

Making a
DIFFERENCE
in the lives of
public employees.



WELCOME



Professional & Technical Employees
Local 17



Local 17 members Lois Watt (President), Ray Ceaser (Trustee) and Peg Taglianetti (Steward) attend a rally in Seattle.

What is **LOCAL 17**?

Professional & Technical Employees (PTE)
Local 17 is a labor union representing nearly 9,000 public employees in Washington and Oregon who have joined together to support, promote, and protect their interests as working professionals.

Local 17 was initially established by a small group of engineers in 1918 for the purpose of elevating the economic status of its members by “establishing higher standards of skills, assisting in the securing of employment, improving the general working conditions and securing, by legal and recognized means, adequate and proper compensation,” as stated in our constitution.

Today, Local 17 represents a diverse group of professional and technical employees – from engineers and information technology experts, to environmental and health specialists. With a solid record of achievement in negotiating innovative contracts, winning significant court victories, and being instrumental in passing pro-worker laws, we are proud to advocate for professionals in the Pacific Northwest.

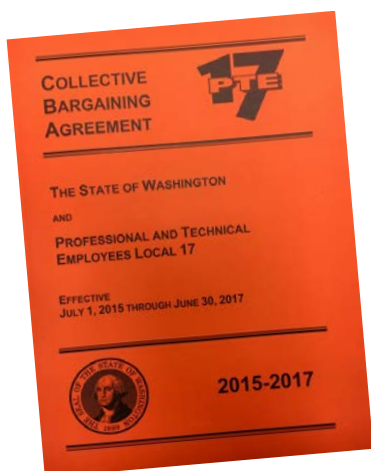
Because of your union representation, you have the right to bargain over the wages, benefits, and working conditions in your contract, and **Local 17 helps to monitor, administer, and enforce the many rights that your contract provides.**

Your **UNION** Contract

Your contract – also called a collective bargaining agreement, or CBA – is negotiated with management by a Local 17 Union Representative and your co-workers who serve on a bargaining committee. Every member has the right to vote on the final agreement. To achieve a good contract, members must show management that they are united in support of their negotiating team. Your contract addresses:

- **Wages** – fair rates of pay for each job, salary increases, paid holidays, vacations, overtime pay, etc;
- **Benefits** – employer-paid insurance, sick leave, pension, uniform allowance, etc.
- **Working conditions**, seniority, job security, safety and health, personal rights, and fair treatment; and
- **A grievance process** by which you can settle differences with your employer.

The wages, working conditions, and benefits in the contract are guaranteed for the term of the contract, meaning that management cannot legally change it without negotiating with Local 17.



Your **UNION** Representatives

Union Representatives are labor relations professionals trained to advocate for members with contract negotiations and administration, including grievance processing, and representation at meetings and hearings, including arbitration and agency proceedings.

Your Steward is the most direct link to union representation in the workplace. Your Steward is a co-worker trained to help represent union members in the workplace, and who works closely with Union Representatives. Stewards are selected through election or appointment to assist in the day-to-day administration of the contract and serve as critical links in the union's communications network. Stewards are official agents of the union and are vital in keeping Local 17 strong and moving forward.



The Local 17 City of Seattle bargaining team and staff with the Mayor at the contract signing.

SOLVING PROBLEMS **Under a Contract**

We all want to have a good working relationship on the job however sometimes difficult issues arise. A Local 17 contract outlines your rights and the procedures to follow should your rights be violated. It also provides a variety of tools for solving workplace problems, such as labor management committees.

If you think your rights may have been violated, or if you have any questions or problems at work, tell your Steward or Union Representative, who can answer your questions and help you figure out the best way to solve the problem.



Local 17 member-leader Suzie Saunders (center) and Union Representative Annie Costello (right) in a Labor-Management Committee meeting at Spokane County.

The **GRIEVANCE** Process

The grievance procedure is one tool for addressing differences between employees and their employer. This process provides an orderly system and protects against contract violations related to wages, work assignments, promotions, layoffs, or other issues included in the contract language.

If you feel you have suffered an injustice at your workplace, you may be able to have your concerns addressed in a timely, step-by-step manner called the grievance process.

Each contract is unique, but in general terms, most contracts have a progressive process presented to different levels of management in an effort to reach a favorable resolution.

Local 17
Grievance/Issue Investigation Form
Available at www.ptc17.org


**SUBMIT TO YOUR STEWARD OR UNION REPRESENTATIVE.
DO NOT SUBMIT TO MANAGEMENT.**

Employee Contact Information:

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Job Classification: _____ Email: _____
Department or Division: _____ Supervisor: _____
What happened? _____

Where did the incident occur? _____
When did the incident occur? _____

Witnesses Names / Contact Info:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Management's actions violated (check all that apply):

Contract
 Past Practice
 Written Policy
 Written Agreement
 None of the Above

Article(s) & Section(s): _____
Explain below
Please attach any supporting documentation

— CONFIDENTIAL —

Your Weingarten **RIGHTS**

Beyond the contract, union members also have another important right known as a Weingarten Right. With this right, members are able to request union representation during an investigatory interview with their employer if they have a reasonable belief that the meeting could result in discipline.

To invoke the Weingarten Right, you should make a statement similar to this:

“If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, I respectfully request that my Steward or Union Representative be present at the meeting.”

Once you have made this statement, contact your Steward or Union Representative as soon as possible. Stewards are trained to represent members during investigatory meetings.

There are times when a meeting called to discuss an evaluation or other non-disciplinary matter may change into an investigatory meeting, and this too, may trigger the Weingarten Right. **You may request union representation at any time before or during an investigatory interview.**

Some Local 17 contracts do make notification a requirement, but generally the member must ask for representation. It pays to know your contract and know your rights!



Local 17 member-leaders from the City of Portland at their workplace: Rachel Whiteside (Trustee & Chapter President) and Priscilla Partch (Chapter Treasurer, Steward).



Local 17 Union Representative Denise Cobden (left) with Public Health members from King County at a rally to save the clinics.

It's Your Union. **GET INVOLVED!**

There is strength in numbers, and an informed and active membership builds greater bargaining power.

When you vote on Local 17 contract issues and in other elections, you are participating. When you read the bi-monthly magazine, *Insight*, or when you attend union meetings, you are participating. There are also opportunities for greater involvement, such as becoming a Steward, Chapter Officer, Bargaining Team member, or Regional Executive Committee (REC) member.

Communication is also a powerful tool in building solidarity among our membership. Local 17 uses a variety of communication tools to keep you informed about what's going on with your union, including our website, magazine, email, social media, videos, publications, bulletin boards, meetings, and more.

Staying informed and actively participating can make a difference!



Ways to **BE INVOLVED**

There are many opportunities for members to get involved with Local 17! Whether at your workplace, in your local Chapter meetings, or at the union's policy-making level, you can help to build and maintain workers' rights, which bolsters a strong middle class.

- Attend chapter meetings, information sessions, and trainings
- Read Local 17 emails, *Insight*, mailings, and newsletters
- Become a Steward, Executive Board Officer, Chapter Officer, or REC Delegate
- Participate on contract bargaining teams, labor management committees or other committees

For more information about involvement opportunities, talk to your Union Representative or visit the Local 17 website: www.ptel7.org



Local 17 Clark County Chapter Officers: Katie Carle (Secretary), Cary Armstrong (Vice President), Mark Rauchenstein (President), and Carla Simmons (Treasurer).



Local 17 members from the Human Services Department at the City of Seattle in Olympia, Wash. advocating for funding to support their clients and their jobs as Medicaid case managers.

Why **POLITICS MATTER**

The United States Congress, state legislatures, and county and city councils make decisions that impact our lives. By joining together with other working people who share our concerns, we can change and transform our communities through political action.

In the political arena, Local 17 and other unions fight for safe and healthy workplaces free of discrimination of any kind; the preservation of benefits like Social Security, retirement, Medicare, unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation; and advocate for using public resources for good jobs, education, transportation, childcare, public safety, housing, and protection of the environment we live in.

Being an active, engaged member means engaging in politics. Here are some ways you can be involved in the political process in support of worker-friendly candidates and policies:

- **Register and VOTE.** Encourage your family, neighbors, and friends to vote for candidates who support working families.
- **Visit the Local 17 Public Affairs web page: ptel17publicaffairs.org.** Subscribe for updates to stay on top of what's going on in the legislature.
- **Contribute to the Local 17 Political Action Fund.** The Local 17 PAC helps to elect officials at all levels of government who are understanding of the needs of working people and their families.

Local 17 dues are never used to support political candidates. Only voluntary donations to the Political Action fund are used to endorse worker-friendly politicians.

Frequently Asked **QUESTIONS**

How do Local 17's dues compare with dues of other unions?

Local 17's dues are the lowest in Washington State. Union dues are 0.85 percent of base pay.

What do I get for the cost of my union dues?

If you put a dollar value on all the added benefits and protections that you have in your union contract, you'd see that union dues are a great investment. Put simply, you get a contract that guarantees your wages, hours, and working conditions that cannot be unilaterally changed. Unions are the only organizations in this country that stand up for the rights of workers.



Local 17 member-leaders from the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Regional Health District in Spokane.

Do my union dues go towards political candidates?

Local 17 dues are never used to support political candidates. Only voluntary donations to the Political Action fund are used to endorse worker-friendly politicians.

Does a union protect workers who aren't doing their jobs?

Local 17 protects the process, not the person. We ensure that all members are given due process and that just cause is used in any discipline. Local 17 determines whether or not to pursue an issue based on the merits of the case, not the individual. The union provides security to all workers by outlining terms and conditions of employment and defining a discipline and grievance procedure. Local 17 does not determine whether an employee is doing his or her job but rather is concerned whether the employee is treated fairly. All union members are expected to perform to the best of their ability and follow the terms and conditions of the contract.

A progressive union for professional,
technical, managerial, and administrative
employees in Washington and Oregon.



www.ptel7.org

Professional and Technical Employees, Local 17
2900 Eastlake Avenue East, Suite 300
Seattle, WA 98102

Phone: (206) 328-7321
Toll-free: (800) 783-0017
Fax: (206) 328-7402
E-mail: union@ptel7.org