

Using the web Resources to Strengthen Your Union

Today's unions have a variety of communication tools that were not available in generations past.

One of the tools is the use of websites. Websites can be used for general research, to find allies working on the same issues, and to efficiently communicate with members.

In coordination with your union representative, it is possible to create a variety of Local 17 bargaining unit websites to convey information to members in a way that is accessible to members on their schedule, whenever they have access to the internet. Local 17 bargaining unit websites are found at: www.ifpte17.org/units/index.html. Most units have their own website.

Additionally, there are a variety of steward resources available on-line including the *Local 17 Steward Resource Guide* and back issues of the *Steward Statement*. The back issues have articles that are relevant to stewards and union leaders. Steward resources can be found at: www.ifpte17.org/publications/publications.html.

Standing bargaining unit websites:

A standing website can be the place to post notes from chapter meetings, steward meetings, copies of collective bargaining agreements and other items of interest to the membership. This can serve as an electronic version of the standard union bulletin board.

Additionally, language regarding a physical, union bulletin board in the work site is part of most Local 17 contracts. A work site board is a visual reminder of the union presence in a workplace as well as another place to find union information. Union bulletin board kits are available from Local 17 by calling 206-328-7321 ext. 121.

Negotiations website:

The negotiations website can serve as the communications hub for fast-breaking news, surveys, draft language and contract proposals.

Information can be made available to members quickly and efficiently without the delays inherent in mailings to member's homes. One of the most utilized examples of this is the posting of draft copies of the collective bargaining agreements.

Local 17 not only gets this information out to members quickly, but it also saves trees and money by printing only as many copies as are needed for members who do not have web access. Please work with your union representative to find opportunities to utilize web-based communications.



Besides information on the Local 17 website and other resources, such as the *Steward Resource Guide*, there are plenty of websites that may be helpful to stewards or union leaders.

IFPTE (International) Union

- www.ifpte.org

Good sources for Washington worker-specific information:

- Washington State Labor Council: www.wslc.org
- Public Employment Relations Commission: www.perc.wa.gov/
- Department of Retirement Systems: www.drs.wa.gov
- Access WA (comprehensive listing to government resources): www.access.wa.gov
- Washington Department of Labor and Industries: www.lni.wa.gov/

Good sources for general research on employment and labor issues:

- Americans With Disabilities Act: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm
- The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO): www.afl-cio.org
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: www.eeoc.gov
- Labor Project for Working Families: www.laborproject.org/
- Evergreen State College Labor Center: www.evergreen.edu/laborcenter/ — *By Ray Goforth, Local 17 Union Representative*

please post and distribute at your workplace