

Frequently Asked Questions

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New School Employee Questions

Information Local 284 needs on New Employees

Name

Address, phone number, email

Date of Hire

Hourly rate of pay

hours worked per week

months worked per year

deductions District takes per yr

days worked per year

Who has to join the Union?

A general rule is anyone who works 14 hours a week and 67 days a year in a unit represented by Local 284. In some Districts, we use the "35% of normal work week" provision. The Contract Organizer will let you know when to use this provision.

What is a non-member?

While a public employee cannot be forced to be a member of Local 284, all employees that are in the appropriate unit (as determined by the State of Minnesota Bureau of Mediation Services) do reap the rewards of the union contract, such as wages, benefits and protection of a union contract. Therefore, anyone who chooses not to become a member of Local 284 is not eligible for SEIU member benefits. Employers know who non-member employees are and who union members are.

When should a probationary employee join?

Probationary employees should join the union immediately when they are hired. Even though probationary

employees can be terminated without "just cause" by the employer, the employee receives all other benefits of the contract. Union members who are terminated during probationary period can get a refund of all dues paid.

Can I belong to two unions at one time?

Yes, it is possible to be a member of Local 284 and another union if you choose.

I work in 2 school districts represented by Local 284. Do I pay dues in both districts?

Yes. Your dues will be determined according to each district/unit's elected process (formula or percentage) based on your wage and the number of hours/months per year you work in each district.

I have 2 jobs at different rates of pay in my unit. How are dues figured?

Dues will be calculated by averaging the 2 different rates of pay and using the total number of hours worked.

Does everyone pay initiation fee? (Initiation fees are currently waived)

There are two exceptions – newly organized units and previous union members with withdrawal cards. Newly organized units have their fees waived until the first contract is settled. Anyone who joins after the first contract has to pay the fee. Former members with SEIU withdrawal cards are reinstated for \$1.00. We will also accept withdrawals from other unions if the new employee gets a letter from their previous union stating their

previous union will accept our withdrawal in lieu of their initiation fee. It is up to the new employee to get the letter. It is not up to the Local 284 staff.

At this time however: both the initiation fee and the \$1.00 reinstatement fee is waived.

Dues Information/Questions

What dues amount should be deducted?

For the most part, refer these calls to the Dues Coordinator. If needed, the information is listed in the member database.

Dues Calculations

The actual method for calculating dues is found on our website:

Formula Dues-Members

$$\begin{aligned}
 & 2.4 \times \text{hrly wage} \\
 & \quad \times \\
 & \quad \text{Weekly hours} \\
 & \quad \div \\
 & 40 + \$15.99 = \text{Monthly Rate} \\
 & \quad \times \\
 & \quad \text{Months worked/year} \\
 & \quad \div \\
 & \text{Deductions/year} = \textit{Dues owed}
 \end{aligned}$$

Percentage Dues-Members

$$\begin{aligned}
 & 2.1\% \times \text{gross wage} \\
 & \quad (\text{to 40 hours/wk})
 \end{aligned}$$

There is a minimum dues amount applicable to both Formula and Percentage dues as of 1/1/2018:

Working 14+ hrs/wk=\$25/mo MBR
Working <14 hrs/wk=\$15/mo MBR

If a Member has also signed up for a COPE (political contribution), that

amount is added to their dues owed for a grand total deducted.

Maximum dues amount is \$75 per month**.

****PLEASE NOTE:** *There are some Employers where members work more months with fewer payroll deductions (example: 12 months with 10 payroll deductions). In their case, they will pay more than the \$75 per month but it will calculate to no more than the \$75 cap for the number of months actually worked.*

Can I pay dues by personal check rather than automatic deductions?

No. Our system is not set up that way. You have to be on automatic deduction.

Union Member changing to Non-Member

If someone requests to become a non-member, refer to the Drop Request Process to determine if they are within their applicable drop window.

Beck Objector

If someone in a private sector unit requests to be a Beck Objector, refer to the Beck Objector Procedure in the Policy Manual 2-4.

Personal Leave, LTD or Workers Comp – Pay dues?

Any employee receiving an equivalent of full pay from the district either as a result of cumulative sick leave, LTD, or a combination thereof, is obligated to continue payment of union dues through payroll deductions. If a member is working 20 hours or less, they pay the lowest rate of dues. When a member no longer receives a check from the school district but wishes to retain their membership in the union,

their dues are reduced to the 20 hours per week or less rate. Their dues must be received in the union office by the last day of the month when due, in order to be in good standing. Or, a member may also take a withdrawal card but they will lose the member memorial fund and the death gratuity if they have one built up.

Maintenance of Dues fund

The maintenance of dues fund was established for the sole purpose of assisting union members in staying current with their union dues. If a member is out of work as a result of an injury, illness or maternity leave and is **not receiving wages or salary benefits as a result of their employment**, they are eligible to apply for a monthly union gratuity payment to be applied to their monthly dues obligation for a period up to 12 months. Members requesting this fund, need to fill out a form and return it to the union office for approval by the Local President.

Retired Member Dues:

Union members are allowed to keep their membership in Local 284 after they are retired, by paying \$4 per month union dues**. This can be paid monthly or annually. If they qualify for and are collecting benefits through PERA, these dues are auto deducted from their PERA pension semi-annually; \$24 in March and \$24 in September. They will need to fill out a card giving permission to the PERA office to deduct these dues. By paying retiree dues, they are eligible for the member memorial fund*, the death gratuity if they are eligible for one, and all other Local 284 and SEIU benefits

such as the Union Plus programs, and the \$3,000 accidental death-dismemberment insurance.

Any former member who joins as a retired member 30 days or more after retirement, will be eligible for all member benefits except for the member memorial fund.*

**to be eligible for this, there can be no break in dues from date of retirement to when retiree dues are paid.*

***International minimum dues are required to be on the Executive Board, there can be no break in dues from date of retirement to when elected, as of 1/1/19 \$39 per month.*

Members leaving employment – withdrawal Card.

If requested, Members leaving employment may receive a Withdrawal Card. They need to be current with dues & return their Membership card if applicable. No benefits are provided to a “withdrawn” Member, but if they start working again they can return their Withdrawal Card to the Union and join for a \$1 reinstatement fee.

Steward Role and Compensation:

Steward compensation shall be calculated based on work performed as described in the Steward Agreement Form and approved by the Executive Board. Compensation will be paid annually, after the close of the fiscal year.

Complaints about Dues

The current dues formulas were voted on by the membership at a general membership meeting. There is a Finance Committee (budget & dues) that meets quarterly throughout the

year addressing dues issues. Members are welcome to be part of this committee if they wish.

Member Requests/Inquiries

Requests for lists of members

The only time we send out lists of members is to stewards and then only if we have the approval of the Contract organizer and Executive Director. The stewards sometimes request a list so they can check and see who is a member when they have a meeting. Or they check to make sure everyone is in the unit. Always stamp "confidential" on the list. Never mail out addresses, and NEVER mail lists of members of one unit to someone in a different unit. ***Steward lists are never mailed out under any circumstances.***

Credit Union – Want to join one.

Local 284 does not have a credit union like some other unions. If the member says they want to join one because they need a loan or a mortgage, explain that the International Union has a loan program and a mortgage program and you will give them the phone number to call. Also, some school districts have credit unions for their members.

Caller requests a copy of their contract.

The employer is supposed to supply contracts to the employees. Tell the caller to contact the employer. They may also go online www.seiu284.org, to view their current contract and can print it from there or if they don't have access to a computer/printer, verify

that the caller is in the unit and go ahead and mail them one.

Members requesting copies of Constitution and Bylaws, LM2s, 990's, Audits

The Constitution and Bylaws are located on our website. If they are requesting copies of LM2s, 990's or Audits, they are free to come into the union office and look at them. They cannot copy them or take them out of the office. This information is available for **MEMBERS ONLY** – therefore, it shouldn't be posted on the website or placed anywhere non-members may have access to it. You should let the Contract Organizer for that member know that they have requested information.

Do stewards have to attend Negotiations?

One of the duties of being a steward is to attend all negotiation meetings scheduled by the contract organizer. If they cannot make it they should let their contract organizer know.

Complaints on AIL Insurance Agents

If members complain about an agent that contacted them from American Income Life, get their name, address, nature of complaint and name of agent, if possible. Call the number we have for AIL and file the complaint. If the member needs to cancel an appointment with an agent from AIL, give them the current number we have; they should call them directly to cancel.

Request for a new Contract Organizer/Complaints about a Contract Organizer

Requests for a new Contract Organizer or complaints about a Contract Organizer should be directed to the Executive Director or their desinee.

Refunds, Meeting Attendance Fee & Contributions

Refunds

Refunds are given whenever someone has paid the wrong amount to the union. Usually the employer refunds it to the person directly, but some employers prefer the union to give the refund. If someone wants a refund always call the payroll department and verify that the information given to you is correct and let the payroll person know what the correct amount of dues are.

Occasionally a new employee will pay the initiation fee by personal check and then change their mind because they didn't understand that they could accumulate the initiation fee. If they call within 30 days go ahead and refund the initiation fee to them.

All refunds need to have a comment entered into the database.

Meeting Attendance Fee

When doing the work of the union that results in missing time from work, it is our policy that the employer should pay our members for the time missed from work to attend authorized SEIU Local 284 union business (negotiations, mediation, arbitration, etc.). However, if the employer refuses to pay our members, those members

shall receive an attendance fee payment from Union if they provide appropriate documentation (meeting attendance form, W4 and I9) showing date and amount of time missed from work and it is verified by the appropriate Union staff member. The rate will be at \$16.00 per hour or the member's actual regular hourly rate that is under the Local 284 contract whichever is higher. Mileage is also paid at the current Federal rate.

Committee meeting attendance fee

Members will be paid for serving on Local 284 Committees or Officer meetings at the rate of \$16.00 per hour or the member's actual regular hourly rate that is under a Local 284 contract provided they have received written approval from the Executive Director and if the meeting is at least two (2) hours. Members of the Executive Board shall not receive the meeting stipend for the following meetings; Executive Board, General Member and Leadership Assembly. Mileage is also paid at the current Federal rate.

Lost checks/never received a check

All requests or questions regarding reimbursements, mileage, lost time checks, etc., need to be directed to the Director of Operations.

Requests for special contributions from stewards

Occasionally the Union will make contributions to gatherings such as "Appreciation Recognition Banquet", "All Staff Holiday Party", "Clerical

Appreciation Banquet", "Staff Appreciation Day". Executive Director must approve these requests.

Elections/Ratifications

When must steward elections be held?

At one time, the local bylaws required annual steward elections. Now the bylaws allow individual units to decide how often to elect their steward: "The stewards of each individual unit shall be elected by the members in their unit."

Are absentee ballots ok for ratification?

The local bylaws state "The results of any collective bargaining negotiations shall be subject to ratification by the membership of the local unit." Ratification votes must be by secret ballot if requested by any member of the unit. *Members must be present to vote unless those members that are present first vote to count absentee ballots*, in which case only single absentee ballots enclosed in sealed envelopes with the member's signature on the envelope will be counted. There shall be no voting by proxy."

Union Elections – What offices are coming up for election & when?

Elections for Executive Board members are held each year in February. Executive Board positions are up for re-election every three years on a rotating basis. If someone wants to know who is up for re-election in a particular year, forward that request to the Director of Operations. This

information is available only to members.

COPE

What is COPE?

Committee on Political Education (COPE) is SEIU's voluntary political action fund. COPE funds are used to build political power for working families. COPE funds are used to fight major policy initiatives and electoral fights at all levels of government. In addition, COPE is used for holding politicians accountable, voter registration drives, and get-out-the-vote efforts.

COPE funds go into the Local 284 political account for SEIU COPE for use for local, state, and federal initiatives and candidates that are committed to increasing union density and improving the lives of working men and women.

Cope Committee

This is a political action committee maintained by the local to assist the union in electing local political candidates to the office who will recognize the importance of the public employee's point of view. Any unit may request assistance through the COPE chairperson. The amount of consideration is determined by the committee in accordance with rules previously established. Further information may be obtained by contacting the chairpersons.

Scholarships

Local 284 Scholarships:

Six Local 284 scholarships are available in the amount of \$500. Forms are available in November each year with the drawing held at the April E-Board or general membership Union meeting. The deadline for entering shall be March 31st.

Winners will be notified by mail. When the required information is returned to the union office, a check is sent to the address given on the Scholarship form.

If a Scholarship is unused by the time of the next Scholarship drawing, the unused Scholarship(s) will be drawn as additional Scholarships.

Scholarship forms are located on our website: www.seiu284.org

Memorials

For a family member:

A \$75.00 memorial check is sent to a member whose spouse, child or parent dies. This does not include in-laws. This is a benefit for members only. Need a copy of Obituary or Funeral Program. *Memorials must be within the last five years, per Executive Board 2/13/2019.

For a member:

There is a member memorial fund for members who pass away regardless of the circumstances. A memorial of up to \$2,500.00 is sent. Member's dues at the time must be in good standing (through the district, self-pay or Maintenance of Dues). A copy of the

obituary is needed to process. This is a member's only benefit.

The date of membership of the deceased member shall determine the amount paid based on either A or B below.

A. A member in good standing with a membership date prior to July 1, 2017, the member memorial benefit shall be \$2,500.

B. A member in good standing with a membership date of July 1, 2017 or after, the memorial benefit shall be calculated based on a vesting model. (e.g. Membership in good standing day 1 up to 1 year the memorial benefit is 10% of the total benefit or \$250; Membership in good standing 1 year up to 2 years membership the memorial benefit is 20% of the total benefit or \$500; Membership in good standing 2 years up to 3 years membership the memorial benefit is 30% of the total benefit or \$750 and so on until 9 years of membership in good standing at which time the full memorial benefit of \$2500 is paid.

*Memorials must be within the last five years, per Executive Board 2/13/2019.

American Income Death Benefit:

This is an accidental death or dismemberment policy that is provided free of charge through AIL. To collect, the death must be accidental – they will need a copy of the death certificate to verify. Currently, the amount for this policy is \$3,000.00. This is a member's only benefit.