



Guidelines for UNW Members Who Serve on Councils or Boards

We encourage UNW members to be politically and socially active in their communities. This can lead to members serving on councils or boards of organizations whose employees are UNW members.

Scope

These guidelines are intended to help our members avoid conflict between their roles as councillors/board members and UNW members/officers. Councils or boards that fall within the scope of these guidelines are governance boards for organizations that have employees who are UNW members. Examples include: housing authority boards; city, town, or hamlet councils; and health authority boards. Councils or boards that fall outside the scope of these guidelines are advisory boards whose members do not play a role in staffing. Examples include: lands and resources boards, municipal recreation advisory boards; and societies.

General

1. Unionists should be guided by union values.
2. Officers of the Union are held to a higher standard than regular members, in part because they are more visible.
3. Before deciding to engage in an activity, ask yourself if you will frequently be in a real or perceived conflict of interest. If the answer is yes, you probably should not engage in the activity.
4. At the first council/board meeting, after you have been sworn in, you should declare that you are a UNW member. You should also declare if you are an officer of the union.
5. You may sit on hiring committees.
6. You should not sit on human resources committees. They typically deal with discipline issues.
7. If human resources issues are raised at council/board meetings, you should remind the council/board that you are a union member, that council/board is not supposed to deal with human resources issues, and direct the issue to the human resources committee.



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8. Most council/board meetings are open to the public and the minutes of those meetings are a matter of public record. You should declare that you are a union member/officer if there are agenda items that might be or appear to be a conflict of interest between your role on council/board and your role as a union member/officer.
9. Exercise caution when making comments that are critical of our union, whether you are a member or an officer. If you are an officer, your comments may carry more weight than if you are not an officer. If you are an officer, making critical comments may violate union bylaws or regulations.
10. You should not attend in camera meetings or in camera sessions dealing with bargaining or human resources issues.
11. You should not take part in any discussion or decision of the council/board that puts you in conflict with the UNW or PSAC or violates UNW or PSAC constitution, bylaws, or regulations.
12. If you are not sure whether taking part in a council/board activity will put you in conflict with your role as a union member/officer, contact your Regional Vice President or UNW headquarters and ask for guidance.

Bargaining and Labour Disputes

1. You may take part in council/board discussions that deal with giving authority and mandate to the bargaining team.
2. You may not be part of the employer's negotiating team if it is negotiating an agreement with fellow UNW members. (UNW Bylaw 16, Section 2)
3. You may take part in the board/council vote to ratify the collective agreement.
4. If there is a strike, you should not cross the picket line (real or virtual), even to attend board/council meetings. Once members are on strike, a picket line exists 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, whether or not there are members actively picketing.