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SASKATCHEWAN ASSESSMENT  
MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
Local # 2215

Bargaining Guidelines  
2024

Approved by the  
Membership of Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency Local 2215  
on February 13, 2024

and

Approved by the  
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## Table of Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Preamble .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Structure of the Bargaining Unit .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Definitions .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Elections and Voting .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities .....</b>	<b>3</b>
5.1	Stewards .....	3
5.2	Alternate Stewards .....	4
5.3	Chief Steward .....	5
5.4	Bargaining Council .....	5
5.5	Grievance Committee .....	6
5.6	Oath of Office for Elected Officials .....	7
5.7	Negotiating Committee .....	7
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Recall of Elected Officials .....</b>	<b>9</b>
6.1	Petition Process .....	10
6.2	Recall Process .....	10
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Role of Staff Assigned- Labour Relations Officer (LRO) .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Proposal Gathering and Package Ratification .....</b>	<b>11</b>
8.2	Call for Proposals .....	11
8.3	Format of a Proposal .....	11
8.4	Proposal Gathering .....	12
8.5	Proposals Conference and Packing the Proposals .....	12
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Ratification of the Tentative Agreement/Memorandum of Agreement .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Job Action/Strikes .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Communications .....</b>	<b>14</b>
11.1	Media .....	14
11.2	Membership .....	15
11.3	Sector/Provincial Council .....	15
<b>12.</b>	<b>Rules of Order for All Membership Meetings .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Amendments to Bargaining Guidelines .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>APPENDIX A - STANDING COMMITTEES .....</b>		<b>17</b>
<b>APPENDIX B - STEWARD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....</b>		<b>19</b>
<b>APPENDIX C- CHIEF STEWARD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....</b>		<b>22</b>

# Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency Local 2215 Bargaining Guidelines 2024

## 1.0 PREAMBLE

- 1.1 Upon written request to the Negotiating Committee, these written policies shall be available to the membership after being approved by the Bargaining Council.
- 1.2 Agreement and any Letters of Understanding affecting them signed between negotiations. **Copies of these documents are available through the Stewards and Chief Steward.**
- 1.3 Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency (SAMA), Local 2215 is a participating Local of the Crown Sector of the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union and governed by the SGEU Constitution and Sector Bylaws.
- 1.4 The Bargaining Unit will consist of all in-scope SGEU members in good standing employed by SAMA.

## 2.0 STRUCTURE OF THE BARGAINING UNIT

- 2.1 The Negotiating Committee shall consist of three (3) elected members.
- 2.2 Bargaining Council shall consist of elected Stewards from the following facilities that are included in the SAMA Bargaining Unit:

Central Office (Regina)	District 1	2 Stewards
Regina Regional Office	District 2	1 Steward
Weyburn Regional Office	District 3	1 Steward
Yorkton Regional Office	District 4	1 Steward
Melfort Regional Office	District 5	1 Steward
Saskatoon Regional Office	District 6	2 Stewards
Swift Current Regional Office	District 7	1 Steward
North Battleford Rural Office	District 8	1 Steward

### **3.0 DEFINITIONS**

3.1 Simple majority refers to fifty percent (50%) of the votes plus one (1) of the valid votes cast. Abstentions and spoiled ballots shall not count as valid votes.

3.2 Plurality refers to the candidate who receives the most votes.

3.3 Recall refers to a process by which an elected official can be removed from **their** office.

3.4 **Member in Good Standing means to have the rights and privileges afforded to them by the SGEU Constitution.**

### **4.0 ELECTIONS AND VOTING**

4.1 **Secret Ballot done in person.**

4.2 **Elections and voting can be conducted using one of the following systems of voting:**

- a) **Electronic voting and elections will be done by using a survey system, such as Survey Monkey or an email vote like Simply Voting.**
- b) **If the email system is used, all the results from the emails will be sent from one (1) of SGEU's email addresses with the vote (reply) automatically sent to the Labour Relations Officer (LRO) assigned to SAMA. Using the 'bcc' field to send the email will ensure no email vote (replies) will be able to be seen by the employees of SAMA. This will ensure the "secret voting" is upheld.**
- c) **If the survey system is used, all the results will be sent to and viewed by the SGEU (LRO) and the support staff assigned to our Bargaining Unit.**

4.3 **The Negotiating Committee will determine whether the election/vote will be conducted in person, secret ballot or electronic voting.**

### **5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

## 5.1 Stewards

5.1.1 Notice of the Steward elections will be posted/e-mailed out at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. Elections will take place thirty (30) days before the term expires or whenever a vacancy occurs.

5.1.2 Stewards shall be elected by members within a work unit. Elections in all regional offices, sub-offices and central office shall take place on even years by secret ballot, **with terms beginning on November 1st**. Stewards will serve for two (2) years and/or whenever a vacancy occurs.

5.1.3 Stewards shall:

- a) Sit on Bargaining Council.
- b) Enforce the provisions of the Collective Agreement and represent members during disputes with the employer. Keep members informed about what happens in Bargaining Council meetings, about planned Union Activities and the anticipated plans of the employer.
- c) Educate the membership about their rights and responsibilities under the Collective Agreement. Know the Bylaws of the Sector.
- d) Meet with new members to explain the role of the Union and the Collective Agreement. Inform new members of scheduled LD 5 courses.
- e) Keep the Union bulletin board updated.
- f) Maintain an accurate list of the members in their district.
- g) Hold worksite meetings to discuss workplace problems. Stimulate members by letting them know what the Union is doing to solve their common problems.
- h) Hold elections, ratification or strike votes when necessary.
- i) Be a delegate to the Proposals Conferences.

- j) Stewards shall perform duties in accordance with the SGEU Steward Roles and Responsibilities. Refer to Appendix B of these Bargaining Guidelines.

#### 5.1.4 Steward Vacancy

- a) Should a Steward fail to fulfil his obligations or vacate their his/her position (i.e. temporarily reassigned), the Alternate Steward will be elevated to full Steward status.
- b) Appointments may be made by the Bargaining Council Chairperson on an interim basis, until a Steward election can be held.

### 5.2 Alternate Stewards

5.2.1 Alternate Stewards shall be elected by members within a work unit. Elections in all regional offices, sub-offices and central office shall take place on even years by secret ballot, **with terms beginning on November 1st** and/or whoever placed second in the Steward election. Alternate Stewards will serve for two (2) years and/or whenever a vacancy occurs.

5.2.2 In absence of Steward, the Alternate will process grievances.

5.2.3 Alternate Stewards shall sit on the Bargaining Council when the Steward cannot attend.

5.2.4 Alternate Stewards shall be a delegate to the Proposals Conference.

#### 5.2.5 Alternate Steward Vacancy

Should an Alternate Steward fail to fulfil **their** obligations or vacate **their** position (i.e. temporarily reassigned), appointments may be made by the Bargaining Council Chairperson on an interim basis, until an Alternate Steward election can be held.

### 5.3 Chief Steward

5.3.1 The role of the Chief Steward is to assist Stewards and Bargaining Council and Negotiating Committee Chairpersons and to represent the Bargaining Unit/Local or Sector.

5.3.2 Election of the Chief Steward will be done as follows:

- a) Nominees for Chief Stewards must already hold the office of Steward or Bargaining Council member, and have completed LD 10 and be willing to complete LD 20 during the term of their office.
- b) Elections will be held at least thirty (30) days prior to the end of the term of office or whenever a vacancy occurs and subject to Sector Bylaws where applicable.
- c) A call for nominations will be made to the members of the Bargaining Council at least fourteen (14) days prior to the election.
- d) Notice for election shall include the date, place and time of the election and who the nominees are. Nominations must be submitted not less than seven (7) days prior to the meeting where the election takes place.

5.3.3 The term of office will be two (2) years, elected in even years.

5.3.4 The Chief Steward shall:

- a) Attend Bargaining Council meetings.
- b) Keep Stewards informed of Sector business.
- c) Ensure Stewards and Bargaining Council members are trained and attend LDs.
- d) Assist Stewards with the grievance process.
- e) Assist the Negotiating Committee with bargaining issues when possible.
- f) Be knowledgeable about the Union, the Sector and the Bargaining Unit/Local.
- g) Chief Stewards shall perform duties in accordance with the SGEU Chief Steward Roles and Responsibilities. Refer to Appendix C of these Bargaining Guidelines.

## 5.4 **Bargaining Council**

5.4.1 SAMA shall have a Bargaining Council comprised of up to eleven (11) elected Stewards in Districts 1 to 9 and three (3) elected

members of Negotiating Committee as per Article 7.5 of the SGEU Constitution.

5.4.2 The Negotiating Committee Chairperson shall also be the Bargaining Council Chairperson who shall:

- a) Call and chair committee and membership meetings.
- b) Be the chief spokesperson for the Bargaining Council and Bargaining Unit members in consultation with and on written permission of the SGEU President when dealing with the media.
- c) Organize and distribute information the Committee may require.
- d) Communicate with the Labour Relations Officer (LRO), who is the Union representative, the Sector Chairperson and the President of the Union, where applicable.
- e) Appoint a Steward to fill a vacant position on the Bargaining Council until an election can be held.
- f) Be responsible, with the LRO from SGEU, for all grievances and liaise, as required, with the Sector Grievance Committee.
- g) Shall hold a minimum of three (3) Bargaining Council meetings per year.
- h) **Be responsible for the bargaining unit finances and provide a budget at the first meeting following the SGEU Annual Convention. Financial reports to be provided at each Bargaining Council Meeting.**

5.4.3 The Bargaining Council Vice-Chairperson shall:

- a) Be elected from the Bargaining Council.
- b) The Vice-Chairperson will serve the same term as the Bargaining Council.
- c) Perform the duties of the Chairperson in their absence.
- d) Perform such other duties as maybe delegated by the Bargaining Council Chairperson from time to time.



5.5 Grievance Committee

5.5.1 The **Negotiating** Committee shall act as the Grievance Committee.

5.5.2 The Grievance Committee shall process the initial stages of grievances in the Bargaining Unit and make recommendations to the Provincial Screening Committee on whether a grievance should proceed.

5.6 **Oath of Office for Elected Officials**

5.6.1 All elected officials will take the oath of office as follows:

"In accepting nomination, I \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby sincerely pledge my word to the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union that I will truly and faithfully perform the duties of my office in accordance with the SGEU Constitution, Statement of Equality, the Policies and the Bylaws of the Union. I will safeguard and protect the assets of the Union and return all assets when I am no longer a member of the Union."

5.7 Negotiating Committee

5.7.1 The Negotiating Committee shall be limited to three (3) representatives, one (1) from each group. Groups shall be as follows:

- a) **Urban** Appraisers.
- b) Appraisal Agrologists.
- c) Technical and Support Services - all others will be represented in this group.
- d) If the majority of a group wish to change their allocation to a different group, they shall do so by submitting their request to the Bargaining Council, in writing with reasons. Applications for allocation changes will only be accepted up until six (6) months prior to Negotiating Committee elections (ten (10) months prior to Collective Agreement expiry date).

5.7.2 Election

- a) Nominations to Negotiating Committee:

- i) Nomination by groups:
  - ii) **Urban** Appraisers
  - iii) Appraisal Agrologists
  - iv) Technical and Support Services
- b) Each group shall elect one (1) member to the Negotiating Committee, plus one (1) alternate. Elections shall be by secret ballot. Ballots are to be mailed to the Administrative Assistant (AA) using the double envelope system **or by electronic voting**. The alternate is whoever placed second in elections, and if no one is available, then Bargaining Council shall appoint.

### 5.7.3 Term

- a) The term shall be for the life of the Collective Agreement (less four (4) months). This will also affect alternate Negotiating Committee members.
- b) The new Committee shall be elected four (4) months prior to expiration of the Collective Agreement and takes over immediately.
- c) The Bargaining Council will elect the Negotiating Committee Chairperson from among the eligible Negotiating Committee members.
- d) The Bargaining Council may suspend all power and duties of the Chairperson by a simple majority vote. The Negotiating Committee shall conduct no further business until after the Bargaining Council has met.
- e) The Negotiating Committee shall have the sole responsibility to negotiate all provisions **including Letters of Understanding**, proposals and amendments to the Collective Agreement in all matters.
- f) The Negotiating Committee shall be responsible for bargaining the proposal package, as directed by the Proposals Conference.

- g) The Negotiating Committee shall be responsible for interim bargaining and overseeing the implementation of the Collective Agreement.
- h) The Negotiating Committee **and LRO** shall approve any communication with the employer regarding negotiations.
- i) The Negotiating Committee is responsible for short term decisions with regard to negotiations and bargaining strategies.
- j) The Negotiating Committee is ultimately responsible for its actions to the Bargaining Council.

5.8 The Negotiating Committee Chairperson shall:

5.8.1 Be chief spokesperson for the Negotiating Committee.

5.8.2 Chair all meetings of the Negotiating Committee.

5.8.3 Represent SAMA at the Crown Sector **Executive Meetings and AGM.**

5.8.4 Communicate with the President of the Union regarding SAMA bargaining.

5.8.5 Communicate, when necessary, with Provincial Council of SGEU and its Committees.

5.8.6 Be responsible for the preparation and distribution of all **documents and** correspondence **that may be required to** the District Stewards by means of email or mail.

5.8.7 Organize all meetings of the Negotiating Committee, either upon request of the members of the Negotiating Committee or as **they** deem necessary.

5.8.8 Chair Negotiating Committee at negotiations, in conjunction with the LRO.

5.8.9 The Chair shall hold office until elections are held, prior to a new round of negotiations, or if recalled by the Bargaining Council.

## 6. **RECALL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS**

An elected official may be subject to a recall process for cause of breaches to the Code of Ethics, SGEU Constitution or Policies.

## 6.1 **Petition Process**

- 6.1.1 Recall must be petitioned for by twenty-five percent (25%) of the members who are represented by the person being recalled. The petition must outline the reasons for recall in clear and concise language.
- 6.1.2 Upon receiving the duly signed petition, the elected official responsible for the person being recalled will call a meeting for that purpose. **Notice of the** meeting must be advertised at least fourteen (14) days in advance. The notice must include the time, date, location and purpose.
- 6.1.3 The official facing recall shall receive a copy of the petition, reasons for the recall and notice of the meeting where the vote will take place. Such notice shall be advertised at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

## 6.2 **Recall Process**

- 6.2.1 The official facing recall shall have the opportunity to present **their** position or response to the petition prior to the vote occurring.
- 6.2.2 A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members in attendance shall be required to unseat the incumbent. Only those who are represented by the person being recalled can vote on the recall.
- 6.2.3 Voting shall be done by secret ballot. **Voting can be done in person or electronically.**
- 6.2.4 Vacancies created by a recall will be filled following the election process for other vacant positions as outlined within the Bargaining Guidelines.

## 7. **ROLE OF STAFF ASSIGNED- LABOUR RELATIONS OFFICER (LRO)**

- 7.1 The **role of the LRO is to assist, advise and support the Stewards, the Negotiating Committee and the members of the Bargaining Unit in accordance with SGEU Constitution and SGEU Policy, including bargaining** where the LRO will always be in attendance.

7.2 SGEU appoints the LRO **in accordance with SGEU Constitution and SGEU Policy.**

7.3 The Bargaining Council can ask the President of the Union to remove the LRO from the assignment if the Committee has sufficient reasons.

## **8. PROPOSAL GATHERING AND PACKAGE RATIFICATION**

8.1 Every member of the Bargaining Unit has the right to submit a proposal for changes to the Collective Agreement in accordance with SGEU Constitution and SGEU Policy.

### **8.2 Call for Proposals**

8.2.1 **In accordance with SGEU Constitution and SGEU Policy, every member of the Bargaining Unit has the right to submit proposals for changes to the Collective Agreement.**

8.2.2 **A Call for Proposals shall be made by the Negotiating Committee.**

8.2.3 **The Negotiating Committee is responsible for initiating a call to the membership for proposals prior to the commencement of any round of negotiations.**

8.2.4 **A notice shall be sent electronically and posted on the Union bulletin board at the location.**

8.2.5 **The notice shall state the purpose of the notice, outline the format for making proposal submissions, state how and where proposals are to be submitted, and state the deadline date for when proposals are to be submitted by.**

8.2.6 **The Call for Proposals should allow for members to submit proposals up to and including the proposals conference.**

8.3 Format of a Proposal

8.3.1 **A proposal is a suggested change to the Collective Agreement.**

8.3.2 **A proposal must be clear, concise and in written form.**

8.3.4 **Reason(s)for the Proposal change** shall include:

a) Statement of the desired change.

- b) Reasons for the change.
- c) References to relevant article(s) in the Collective Agreement, if applicable.
- d) References to other agreements, if applicable.

#### 8.4 Proposal Gathering

- a) The Negotiating Committee must notify the membership when and how to submit proposals by a notice on the Union bulletin board **or by email**.
- b) Call for proposals shall be made by the Negotiating Committee.
- c) These proposals must be submitted more than ninety (90) days prior to the expiration of the contract.
- d) Membership meetings **may** be held by the District Stewards to discuss changes to the Agreement and construct proposals.
- e) The Negotiating Committee **may amalgamate** proposals taking into consideration the intentions of the membership and the policies, objectives, **Articles and clauses within the Collective agreement** of the Union.

#### 8.5 Proposals Conference **and Packaging the Proposals**

- a) The Negotiating Bargaining Council Chairperson and the Negotiating Committee shall:
  - i) Chair the conference according to the Bourinot's' Rules of Order established in the SGEU Constitution.
  - ii) Keep accurate and complete minutes of the conference.
  - iii) Keep a record of attendance.
  - iv) Shall amalgamate the proposals into a final package.
  - v) Should be prepared to consider amendments and/or additions to the proposals package from the

Bargaining Council, Crown Sector, SGEU Proper and/or the Labour Movement.

b) Conference Delegates

- i) Delegates to the conference shall be the Bargaining Council Chairperson, the Negotiating Committee, Chief Steward, Stewards, Alternate Stewards, and Negotiating Committee Alternates.
- ii) Delegates shall be responsible for:
  - Representing the views of their work unit.
  - Discussing, amending and ratifying the individual proposals for inclusion in the proposals package and shall do so by a vote of fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) of the delegates at the proposals conference.
  - Late proposals may be presented at the proposals conference and shall be considered for inclusion in the final package by a fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) vote of the persons at the conference.
  - **The Negotiating committee will present the package to the employer at the agreed upon bargaining dates**

9. **RATIFICATION OF THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT /MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

- 9.1 Through negotiating with the employer, a tentative Collective Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement is put together, which both the Bargaining Unit membership and the employer must ratify.
- 9.2 Ratification is described in the SGEU Constitution.
  - 9.2.1 The tentative Collective Agreement/Memorandum of Agreement must be presented to the Sector Executive **and Administration Committee** for review and approval prior to ratification by the members.
  - 9.2.2 The Negotiating Committee Chairperson shall call a regional membership meeting to ratify the tentative Collective

Agreement/Memorandum of Agreement after the above required approvals have been obtained.

**9.2.3** Notice shall be mailed (or sent electronically) fourteen (14) days in advance stating the purpose, locations, dates and times of the meetings.

**9.2.4** The Negotiating Committee Chairperson shall, if possible, chair all regional membership ratification meetings. All members of the Negotiating Committee and the LRO shall attend as many of the meetings as possible.

**9.2.5** Ratification of the Tentative Agreement/Memorandum of Agreement shall be carried out through regional membership meetings called for such purposes, or in whatever manner, the Bargaining Council would deem appropriate. Alternate methods must conform to the SGEU Constitution:

- a) Secret ballot
- b) Mail out ballot
- c) Electronic ballot**
- d) Regional meetings
- e) or combination thereof**

**9.2.6** When ratification ballots are being counted, the Negotiating Committee shall ensure that a SGEU Provincial Council member, not representing that Negotiating Committee directly, is there as a scrutineer in accordance with the SGEU Constitution.

## **10.0 JOB ACTION/STRIKES**

**10.1** As per SGEU Constitution, Article 7.6.1.6.

**10.2** Quorum will be retained with fifty percent (50%) of those members initially in attendance at the strike meeting.

**10.3** A strike vote will be achieved by a fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) vote of those members present and voting at the strike meeting.

## **11.0 COMMUNICATIONS**

**11.1 Media**



- 11.1.1 The Negotiating Committee shall determine who will act as spokesperson on behalf of the Bargaining Unit.
- 11.1.2 All public statements shall be consistent with Union policy and principles.
- 11.1.3 Public statements issued shall be approved in advance by the Negotiating Committee subject to written approval by the President of the Union or **their** designate.
- 11.2 **Membership**
- 11.2.1 Stewards/Bargaining Council shall be the communications link for the Negotiating Committee, holding regional membership meetings during the course of collective bargaining to report to members and to receive feedback from the membership.
- 11.2.2 Written bargaining reports shall be made available to the Bargaining Unit membership during the course of collective bargaining.
- 11.2.3 The Negotiating Committee may **provide communication** on particular issues to elaborate on a problem and to give management's response.
- 11.3 **Sector/Provincial Council**
- Any pertinent information arising during the course of collective bargaining shall be communicated via written bargaining reports to the Sector Executive and the Administration Committee of the Provincial Council.
- 12.0 **RULES OF ORDER FOR ALL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**
- 12.1 In accordance with Article 11 of the SGEU Constitution and Bourinot's Rules of Order.
- 12.2 **The meeting agenda** must include the statement of equality, appointment of Ombudsmun, adopting of the agenda and adoption of the previous minutes.
- 12.3 In accordance with SGEU Policy Articles 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6, an accurate record of all meetings and a register of attendees will be kept. After the adoption of the minutes, they will be signed by the Chair of the Bargaining Council and kept in a minute book or

binder. They will be the official records of all business done in the Bargaining Unit.

12.4 At the close of each meeting **a record of attendance will be kept**, the Chair will sign **their** name directly below the last person's name who signed in and add the time and date.

12.5 A quorum will be fifty percent (50%) of those members in attendance at the start of the meeting.

12.6 The Chairperson of the meeting will vote only in the event of a tie.

12.7 There will be no proxy voting at meetings.

### **13.0 AMENDMENTS TO BARGAINING GUIDELINES**

13.1 Amendments to the Bargaining Guidelines will be made in accordance with the procedures outlined by the Bargaining Unit.

13.2 Any member may make a proposal to amend these policies and procedures and shall be so advised with the Call for Proposals.

13.3 The Negotiating Committee shall make recommendations on the proposed amendments. The recommendations shall consist of acceptance, rejection or redundancy.

13.4 Such proposals must be submitted to the Negotiating Committee.

13.5 The Negotiating Committee may also propose amendments.

13.6 Amendments must be ratified by a fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) vote of the delegates at a Bargaining Council meeting called to ratify the proposal package.

13.7 All amendments must conform to the SGEU Constitution, the SGEU Policy Manual and Sector Bylaws.

13.8 Bargaining Guidelines become effective after they are approved by the Bargaining Council and the Grown Sector Executive pending approval of the Membership, Constitution and Legislation (MC&L) Committee.

13.9 The amended Bargaining Guidelines will be sent to the MC&L Committee within sixty (60) days of approval by the Bargaining Council as per Constitution Article 7.3.1.

## APPENDIX A - STANDING COMMITTEES

### 1. Long Term Disability

Long Term Disability as per 8.6.1 of Crown Sector LTD Standing Committee bylaws "Each Bargaining Unit that is a member of the LTD Plan shall elect one representative to the Crown Sector LTD Standing Committee."

The committee representative will consist of:

- a) One (1) member at large.
- b) Alternate will be elected from and by the Bargaining Council
- c) LTD members shall serve a Two (2) year term **of** office with elections in odd years. Whenever a vacancy occurs, the alternate shall serve for the remainder of the term.
- d) The Chair of the Bargaining Council will put out the call for nominations for LTD Standing Committee reps with 14 calendar days' notice, stating nomination procedures and deadlines.
- e) There is a Call for Nominations open to all members. If needed, an election would be held by Bargaining Unit members via electronic or paper vote. The member elected will represent the LTD at the Bargaining Council, for a two-year term.

### 2. The Extended Health's Benefits Plan

The Benefits Plan is an extended health plan and administrated by a joint Union/Management Committee.

The committee will consist of **two (2) representatives. Effective 2025 one (1) representative will be elected in even years and one (1) representative will be elected in odd years. Representatives will serve a two (2) year term.**

- a) The Chair of the Bargaining Council will put out the call for nominations **at the same time as the nominations for stewards.**

- b) The Call for Nominations is open to all members. If needed, an election would be held by Bargaining Unit members via electronic or paper vote. The members elected will represent the Benefits Plan. **The Bargaining Council may request one or both to attend a bargaining Council meeting (or portion thereof) for the purposes of reporting and getting direction on the Benefits Plan.**
- c) If no nominations are received the bargaining council will arrange a conference call to appoint the **representative** plan administrator and /or member at large from the bargaining council.

### 3. Occupational Health and Safety

The Occupational Health Committee shall be comprised of: one **(1)** worker in every workplace. **[eight (8) regions, one (1) central office]**

- a) Every workplace consists of **one (1)** in-scope employee and **one (1)** out-of- scope supervisor.
- b) Worker Representatives shall be elected by the workers of the worksite that they represent.
- c) Elections of Worker Representatives shall occur in June of odd years.
- d) The election of Worker Representatives shall include a nomination process, call for nominations by the Chief Stewart with **fourteen (14)** calendar days' notice stating nomination procedures and deadlines.
- e) The election of Worker Representatives shall be conducted by secret ballot vote.

### 4. **Classification** Plan will be handled by the Negotiating Committee

### 5. Other Committees

- a) Other short-term Committees as required, appointed or elected as per guidelines as seen fit by Bargaining Council.

## APPENDIX B - STEWARD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Steward is one of the most important positions within the labour movement and probably the most recognizable. You are the first person that members in your assigned area contact for information about their workplace, Union, CBA and for help resolving workplace issues. As a Steward, you are a vital link between the members, your local (or Bargaining Unit), SGEU and management.

To many members, the Steward is "the Union," and their relationship with the Steward will have significant influence on their view of SGEU. Through their actions, attitude and approach, Stewards are the SGEU that our members will remember. Therefore, it is critical that the image and reputation put forward by the Steward is one worthy of their trust, confidence and respect.

Under the guidance of your Chief Steward, you will work collectively with other Stewards, elected leaders, SGEU LROs, Bargaining Unit and sector officials. Our members will most often turn to you, the Steward, when seeking advice. In order for their opinions to be valued, the Steward must be familiar with several documents including: the SGEU Constitution, Sector Bylaws, their CBA, workplace policies and practices, and any relevant legislation. Above all, the Steward must be a fair and objective advocate for all members in their workplace.

### Qualities of an Effective Steward

- **Able to Resolve Conflict:** You will be recognized as a good problem solver.
- **Credible and Reliable:** You will be seen as an honest and credible person with a high degree of integrity who respects the privacy and confidentiality of each member.
- **Assertive:** You will be assertive (not aggressive) and decisive, with the ability to deliver difficult and unpopular news.
- **Respected:** You will be recognized and respected for possessing a strong work ethic. The Steward is positive, motivated, enthusiastic and an energetic supporter (and promoter) of the Union.
- **Diplomatic:** You will demonstrate commitment to the principles of justice, equality, security, fairness and democracy.
- **Compassionate:** A Steward needs to be compassionate and able to develop a rapport with the members. You will make members feel comfortable and provide them with support and encouragement.

- **Able to Communicate Clearly:** A Steward needs well developed communication skills, including the ability and willingness to give your undivided attention. You will be thorough, well organized and empower members to help themselves by providing them with information and support.

## **Key Responsibilities and Workplace Expectations**

As an SGEU Steward, your key responsibilities include:

- Building solidarity and promoting harmonious relationships among the members and discouraging factional bickering in the workplace.
- Serving as the protector of the rights of our members.
- Enforcing the CBA and/or any applicable legislation by identifying violations, investigating complaints and meeting with management to solve problems or file grievances.
- Providing information on programs available to members through the Union and employer, such as Workers' Compensation, Long-Term Disability, and Employee & Family Assistance Plans.
- Defending the Union from harmful rumors by promoting and maintaining a positive, professional and proactive relationship, both within the Union and between the Union and management.
- Investigating and responding to members' concerns in a timely fashion.
- Gathering necessary research materials to support your Bargaining Unit's Negotiating Committee.
- Learning from your fellow members by asking for their advice. Their knowledge, strengths and experiences may help you to help others.

## **Union Expectations**

Your fellow members expect you, as a Steward, to:

- Support and cooperate with your Chief Steward, local executive, and SGEU leaders and their appointees, and never work in conflict with them.
- Get to know SGEU, including understanding our history, structure, mission and role within the labour community.

- Encourage members to attend meetings and (when asked) offer a brief report on the issues discussed at the meeting in such a way that those who did not attend will recognize their importance.
- Maintain open lines of communication with the Chief Steward, other Stewards, officers, members and the SGEU Office.
- Report to the local executive the successes and challenges you have faced.
- Ensure that all members are abiding by the rules set forth in the SGEU Constitution and your Local Bylaws.
- Attend and actively participate in Union meetings.
- Attend training sessions offered by the Union.
- Promote union-building activities such as: welcoming new members, recruiting volunteers to become actively involved in Union affairs and exploring opportunities for increased membership participation.
- Promote and support the "union label" by buying products that have been produced by unionized workers.

Standing in solidarity with SGEU, you will help us succeed in our efforts to enrich the lives of the working men and women. Stewards are the backbone of the labour movement and the front rank of every battle!

## **APPENDIX C - CHIEF STEWARD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

You are a workplace leader who represents SGEU, coordinates Stewards and enforces the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). You work collectively with Stewards, elected leaders, and SGEU staff in your workplace, Bargaining Unit and sector. You also deal with management on behalf of the Union. As Chief Steward, you fulfill the duties of a Steward, but also work with other Stewards in your zone to do the following:

### **Communication**

- Encourage Stewards to approach you with questions about processes, contract interpretation and reports of workplace conflicts and issues.
- Advise Stewards and other members about Union activities and advise Bargaining Unit and sector leaders about workplace developments.
- Ensure new member orientations are occurring as needed.
- Ensure you have a strong relationship with the assigned SGEU LRO.
- Inform Stewards and members about changes in or interpretation of the CBA, as well as relevant arbitration decisions.
- Be accessible to Stewards by telephone or in person.  
Conflict Resolution.
- Assist in resolving conflicts between members and Stewards or between members and the employer.
- Be knowledgeable about both workplace and Union harassment policies and procedures.
- Encourage Stewards to talk to you when they encounter harassment in the Union or in the workplace, and work with Stewards and/or the SGEU LRO to resolve the problem.
- Hold regular meetings of all Stewards. Topics should include current workplace issues, barriers facing equity-group Stewards, discrimination/harassment of Stewards in the Union and the workplace, and strategies to address issues.
- Work to dispel, not encourage, rumors.



## **Grievance Coordination**

- Assign complaints and grievances to Stewards in your zone, taking into account:
  - Stewards' specialized knowledge.
  - The chance for new Stewards to gain experience.
  - The need to prevent Steward burnout.
- Respect members' right to work with the Steward of their choice. Assist Stewards, as needed, in writing and investigating grievances properly, and in judging whether a complaint is a grievance.
- In communications with the SGEU LRO, keep track of filed grievances and ensure the necessary tasks are completed.
- Inform Stewards that all grievances are to be fully investigated in order to identify any violations of the CBA and/or any other statutes or laws, before being filed. Educate Stewards on the internal appeal processes.
- Ensure contract enforcement by:
  - Not agreeing to any deal that violates the provisions in the CBA or any other rights defined in a statute.
  - Challenging violations of the CBA and other rights defined in a statute.

## **Leadership**

- Promote maximum involvement by members in Union activities, especially within the collective bargaining process.
- Delegate duties to Stewards (and to panel reps where relevant).
- Call and chair regular Steward meetings to share information, identify best practices, and review grievances and other workplace issues.
- Chair other meetings when necessary, such as membership or Union Management Committee meetings.

## **Recruitment**

- Actively recruit new Stewards with the goal of achieving a representative Steward body in SGEU.

## **Mentoring and Training**

- Ensure you are familiar with your CBA, related legislation, workplace policies and procedures, SGEU policies, the Steward Manual and Union resource people.
- Complete training as set out in SGEU's policy.
- Provide orientation for new Stewards and support them to meet the expectations set out in the Steward job description.

## **Mentoring Arrangements for New Stewards**

- Encourage Stewards to take appropriate training, such as LD 10, LD 11, LD 20, ULD 30 and conflict resolution training.
- Update Stewards about education opportunities.
- Encourage Stewards to set appropriate limits to prevent stress and burnout.

## **Administrative Duties**

- Ensure elections are held for positions of Stewards and representatives for your workplace OH&S Committee.
- Ensure that Stewards are registered with SGEU membership records after each election.
- Ensure distribution and posting of Union information within your zone.

