does.</p> |