

BECOME A UNION STEWARD

WHAT IS A UNION STEWARD?

A Union Steward is the traditional title given to a Union member who is the Union's recognized representative in the workplace. In AUPE, a Union Steward is a member who has been nominated, trained and appointed to act on behalf of other members. (It is a good idea to have Union Stewards in a workplace. The number of Union Stewards depends on the workplace size, physical set-up, number of work units and hours of work.)

WHAT MAKES A GOOD UNION STEWARD?

A Union Steward represents their co-workers. The Union Steward is their spokesperson. Whether looking at the relationship between the Union and Members, or between the Union and Management, the Union Steward is the key person.

The Union Steward always has their Membership Services Officer (MSO)/Union Representative to rely on for advice and mentoring. The Union Steward is protected by language in their Collective Agreements and under applicable legislation.

The Union Steward needs to have a keen interest in people and an enthusiasm for Labour's ideas and programs. The Union Steward should enjoy helping others, and have the desire and initiative to look after the interest of the members.

A good Union Steward will be:

- Impartial, fair, objective and professional;
- Friendly and easy to talk to;
- Quick in securing facts and information, and able to use them effectively;
- Enthusiastic about Union work and able to help Union members to understand the Union's role;
- Courageous enough to tell members when they may not have a case, and have the "guts" to stand up to the Employer when representing a member who has a case; and
- Someone who does not pass the buck.

Stewards' roles from the foundation of the Union movement.

They work to inform and motivate union members, to protect the Collective Agreement, and to keep the information flowing between the Membership and the Leadership. In the eyes of the members, Stewards are the Union by their actions and their conduct.

THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A STEWARD

1. Approach a member of your Chapter/Local Executive or an AUPE staff member.
2. Advise them you are interested in becoming a Union Steward.
3. You will be given a booklet titled "Becoming an AUPE Union Steward".
4. Read and review this booklet as it explains the roles and responsibilities of Union Stewards.
5. Fill out the nomination form and sign it, give the nomination form to a member of your Local/Chapter Executive.
6. The Local/Chapter Executive will review the nomination form and make the recommendation on acceptance.
7. They will then forward the nomination form to Edmonton HQ located at 10451 – 170 Street, T5P 4S7 to the attention of AUPE Education Section.
8. You will be sent a letter advising of the training and dates available.



UNION STEWARD TRAINING

Levels and Training for Union Stewards:

Level 1-Union Steward:

This is a 1 day Introductory Union Steward Course. In this course participants will gain knowledge of their: Roles and Responsibilities as Union Stewards; Knowing your Contract, a Systematic Approach to Contract Interpretation; What is Discipline; and Disciplinary meetings.

Once you have been nominated and have taken the Level 1 Union Steward Course you can represent members in disciplinary meetings, interpret the collective agreement for your members and be a worksite contact.

Level 2-Union Steward:

Prerequisite is Level 1

It is recommended that you have experience in handling disciplinary meetings and observing grievance hearings before taking the Level 2 Union Steward Course.

The Level-2 Union Steward Course is a 2 day course and Union Stewards will gain knowledge in areas such as: AUPE Steward and Collective Bargaining; Complaints vs Grievances; Gathering the Facts; Investigation and Research; Just Cause; Employer Rules; the Grievance Process; the Grievance Form; Presenting the Grievance; and Grievance Follow Up.

Once you have completed this 2 day course you can represent members at Investigations and handle Grievances, as well as the duties listed under the Level 1 Union Steward.

Level 2-Union Stewards are encouraged to mentor Level 1-Union Stewards in disciplinary meetings.

Level 3-Union Steward:

Once you have a comfort level as a Level 2-Union Steward and have handled grievances, you can apply to take the 4 day Level 3-Union Steward Course. This would be the Advanced Union Steward Course currently being offered at AUPE Labour School.

The Level 3-Union Steward Course is a thorough review of the Level 1 & 2 Union Steward courses and reviews the Contract Interpretation Course. This course also gives Union Stewards instruction on Advanced Research Techniques, How to Prepare Your Argument, Writing Your Presentation, Preparing for the Hearing and Advanced Grievance Presentations.

Level 3-Union Stewards handle all roles and responsibilities of a Union Steward, you also mentor Level 1 & 2 Union Stewards in areas such as Investigation, Disciplinary Meetings and Grievance Hearings. Level 3 Union Stewards would be considered for Secondment opportunities with AUPE.



AUPE CONSTITUTION

Article 21 - Locals Without Chapters

21.03 (f)

“...The Executive Board is empowered to nominate Union Stewards for assessment, training and appointment by AUPE between annual general meetings of the Local. All members of the Executive Board shall be deemed to be stewards.”

21.03 (i)

The Annual General Meeting of the Local shall nominate Union Stewards for assessment, training and appointment by AUPE as it deems necessary;

Article 23 - Chapters

23.04

“...This Board is empowered to nominate Union Stewards for assessment, training and appointment by AUPE between annual general meetings of the Chapter.”

23.10 (f)

The Annual General Meeting of the Chapter “...shall nominate for assessment, training and appointment by AUPE such Union Stewards as it deems necessary.”

UNION STEWARD NOMINATION FORM

Please Print Clearly

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Home Phone: _____

Workphone: _____

E-mail: _____

Local: _____ Chapter: _____

Employer: _____

Worksite: _____

Signature of Member: _____

The Local/Chapter has reviewed the Nomination:

Accept Decline

Locals with Chapters:

Chapter Executive Member (please print and sign name)

Locals with NO Chapters:

Local Executive Member (please print and sign name)

Please forward this nomination form
to the attention of Education Section

AUPE Headquarters
10451 – 170 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5P 4S7



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Toll-free Fax: 1-888-388-2873

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