

Member Participation



Washington State
Council of Fire Fighters



WSCFF

Things Were Good

- **1977 Abood v Detroit Board of Education, and other Supreme Court Decisions-**
 - *Found that there was no violation of the 1st and 14th Amendments under which nonunion employees represented by a union were required to pay union dues or an agency fee.*



Things Were Good

- **Although Right to Work existed prior to June 2018- Little impact in Washington.**
- **Many locals operated closed shop type environments.**
- **Employees were members and union leaders assumed that was enough....**



What Some Thought Our World Was



Marc Janus v AFSCME

- **SCOTUS Decision June 2018**
 - *Majority ruled –*



Janus Decision

Heavily funded and supported by non-union organizations.

- *Evergreen Foundation*
- *ALEC*
- *Liberty Justice Center*



WSCFF Political Action

- **House Bill 1575 – 2019 Legislative Session**
 - *Allows dues to be collected with authorization by employee (Opt-In)*
 - *Requires written revocation (Opt-Out)*





UNION BY CHOICE OPT-IN FORM



I, _____, elect to **OPT-IN** and become a **Union Member by Choice**. It is my decision, as an American, to freely associate with a union and I'm choosing to be part of the International Association of Fire Fighters Local _____, and its affiliates.

By means of this voluntary decision, I recognize the advantages of being a member and participating in matters beneficial to me, my family, our profession, and the community I serve. As a member I receive all rights of union membership, including the right to have a voice and a vote about contract matters, including those areas pertaining to wages, hours, and conditions of employment, and other decisions made by this local. I further receive the right to vote for officers of this union.

I make this authorization knowing there is a cost for representation, collective bargaining, and other activities my union undertakes on behalf of me and my family.

As a member, I am entitled to the benefits of our collective bargaining agreement and all other benefits that my union and its affiliates offer.

Effective immediately, I hereby authorize the deduction of union dues as outlined in the local's Constitution and Bylaws, which are democratically controlled by the members and followed by the elected leaders of the union. The amount that is to be withdrawn will be transmitted to the union.

Signature

Date

Principle Union Officer

Date

Department Representative

Date

CC: Union Member
Local Union
Employer



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- By means of this voluntary decision, I recognize the advantages of being a member and participating in matters beneficial to me, my family, our profession, and the community I serve. As a member I receive all rights of union membership, including the right to have a voice and a vote about contract matters, including those areas pertaining to wages, hours, and conditions of employment, and other decisions made by this local. I further receive the right to vote for officers of this union.



- **I make this authorization knowing there is a cost for representation, collective bargaining, and other activities my union undertakes on behalf of me and my family.**
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OPT-OUT FORM



Attention (insert name of local and IAFF Local xxxx) and (insert employer):

Effective immediately, I, _____, hereby resign from IAFF Local _____ and its affiliates. I will no longer be a member of my union and this choice is made knowing that my family and I will no longer be eligible for certain benefits through affiliation. I also understand that I will no longer have a say in the actions of the union, or have the right to vote on matters that directly affect me and my family.

My signature is the direction that the union no longer has my consent to take any money in union dues or fees from my paychecks. I hereby revoke any prior dues/fees checkoff authorization I may have signed.

This notification is permanent and continuing in nature, until I notify you otherwise. I understand that if I wish to re-affiliate, I will be subject to any reinstatement fees and past due charges IAFF Local _____ has put in place.

I understand that I may be required to pay for certain benefits as outlined in the collective bargaining agreement. My required participation and payment will be done through payroll deduction on a line that will not be associated with union dues and will not be allowed as an IRS tax deduction.

I further understand that my choice to opt out of the union may mean that certain benefits outside of the collective bargaining agreement will no longer be available to me or my family.

Sign Name

Date

Department Representative

Date

Principal Union Officer

Date

CC: Union Member
Local Union
Employer



- **Effective immediately, I, _____, hereby resign from IAFF Local _____ and its affiliates. I will no longer be a member of my union and this choice is made knowing that my family and I will no longer be eligible for certain benefits through affiliation. I also understand that I will no longer have a say in the actions of the union, or have the right to vote on matters that directly affect me and my family.**

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Janus Impact

- **Department of Labor reports approximately 340,000 workers have left the following unions – AFSCME, SEIU, NEA, and AFT.**
- **WSCFF Impacts as reported by District Representatives. Less than 25 across the state.**



Engaging our Membership



How do you define active participation?

- **Attending union meetings**
- **Union events**
- **Taking on a specific role in the union**
- **Serving on committees**
- **Participating in political action**
- **Union rallies**



What percentage of your members are active?

- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 50%



What are some of the reasons your members get involved?

- **Union pride**
- **Peer pressure**
- **Incentives**
- **Leadership**
- **Personality**
- **Improve job**
- **Showcase a talent**
- **Personal Self Preservation**



Why would members elect not to participate?

- **Lack of information, intimidation, knowledge**
- **Dislike you**
- **Thinks the union does not listen**
- **Lack of time**
- **Dislikes others and concept of a group**
- **Status quo**

Why don't members participate?

Continued...

- **Fear of retaliation from your own group**
- **& management**
- **Interest in only one issue; moved on**
- **Generational differences**
- **Lack of understanding of a labor union**
- **Politics**
- **Save Money**



Local's may differ on why?

- **Ongoing work; what's happening now**
- **What may work for one group may not work for others. (size, culture, history etc.)**



Utilizing Members to Engage Member



Informal Leaders

Connectors - Know everyone

- **Seem to know most people**
- **People know them**
- **May trust them**
- **Involved in other social activities**



Informal leaders

Experts - Knows everything about a specific item and is willing to share it with others.

- **Enthusiastic**
- **Admired by others**
- **May not be interested in a leadership role**

Informal leaders

Persuaders - Those well respected and have charisma.

- **Make people comfortable**
- **Can convey persuasive emotion into conversation**
- **Syncs with others faster than most people**

Orientations

- **Members have a more favorable view of the union if they have an orientation in the first 6 months.**
- **An orientation may also identify your future leaders.**

Formal Orientation

Conducted for members when they first sign up for the union.

Information about the union

- **What kind of information?**
- **Who you are, what you do, and why**

Encourages participation

One longer meeting or multiple meetings



Formal Orientation

Public recognition by your local

- **Union Meeting**
- **Special gathering**
- **Family & Friends**
- **Department leadership**



Informal Orientation

- **Takes place during the first 6-12 months**
- **Local leadership will continually check in**
- **One point of contact may be helpful**
- **Make the union the go to group**



Membership surveys

One on one interaction works BEST

- Not all of our members will talk
- They might prefer a group –Station Visits

Focus groups

The feedback and involvement of informal leaders will often provide the best information.



Why is a one-on-one communication a powerful tool?

- **Creates data for unions to message**
- **Personalizes the union, gives it a human face**
- **Establishes Trust**
- **Allows for factual information to be shared**
- **Motivates people to join in**



Within your table groups –

- **Please discuss your formal and informal orientations.**
- **Identify what has worked and what has not worked**
- **Select a person to share your results**



What's worked with Meetings?

- **Meetings less structured; answer questions**
- **Morning and evening meetings**
- **Have an agenda, make it known, ask for items**
- **Meeting followed by an activity, build upon the gathering.**
- **Educational Component**



Sharing information

How

- **Bulletin Boards**
- **Phone calls**
- **Snail mail**
- **Social media**

What kind of information – Who is the audience?



What are your victories?

- **Pay and Benefits – You have to let the membership know how these were fought and won**
- **Hours of work**
- **Job safety**
- **Presumptive language**



Participation Strategies

With your groups- Issues

Dislike of Local Union Politics

Members have it good, no concerns

Members lack time

Negative feelings about past officers



Participation Strategies

With your groups- Issues

Union doesn't listen

Information seems to be controlled

Generational differences

Lack help with Local activities



Can you talk UNION?

- **Are you *willing* and are you *able* to talk union?**
 - *You will have questions?*
 - *You will be challenged?*
- **Stay Professional -**

