



SGEU Steward Job Description

You are the first person that members in your assigned area contact for information about the workplace and SGEU, and for help solving workplace issues. Under the guidance of your chief steward, you work collectively with other stewards, elected leaders, and SGEU staff in your workplace, bargaining unit, and sector.

Duties:

- Advocate
- Enforce the collective agreement by identifying violations, investigating complaints, and meeting with management to solve problems or file grievances
- Deal with harassment and other conflicts in the workplace
- Identify future collective agreement proposals

Be a Sounding Board

- Listen to members' concerns while maintaining confidentiality
- Empower members to help themselves by providing them with information and support
- Provide information on programs available to members through the union and employer, such as Workers' Compensation, Long-Term Disability, and Employee & Family Assistance Plans

Educate

- Answer questions about your collective agreement
- Inform members (both face-to-face and in meetings) of workplace issues and what SGEU is doing to address them
- Inform members (both face-to-face and in meetings) of issues and actions affecting them in the union and community

Organize

- Be familiar with your workplace and your members
- Welcome and orient new employees
- Advise other elected SGEU leaders of issues and developments in your workplace
- Mobilize members to take part in proposals gathering, collective-bargaining support activities, internal union meetings and elections, and other union campaigns
- Support the membership in providing relevant changes in work and personal data to SGEU Membership Records.

(The blend of duties and level of responsibility may vary, depending on the structure of your workplace, bargaining unit, and sector.)

Roles and Responsibilities:

You bring these qualities to the role of steward:

- Take initiative to learn and understand relevant grievance procedures
- Follow through on tasks and commitments to members
- Keep members' information confidential (except in discussions with the chief steward or as required in the grievance process)
- Willing to complete Union Leadership Development training (ULD 10, 20, 30)
- Listen effectively
- Care about the well-being of others

SGEU will provide education and support so you can:

- Actively challenge inappropriate or harassing behaviour in the workplace and not take part in it
- Be familiar with the collective agreement, workplace policies and procedures, SGEU policies, Steward Manual, and union resource people
- Speak out when members' rights are harmed
- Research complaints, questions, and workplace issues, and weigh conflicting information
- Present an argument clearly, assertively, and respectfully
- Follow SGEU's Code of Conduct for Elected Officers and the Statement of Equality
- Listen effectively
- Take and maintain clear records
- Believe in the trade union movement

Working Environment:

- Stewards are elected to a two-year term. Some duties can be performed on work time or are compensated by the union. Stewards may be required to perform other tasks on their own time.
- Stewards' rights and union activity are protected by law and your collective agreement. Some employers may try to challenge your role, but other stewards, your chief steward, your Agreement Administration Advisor, and the larger union are there for advice and support.
- It's a rewarding experience to help others and be part of a larger union family.

(Approved by Provincial Council April 2009)