



Pocket Guide for

STEWARDS

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THE PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTE OF
THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA
L'INSTITUT PROFESSIONNEL DE LA
FONCTION PUBLIQUE DU CANADA

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Pocket Guide for STEWARDS

OTHER USEFUL DOCUMENTS

Guide for Members

Membership Benefits pamphlet

Professional Institute By-Laws and Regulations

Professional Institute Policy Manual

Staff List

Steward Manual

Manual for Elected Officials

Pocket Guide for Elected Officials

Pocket Guide on Mentoring

Pocket Guide on Occupational Safety and Health

Pocket Guide on Consultation

Pocket Guide on Harassment

Pocket Guide on Employment Equity



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INTRODUCTION

Many organizations are hesitant to accept unions in their workplace, perhaps fearing that the cost will be too high. However, history has demonstrated that while it does cost employers some money when their employees are unionized, the benefits far outweigh these costs. Working conditions were bleak in the 1800's. Thankfully, they have changed dramatically over the past 150 years due, in great part, to the unions.

Since their inception in Canada, unions have played an important role in the socio-economic development of the country. Many issues have been resolved through consultation and collective bargaining between unions and employers over the years. Others, such as the fact that women were being paid less than men while performing work of equal value, had to be resolved through legal challenges.



Many important subjects have been raised by unions through the years. The Institute was instrumental in bringing the need for whistleblowing legislation to the attention of the public and this has led to departments being far more accountable for their funds and their actions.

This *Pocket Guide for Stewards* was developed by the Member Services Committee. It complements your Steward Manual. Please keep it with you at all times, as it may provide you with help when dealing with colleagues or employers.

If you have any comments or suggestions for the *Pocket Guide for Stewards*, please send them to the Steward Coordinator at the PIPSC National Office.

REASONS FOR HAVING A UNION

While the media seem to only talk about unions when there is strife in the workplace, no one seems to remember all the positive things that unions have accomplished through the years. One only has to look at history to realize that workers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were working under appalling conditions. Twelve-hour days, seven days a week were not unheard of.

THE JOY OF LIFE WITHOUT UNIONS

Did you know that...

- In most of Canada in the 19th century, unions were considered criminal conspiracies in restraint of trade. In 1816, the province of Nova Scotia passed a law that provided a three-month jail term for merely entering into a union contract.
- Well into the 20th century, it was legal for employers to require prospective employees to sign “yellow dog” contracts which barred employees from union membership and forced them to resign if they had already joined a union.
- Most Canadian private sector workers did not enjoy the legal right to join unions, bargain collectively and strike until 1944 - nine years after their American counterparts and about four decades after their Swedish and Danish counterparts. It would be more than another quarter



century before most Canadian public sector workers enjoyed collective bargaining rights. Prior to 1967, federal public service employees were not allowed to unionize.

- In late 19th century factories, strict production quotas were often enforced through fines and beatings.
- During the Great Depression, workers often had to bribe their way into even low-paying menial jobs in auto plants.

WHAT UNIONS HAVE GIVEN US

Did you know that...

- We owe the **two-day weekend** mainly to unions. Before collective bargaining became widespread, the 5 1/2 day week was the norm in Canada.
- Before there were public libraries and cultural centres, union halls served as libraries, forums for public lectures and seminars, and venues for a broad range of educational and cultural activities. The union tradition of **adult education** has continued to this day.
- It's largely thanks to unions and their participation in the political arena that Canadians have publicly-funded **medical care, employment insurance, public pensions**, and other worthwhile social programs.
- Canada's unions played a pioneering role in the development of an **occupational health and safety program**.

- Over the past two decades, union-supported business ventures, particularly in the province of Québec, have been responsible for creating and saving thousands of jobs.
- If you are a unionized worker and file a grievance against what you perceive as arbitrary dismissal, you have a better chance of getting your job back than if you were non-unionized, as most non-unionized workers enjoy virtually no protection against arbitrary dismissal.
- The Canadian labour movement has worked hard to bring in affirmative action, pay equity, anti-discrimination legislation and other human rights measures that benefit all Canadians.

THE INSTITUTE STEWARD

WHAT IS A STEWARD?

By virtue of legislation and individual collective agreements, stewards are the official representatives of the Institute in the workplace and as such represents

UNION TRIVIA

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the longest work week ever was 142 hours, worked by an English doctor in 1980. This left him with 3 hours 42 minutes and 51 seconds per day to eat, sleep, watch television and hang out...

ALL Institute members, including non-members covered by the collective agreement (known as Rand members), within a specific area of jurisdiction. They deal as equals with the employer and provide a channel of communication between the members, management and the Institute.

Stewards assist in the interpretation and promotion of Institute policies and programs, act as advisors to members and should be the first contact with the members on behalf of the Institute.

WHAT IS A RAND MEMBER?

Employees belonging to a bargaining unit who do not want to apply for membership are RAND members. They are nonetheless required by legislation (a ruling by Justice Ivan C. Rand in 1946) to pay union dues, as they benefit from the collective agreement negotiated by the union on behalf of the members of the bargaining unit.

ARE THERE CATEGORIES OF STEWARDS?

No. There is only one category of stewards.

Stewards - volunteers who wish to become engaged in one or another of the facets of representing members to management and who have taken the basic training course. A member who has signed an application form to become a steward, will become a steward-in-waiting until he/she completes the basic steward training course. Upon completing this course, the steward-in-waiting will be appointed as a steward.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A STEWARD?

- attend training offered by the Institute
- promote the Institute to the members
- act as Institute representative in dealings with the employer
- assist in solving members' work-related problems
- communicate members' concerns and issues to the PIPSC regional office staff and the employer
- support and participate in labour actions as required

The steward's most important responsibility is to ensure that the provisions of the collective agreements are followed by the employer. The steward deals with member complaints, advises, assists and may represent members on the processing of a grievance, provides information to the membership on a variety of activities and issues, and represents members in meetings with management.

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF STEWARD DUTIES?

Day-to-day activities

- assist the members in solving workplace problems, including handling complaints which may lead to grievances
- being aware of Institute policies, programs and positions



- circulate information intended for Institute members
- keep bulletin boards for Institute use in the workplace updated with current information
- know where to obtain answers to questions regarding the workplace and the collective agreement as well as questions on terms and conditions of employment not contained in collective agreements
- meet new employees and tell them about the Institute
- encourage new employees and Rands to become members
- be aware of the concerns of the members in the workplace, and communicate those concerns to the relevant elected officials, stewards and/or staff
- ensure all members have received a current copy of their collective agreement from the employer and understand it
- represent the Institute views at union/management consultation meetings
- keep members informed about issues on which the Institute has voiced an opinion

DUTIES DURING THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROCESS

- organize phone networks or e-mail groups for the dissemination of information
- encourage members to attend preparation meetings and fill out questionnaires
- keep members informed of developments at the bargaining table through meetings or e-mails
- understand the bargaining process and applicable dispute resolution mechanism (strike, conciliation or arbitration) so as to be able to answer member questions
- encourage members to take part in job action if required
- organize meetings to explain the terms of a new tentative agreement and encourage members to vote
- during the life of the collective agreement, keep track of grievances as these may provide insight in future bargaining rounds

PARTICIPATION IN WORKPLACE COMMITTEES

- Departmental/Agency Consultations
- Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Harassment
- Employment Equity



ARE STEWARDS REQUIRED TO TAKE TRAINING?

Members who have applied to become stewards must attend the basic steward training session offered through their PIPSC regional office prior to being officially appointed. Stewards are then encouraged to attend advanced training courses to increase their knowledge and improve their skills in a number of work-related areas.

If a steward is a member of an Occupational Safety and Health Committee or a Union Management Consultation Committee, he/she must commit to taking advanced training on this topic as soon as possible. Stewards who fail to do so could be forced to resign from the committee as they would no longer have the support of their union.

The Institute strongly recommends that members sitting on OSH committees become stewards. However, a resolution adopted by the 2002 PIPSC Annual General Meeting stated that this is not mandatory. This being said, members sitting on OSH Committees must attend the training offered by the Institute.

DO STEWARDS HAVE IMMUNITY FROM DISCIPLINE?

Union officials are generally protected from discipline for making statements against their employer provided their comments are made in the course of their union duties. The reason for this protection is clear: the integrity of the

adversarial nature of the collective bargaining process must be preserved. There must be a recognition that once employees assume union responsibilities, their status changes drastically. A steward must be able to present the union's positions assertively. To deny this protection would be to stifle the legitimate union representation of employees in the workplace.

HOW ARE STEWARD APPLICATIONS APPROVED?

Group Executives have the responsibility of approving or rejecting steward applications. If the Group Executive approves an application, the Institute President has the ultimate responsibility of appointing (or not) the steward. Once the appointment is confirmed, a letter is sent to the employer informing them of the name of the steward as well as his/her area of jurisdiction.

HOW LONG IS THE TERM OF A STEWARD?

A steward is appointed for a term of up to three years which is renewable.

HOW IS STEWARDSHIP RENEWED?

All stewards will receive a renewal form in late August of the year in which their stewardship expires. On this form, the stewards will be required to indicate the activities in which they have taken part over their last term. These forms will be returned to the PIPSC Steward Coordinator.



The presidents of each constituent body (Sub-Group, Branch and Region) will be sent a list of all stewards in their jurisdiction whose stewardship is expiring, along with a copy of the signed renewal forms. They will be asked to provide input on the potential renewal of those stewards and to send their approval or objections, in writing, to the Institute Steward Coordinator.

The PIPSC Steward Coordinator will send, to the president of each Group (or chief steward where applicable), a list of all stewards in the group whose stewardship is expiring, along with a copy of the completed renewal forms and any comments received from the other constituent bodies. Group presidents (or chief stewards) will be asked to provide their recommendation on the renewal of those stewards.

If the renewal of the stewardship is approved, the steward will receive a new steward card and certificate early in the new year. If the renewal of stewardship is denied, the steward will be so advised and will be invited to contact the appropriate Group Executive to obtain further details should they wish to do so.

UNION TRIVIA

The biggest strike in Canada was the Québec General Strike, in April and May 1972. Almost 300,000 workers took part. Thirteen hospital union officers and three important union leaders received jail terms and fines.

GRIEVANCES

WHAT IS A GRIEVANCE?

A grievance is a complaint **in writing** about any employment-related matter.

WHAT IS MEANT BY “OBEY FIRST, GRIEVE LATER”?

Jurisprudence has established that employees have a duty to obey a supervisor’s order or decision even if they disagree and wish to grieve. They are to obey first, and grieve later.

Exceptions to this rule have been accepted in special circumstances such as refusal to work for fear of endangering one’s health or safety or being ordered to perform an illegal act. Prior to refusing to perform a task based on these grounds, an employee should always explain clearly his motives and take steps to contact PIPSC staff as early as possible.

IS IT NECESSARY TO FILE A GRIEVANCE IN THE CASE OF A COMPLAINT OR A PROBLEM?

No. It is often advisable to attempt to resolve a problem informally prior to resorting to the grievance process. Many collective agreements provide specifically for informal resolution of conflicts. In many agreements timelines can be frozen while the parties attempt to resolve issues informally even once the grievance process has begun.



TYPES OF GRIEVANCES UNDER THE *PUBLIC SERVICE LABOUR RELATIONS ACT*

The *Public Service Labour Relations Act* (PSLRA) distinguishes between three types of grievances: individual grievances as well as group grievances and policy grievances that the bargaining agent may submit.

A group grievance has to deal with the interpretation or application of a collective agreement. Although submitted by the bargaining agent, a written consent form - identified as Form 19 - needs to be signed by each employee who supports the grievance and must be submitted along with the grievance.

A group grievance must relate to employees in the same department or agency.

A policy grievance is limited to the interpretation of the collective agreement generally. It can be submitted both by the employer or the bargaining agent. The procedure is limited to one level only.

A steward is **not** entitled to sign a policy or group grievance form on behalf of PIPSC. In the latter case, the grievance needs to be signed by an Employment Relations Officer whereas a policy grievance needs to be endorsed by the PIPSC National Office and bear the signature of its General Counsel.

IS PIPSC PERMISSION REQUIRED TO FILE A GRIEVANCE?

PIPSC permission is required if the grievance pertains to a violation in the application or interpretation of the collective agreement (i.e. vacation, pay, overtime, etc.) A steward and/or staff person should always assist the member in preparing the wording for this type of grievance. These grievances require the signature of a PIPSC representative.

PIPSC permission is not required for problems not related to the application or interpretation of the collective agreement such as inaccurate performance appraisals, discipline, office moves or reorganisation of duties. However, it is recommended that advice be sought from a PIPSC representative prior to filing a grievance.

WHAT IS ADJUDICATION (OR ARBITRATION)?

Adjudication is the process whereby a grievance that has been unresolved at the final level is referred to a third party for resolution. In some jurisdictions, this process is called arbitration.

CAN ALL GRIEVANCES BE HEARD BY A THIRD PARTY?

It depends on the jurisdiction. Under the *Canada Labour Code*, all matters may be referred to arbitration. Under the *Public Service*



Labour Relations Act (PSLRA), only three categories of grievances may be referred to adjudication:

- grievances dealing with the application or interpretation of a collective agreement or arbitral award
- grievances concerning discipline resulting in a suspension, financial penalty or termination in certain cases
- since April 2005, the PSLRB may apply the *Canadian Human Rights Act*

Is PIPSC APPROVAL REQUIRED TO PROCEED TO ARBITRATION OR ADJUDICATION?

PIPSC, as the bargaining agent, retains the authority to refer to adjudication/arbitration all matters pertaining to the interpretation or application of the collective agreement.

In disciplinary cases, the member can refer on his own. However, if PIPSC is to provide representation, the referral should be channelled through its representational services.

A staff member should always be involved in the drafting of these grievances.

Representation is a two-way street. Members have the duty to collaborate with the representative if the representative is to be successful.

UNDER THE PSLRA WHAT ARE TYPICAL EXAMPLES OF ADJUDICABLE AND NON-ADJUDICABLE GRIEVANCES?

Adjudicable

- job content grievances
- denial of terminable allowances
- errors in pay
- denial of leave
- cash out of vacation leave credits
- 3-day suspension
- recovery of alleged overpayment
- denial of call-back pay
- demotions, terminations for unsatisfactory performance, and deployments (under certain circumstances)

Non-adjudicable

- performance appraisals
- letter of reprimand
- office size
- verbal reprimand
- relocation of office
- classification grievances



WHAT IS AN NJC GRIEVANCE?

Employees working for certain federal employers are covered by some or all National Joint Council (NJC) Directives. These directives cover a variety of benefits such as Travel, Isolated Posts, Official Languages and Relocation and form part of the collective agreement. The application or interpretation of these directives is both grievable and adjudicable despite the fact that the grievance process is different from the regular grievance procedure. Should you believe that a grievance is an NJC grievance it is advisable to contact the PIPSC regional office staff for guidance.

WHAT IS A CLASSIFICATION GRIEVANCE?

A classification grievance is a written complaint against management's classification of a position. Under the PSLRA this type of grievance is not adjudicable and has its own procedure. Should a member want to file a classification grievance, he should contact PIPSC regional office staff for advice.

A grievance against the content of a job description is not a classification grievance, but a staff relations grievance which is normally adjudicable under the PSLRA. It is important to verify the respective collective agreement and to contact staff to ensure that proper advice is given to the member.

CAN A MEMBER GRIEVE THE FACT THAT HE OR SHE DID NOT WIN A COMPETITION FOR A POSITION?

Employees who are subject to the *Public Service Employment Act* (PSEA) cannot use the grievance process as the legislation provides for a complaint procedure under the Public Service Staffing Tribunal. PIPSC may represent complainants before the Staffing Tribunal. This process primarily applies to employees of the federal Treasury Board.

Employers not subject to staffing legislation (e.g. Canada Revenue Agency) normally have an internal redress mechanism to deal with staffing decisions. They may even have a form of independent third party review of staffing decisions. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances when an employee of such an employer should use the grievance process, especially if there is staffing-related language in a collective agreement. Only when there is staffing-related language in a collective agreement can a staffing grievance be referred to adjudication by a labour board.

A steward should contact PIPSC staff to ascertain what the appropriate staffing redress mechanisms are in the steward's area of jurisdiction.



THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS

IS THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS THE SAME IN EVERY COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT?

No. The grievance process is not always the same depending on the jurisdiction and the bargaining unit. This is why it is critical that the collective agreement of the potential grievor be verified prior to providing advice or submitting a grievance.

HOW DOES THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS WORK?

Despite the fact that the details of grievance procedures may vary by bargaining unit, the general principles are quite similar.

A grievance is submitted in writing to management. Upon receipt of the grievance the employer schedules a grievance hearing. A management representative will hear the grievance which is normally presented by a union representative in the presence of the grievor. After a prescribed period of time the employer is expected to provide a response or decision concerning the complaint.

If the employee is not satisfied with the response, the grievance can be transmitted to the next level. This process is repeated until either the employee is satisfied with the response, drops the grievance or reaches the final level of the procedure. There are usually between two and four steps in grievance procedures. Should the employee still not have received satisfaction after the final level, the grievance may be transmitted to adjudication, providing the grievance is adjudicable and that the union supports the grievance in the case of a misapplication or interpretation of the collective agreement.

WHAT NORMALLY HAPPENS AT A GRIEVANCE HEARING?

The grievance hearing is normally held in person, but sometimes the hearing occurs by conference call. Usually a staff relations officer will accompany the manager hearing the grievance.

The member is usually represented by a steward or member of PIPSC staff. The grievor, through the representative, will present the arguments and facts in support of the case. It is important to present accurate information rather than hearsay or anecdotal evidence.

Discussions during the hearing are privileged thereby providing the parties an opportunity to discuss the issues openly. At lower levels, more often than not, the hearing is informal and the parties jointly attempt to find solutions to the problem.

UNION TRIVIA

On May 1, 1986, a million black children in South Africa stayed home from school in support of a general strike of black workers.



In most cases the employer will not immediately respond but will reserve comments for the written response. The employer's response can be very brief. At a minimum the response should indicate whether the grievance is upheld, partially upheld or denied.

The grievor should never meet alone with the employer and notes of the meeting should be taken by the grievor or the representative at each grievance meeting and these should be kept as part of the grievance file. The employer's reactions, comments or documentary evidence, if provided, should be recorded or kept.

WHAT IS THE TIME FRAME FOR SUBMITTING A GRIEVANCE?

Specific time frames are outlined in each collective agreement. The time frames may or may not include weekends, therefore, always verify the respective collective agreement as this deadline has to be respected. It is this deadline date that sets the time limits for the first hearing date and determines if the grievance is within time limits.

HOW IS A GRIEVANCE SUBMITTED TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

When a grievor is not satisfied with the grievance response and wishes to proceed to the next grievance level, a transmittal form must be signed. A transmittal form must be signed every time a grievance is transmitted to further levels. Specific time deadlines

are prescribed in collective agreements. As these timelines can vary, verify each collective agreement specifically.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE PIPSC REPRESENTATIVE IS NOT AVAILABLE UNTIL AFTER THE GRIEVANCE HEARING DEADLINE?

It is not unusual for the parties to agree to extensions to either hearing dates or response deadlines due to scheduling problems. These extensions have to be mutually agreeable and should be confirmed in writing. Failing such agreement, the deadlines have to be respected.

WHAT IF A RESPONSE IS NOT RECEIVED WITHIN THE PRESCRIBED DEADLINES?

If a response is not sent within the prescribed deadlines complete a transmittal form and submit it to the next level. It is also recommended that you verify with the PIPSC Regional Office in case an extension to the deadline has been agreed to and you have not been notified.



A GRIEVOR HAS BEEN OFFERED MEDIATION AS A MEANS OF ATTEMPTING TO RESOLVE THE GRIEVANCE. WHAT IS MEDIATION? CAN WE DO THIS DURING THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS? WHAT HAPPENS TO THE DEADLINES?

Mediation is a voluntary process whereby the parties in dispute utilize the services of a neutral third party to attempt to resolve the issue. It is not uncommon to be offered the opportunity to refer unresolved issues to mediation. Many collective agreements contain language freezing grievance deadlines where the parties are attempting to resolve problems informally and the PSLRA encourages parties to a grievance to avail themselves of mediation. Should the process not be successful, the grievance process continues. Mediation is a voluntary process therefore neither the employer nor the member is obligated to participate.

WHO HEARS THE GRIEVANCE?

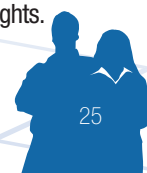
For every step in the grievance procedure, as described in the collective agreement, the employer will have assigned a specific management representative. It is the employer's responsibility to post the names of these representatives in each work site.

IS A STEWARD ENTITLED TO LEAVE WITH PAY DURING THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE?

Most collective agreements provide for leave with pay for the steward to assist an employee in the presentation of a grievance. The steward should also be provided leave with pay to prepare for meetings with management, including grievance hearings. Collective agreements may differ with respect to this issue therefore it is recommended that the steward verify his or her collective agreement.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STEWARD DURING THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS?

- Keep the Institute and the grievor informed of the progress of the grievance and provide the Institute with copies of all documents.
- Keep the grievor informed of the procedure at each step as the grievance is transmitted and always ensure the grievor is in agreement with an extension or postponement.
- Ensure that applicable timelines are respected.
- Do not commit the Institute beyond your limits or responsibility (or comfort level) without speaking to the regional office staff.
- Do not settle a grievance while in doubt or without the member's consent. Advice is always available.
- Do not make informal arrangements which violate the contract or infringe on employee or union rights.



CAN A MEMBER DECIDE NOT TO PROCEED WITH A GRIEVANCE ONCE IT IS SUBMITTED?

Yes. A member can either abandon or drop the grievance if he or she does not wish to proceed with it. Confirmation of this decision is normally in writing and either the representative or the grievor can advise management. It is strongly recommended that the employee advise the representative as soon as such a decision is made.

THE GRIEVANCE FORM

DOES A GRIEVANCE HAVE TO BE PRESENTED ON A GRIEVANCE FORM?

The complaint is normally presented on a grievance form, however, this is not mandatory. The only requirement is that it be submitted in written form and that one form or written complaint be submitted for each grievance.

If you do not have a form make a few copies of the written complaint and ensure that the manager provides you with at least two copies of the document after it has been signed.

Grievors who support a group grievance, as per the PSLRA, need to fill out and sign a consent form identified as Form 19.

WHERE CAN I OBTAIN A GRIEVANCE FORM?

Grievance forms are available at most Human Resource or Personnel offices and at all PIPSC offices. The PIPSC Web site (Steward page) also has electronic versions of the Treasury Board and the CRA forms.

WHAT INFORMATION HAS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN FILING A GRIEVANCE IF WE CANNOT FIND A GRIEVANCE FORM PRIOR TO THE GRIEVANCE SUBMISSION DEADLINE?

What is most critical is to submit the grievance. Do not worry if you do not have a form. There are five key components to a grievance form and as long as the required information is provided you will not have any problems. The key components are:

- Grievor Identification
- Statement of grievance
- Corrective action required
- Union approval (if required) and member signature
- Management signature and date (official receipt)

WHAT NEEDS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STATEMENT OF THE GRIEVANCE?

It is advisable that stewards consult with PIPSC staff when completing the grievance to ensure that no critical information has been overlooked.



The grievance statement must include a description of the grievable incident or decision, the date the grievable incident occurred, and the reason for the grievance, including the articles of the collective agreement or policies which have been violated. Be concise, clear and do not write more than is necessary.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CORRECTIVE ACTION SECTION?

This section needs to reflect exactly what redress by management would make the grievor whole again. Examples include pay adjustments (including retroactive payments), restitution of leave credits, destruction of documents, adjustments to performance appraisals, reinstatement after discharge, reduction or retraction of a suspension or any other action required to correct the injustice stated in the grievance statement. The corrective action should be consistent with the statement of grievance. It is highly recommended to seek advice from PIPSC staff when preparing this portion of the grievance form.

AS A STEWARD, CAN I SIGN A GRIEVANCE FORM?

As a steward, you are an official PIPSC representative and as such you can sign individual grievances. Please note that if there is any doubt as to whether or not the grievance concerns the application or interpretation of the collective agreement, you should contact your PIPSC

regional office for advice from staff. **Do not forget to ensure that the grievor signs the form or statement.**

A steward is **not** entitled to sign a policy or group grievance form on behalf of PIPSC. A policy grievance needs to be signed by an Employment Relations Officer whereas a policy grievance needs to be endorsed by the PIPSC National Office and bear the signature of its General Counsel.

WHO IS THE GRIEVANCE FORM SUBMITTED TO?

The grievance is usually submitted to the first level supervisor of the grievor. It can also be presented to the staff relations officer. The management representative needs to sign and date the form indicating official receipt and return the appropriate copies to the grievor and the union representative. Should this be the steward it is important that all documents be kept for transmittal to the person presenting either the grievance at a higher level or presenting the grievance at adjudication. A copy of the original grievance will be needed to refer the matter to adjudication or arbitration.

A transmittal form is submitted in the same fashion.



THE GRIEVANCE INVESTIGATION

WHAT DOES A REPRESENTATIVE NEED TO DO TO PREPARE FOR A GRIEVANCE HEARING?

The representative needs to gather all relevant information in order to put forward a convincing argument at the hearing.

The following needs to be ascertained:

- Who is involved? (Grievors, witnesses, supervisors)
- What happened? (Description of the incident or situation)
- When (exact dates and times) did the incident or situation occur or when did the grievor realize he/she was aggrieved?
- If applicable, where did the incident occur? (exact location; department, or elsewhere in the workplace)
- Why is this a grievance? (violation of collective agreement, policy or other)
- What corrective action is requested?
- What documentary evidence exists? (e-mails, pay stubs, time sheets, correspondence, policies, etc.)
- Are there any precedents which could support the case? (jurisprudence, past practice, policies). (Contact the Negotiator or Employment Relations Officer for assistance)

- What is the employer's anticipated response and counter argument?
- Would mediation be appropriate?

The arguments should be prepared in advance of the hearing in cooperation with the grievor.

The grievance file will need to be sent or copied to the respective regional office for representation if they take over the grievance

A grievance fact sheet and a grievance file document checklist may be used when filing or investigating a complaint.

UNION TRIVIA

The **earliest recorded strike** took place in Rome in 309 B.C. when an orchestra leader, unhappy with the length of meal breaks, walked off the job.



GRIEVANCE FILE DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

Name of Grievor

Work Address

Work Phone

E-Mail

CONTACTED REGIONAL OFFICE FOR
ADVICE ON GRIEVANCE WORDING

YES NO

FACT SHEET

GRIEVANCE FORM
(Ensure copy is sent to Regional Office)

FOR GROUP GRIEVANCE - FORM 19

EMPLOYER RESPONSE AT FIRST LEVEL

TRANSMITTAL FORM TO 2ND LEVEL

EMPLOYER RESPONSE AT 2ND LEVEL

TRANSMITTAL FORM TO 3RD LEVEL
(if applicable)

YES NO

EMPLOYER RESPONSE AT 3RD LEVEL
(if applicable)

TRANSMITTAL FORM TO FINAL LEVEL
(if applicable)

EMPLOYER RESPONSE AT FINAL LEVEL
(if applicable)

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

NOTICES/LETTERS FROM EMPLOYER

PAY STUBS

OTHER (Specify)

ALL DOCUMENTS SENT
TO REGIONAL OFFICE

COMMENTS:



GRIEVANCE FACT SHEET

NAME OF GRIEVOR

WORK ADDRESS

WORK PHONE

WORK E-MAIL

HOME ADDRESS

HOME PHONE

HOME E-MAIL

EMPLOYER/DEPARTMENT

SHIFT

GRIEVOR'S CLASSIFICATION

STATUS

SUPERVISOR'S NAME
(if relevant)

SUPERVISOR'S PHONE NUMBER
(if relevant)

DATE AGGRIEVED (e.g. request refused, incident occurred, error on pay cheque, etc.)

LAST DAY TO FILE GRIEVANCE

DATE GRIEVANCE WAS PRESENTED

1ST LEVEL

2ND LEVEL



1ST WITNESS (if applicable)

NAME

HOME PHONE

WORK PHONE

2ND WITNESS (if applicable)

NAME

HOME PHONE

WORK PHONE

3RD WITNESS (if applicable)

NAME

HOME PHONE

WORK PHONE

SUMMARY OF FACTS OR PROBLEM
(WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE)

EMPLOYER'S ARGUMENTS, POSITION OR EXPLANATION

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUESTED

ARTICLES IN COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

POLICIES RELATING TO THE GRIEVANCE

COMMENTS:



DUTY OF FAIR REPRESENTATION

The Institute is required by law, through its representatives, to represent all members of the bargaining unit fairly and equitably in all matters, even those members who have not signed a membership application form (Rands). This representation must be carried out in a manner that is not “arbitrary”, “discriminatory” or “in bad faith”.

WHAT IS “ARBITRARY”?

- treatment that is abrupt, inconsiderate, indifferent or insensitive
- failure to investigate
- superficial, off-handed investigation
- failure to notify grievor of recourse mechanisms
- reckless disregard for the interests of the grievor

WHAT IS “DISCRIMINATORY”?

- treating members of the bargaining unit differently without a good reason
- different treatment based on union membership or on grounds prohibited by the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (i.e. race, gender, etc.)
- departure from the usual procedure without a valid reason

WHAT IS “BAD FAITH”?

- hostile or malicious frame of mind
- evidence of bad faith is based on personal hostility, desire for revenge, lack of fairness or impartiality, intentional deception, flagrant dishonesty or ulterior motive
- having a “hidden agenda” towards the grievor

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ENSURE FAIR REPRESENTATION OF A MEMBER?

- Always get the grievor’s complete side of the story
- Never dismiss any complaint or question as petty or frivolous
- Handle every grievance in the same thorough and professional way
- Do not be influenced by bias or hostility to the grievor by others
- Never display any bias or hostility towards the grievor
- Whenever in doubt, contact the Regional Office for advice

TRAINING FOR STEWARDS

WHAT KIND OF TRAINING DOES THE INSTITUTE PROVIDE ITS STEWARDS?

The Institute offers a wide range of training sessions for stewards and members throughout the year.



Basic Steward Training gives members who apply to become stewards an overview of the collective agreement, the legislative cadre, recourse by way of complaints or grievances. This session also explains the steward's role and the services and the structure of the Institute.

Advanced Steward Training is offered to stewards at the Regional Training School in the form of training modules on a wide variety of topics such as consultation, grievance handling, staffing under the PSEA, human rights, harassment, and health and safety.

The Steward Council is comprised of all the stewards in a geographical area. It provides an opportunity for stewards to discuss issues of concern and to obtain training tailored to their needs. It meets once per year.

The Regional Council meets once per year. Delegates are chosen by the Branches and are usually stewards. At the Regional Council, delegates discuss concerns and issues relevant to the region and prepare resolutions for the Annual General Meeting. This may also be an opportunity for training on specific topics.

UNION TRIVIA

*The **smallest strike in Canada** was waged by a North York, Ontario, woman in 1984. She picketed her own house until her husband and children agreed to help with the chores.*

ARE THERE ANY OTHER COURSES OFFERED BY THE INSTITUTE?

Collective Bargaining Training - The Collective Bargaining Course is currently offered based upon collective bargaining schedules or projected need for the course for members of executives and bargaining teams.

Introduction to PIPSC and the Labour Movement - This introductory session is sponsored at a local level by a Branch, Group or Sub-Group as an opportunity to attract and inform members. It focuses on how the Institute serves its members, as well as how the members' input and involvement is critical to the Institute. This training generally takes place at the work site.

Executive Training sessions may be provided for the Executives of constituent bodies to assist them in their duties.

NOTE: The Training Program is monitored for its effectiveness and may be altered to meet the needs of the membership. The training program is administered by the Member Services Committee but offered on a regional basis. Consult your PIPSC Regional Office to find out what is available in your region.



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH?

It's a framework to ensure that the safety and health of workers is protected. It can be achieved through local, regional and national Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) committees.

WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS OF THE EMPLOYEES?

- right to participate - by volunteering on OSH committees
- right to know, from the employer, about potential safety and health hazards in the workplace
- right to refuse dangerous work, when there is reasonable cause to believe the operation of equipment is dangerous or conditions in the workplace are dangerous
- right to voice concerns about OSH matters through the employee representatives

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE STEWARD IN REGARDS TO OSH?

- Check if there is a departmental OSH policy
- Ensure that everyone is aware of roles and responsibilities
- Check if there is a local OSH Committee or S&H Policy Committee
- Advise management of their responsibility to set up a workplace (local) OSH Committee and advise PIPSC staff of this request

- Report any infractions or concerns to the local OSH Committee and monitor the issue via minutes of the meeting
- Ensure PIPSC is aware of the names of all PIPSC representatives on OSH Committees

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF AN OSH COMMITTEE AND ITS MEMBERS?

As members of the committee, employees participate fully in the employer's occupational safety and health program. However, the committee does not have legal power to force the employer to adhere to its recommendations.

The role of an OSH Committee includes:

- workplace inspections, accident investigation and education.
- dealing with specific issues at regularly-scheduled meetings
- making appropriate recommendations to the employer
- monitoring the employer's compliance with the appropriate OSH legislation, such as reporting, posting, establishing committees and respecting regulations

WHEN SHOULD AN OSH COMMITTEE BE SET UP?

Under Part II of the *Canada Labour Code* which applies to the federal government as well as to all federally-governed employers, the employer is normally required to set up a safety and health committee for each workplace where there are 20 or more



employees. If there is no OSH Committee in your workplace, consult your PIPSC Regional Office as some workplaces are exempt from this requirement or may be under provincial jurisdiction.

WHO CAN SIT ON AN OSH COMMITTEE?

Management and employee representatives sit on the Committee. Employee representatives must constitute at least 50% of the membership.

WHO SELECTS WHICH EMPLOYEES SIT ON OSH COMMITTEES?

Employee representatives should be selected by the unions and are usually stewards.

HOW MANY PEOPLE SIT ON AN OSH COMMITTEE?

This depends on

- number of employees at the workplace
- degree of hazard in the workplace
- variety of functions
- the number of unions to be represented
- shift work

WHAT ARE THE PREREQUISITES TO BEING ON AN OSH COMMITTEE?

- Employees must have the time necessary to do the job and be willing to take the training offered by the employer and the Institute

- it is strongly recommended that employee representatives be stewards for their own protection and to ensure that the views voiced at the meetings are those of the Institute

IS AN EMPLOYEE ALLOWED TO DO OSH WORK DURING NORMAL WORKING HOURS?

An employee is entitled to paid time for work related to committee functions. This time is deemed to be time at work for the calculation of wages.

WHO SHOULD RECEIVE OSH TRAINING?

All employees sitting on OSH committees should receive training. Employees who use, store, handle or dispose of a controlled product, their supervisors and employees who could be at risk during the use, storage, handling and disposal of a controlled product should also receive training.

WHO PROVIDES OSH TRAINING?

It is the responsibility of the employer to provide OSH training. All costs pertaining to such training must be borne by the employer.

However, acknowledging the importance of developing our own perspective on this very important matter, PIPSC also offers basic and advanced OSH training to its stewards. Contact your PIPSC Regional Office to find out about the availability of OSH training in your region.



THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE CONSULTATION PROCESS?

Consultation is used to develop and maintain sound and harmonious union/management relations. It provides an informal yet official channel of communications between management and unions in which matters of concern can be freely discussed and in which mutually-acceptable solutions may be reached.

The main objectives of consultation are:

- to provide a forum for the regular exchange of information between the employer and members
- to provide an opportunity for the exchange of views and comments on subjects which are in the preliminary stages of the employer's decision-making process
- to obtain factual information for members on matters related directly or indirectly to their work environment
- to provide members with greater participation in the decision-making process of the employer

Employers covered by the PSLRA have a legal obligation to hold consultations with bargaining agents.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF CONSULTATION?

Within large departments, agencies and separate employers, consultation usually takes place at three

levels: local, regional and national. In some instances, there is also a sectoral level. In smaller organizations there may be only one level of consultation.

Unresolved issues at lower levels should be put forth to the next level.

WHO SELECTS REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE UNION-MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION COMMITTEES (UMCC)?

Management and the Institute select their respective representatives for the UMCC. Institute representatives must be stewards and should have taken the consultation training course offered by the Institute.

WHO PREPARES THE AGENDA?

Agendas are drawn up prior to each meeting. It is the responsibility of the President of the consultation team to get input from members in the workplace prior to the meeting. In many cases, chairmanship is shared between the management and the union. In this case, chairmanship and agenda preparation can be rotated.

WHAT TOPICS CAN BE DISCUSSED?

Almost any topic can be placed on the agenda except matters of a personal rather than a collective nature and matters relating to specific grievances or the collective bargaining process.



Topics which can be discussed at UMCC include:

- elimination of rumours
- education opportunities
- employer policies
- staffing procedures and human resources planning
- pay and benefits administration
- performance appraisal processes
- employee assistance programs
- codes of conduct
- circulars, bulletins, policies and directives
- working conditions in general
- changes in equipment
- workload and overtime distribution
- reorganizations

Remember also that a UMCC does not have the authority to alter the provisions of a collective agreement.

If classification, reorganization and/or work force adjustment are put on the agenda of a consultation meeting, ensure that advice is sought from the appropriate Institute staff member prior to the meeting. Depending on the nature of the issue, it may be necessary to involve a staff member on an ongoing basis. No commitment or agreement is to be made on behalf of the Institute on these issues without consulting staff.

WHAT IS THE STEWARD'S ROLE IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS?

As a steward you may be approached by PIPSC or the employer to participate in consultation committees. Should you not be a member of such a committee, it is your responsibility to provide the representatives on these committees with issues or problems affecting the membership in the workplace so that they may be raised for resolution at the appropriate UMCC.

HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

WHAT IS HARASSMENT?

Harassment is generally recognized as any improper behaviour by an individual, that is directed at, and is offensive to, another person or persons in the workplace, and that the individual knew or ought reasonably to have known would cause offence or harm. It comprises any objectionable act, comment or display that demeans, belittles, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat. It includes harassment within the meaning of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. Most employers have anti-harassment policies and guidelines.



WHAT IS ABUSE OF AUTHORITY?

For our workplaces, abuse of authority is normally understood in the context of harassment. The New Brunswick Government Harassment Policy states: “[Abuse of authority is]... where an individual improperly uses the power and authority inherent in a position to endanger a person's job, undermine the performance of that job, threaten the person's economic livelihood, or in any way interfere with or influence a person's career. It is the exercise of authority in a manner which serves no legitimate work purpose and ought reasonably to be known to be inappropriate.” Examples of abuse of authority include but are not limited to such acts or misuse of power as intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion.

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature, either at or away from the usual workplace, that is objectionable or offensive, either on a one-time basis or in a series of incidents is deemed to be sexual harassment. It can be accompanied by threats or tied to employment consequences. It is important to remember, however, that sexual harassment, along with any other forms of harassment, is a tactic of power, exclusion, humiliation and/or control.

Examples of sexual harassment:

- **Quid pro quo** - demand of a sexual favour in exchange for a job or other employment-related benefit.

Generally happens between supervisors/managers and employees. Can also encompass situations of abuse of authority.

- **Poisoned Work Environment** - direct or indirect harassment through jokes, graffiti, insults of a visual or verbal nature. Generally happens between co-workers.

Accepted social interaction that occurs regularly in the workplace, flirtation or an office romance between two consenting persons is not sexual harassment.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR HARASSMENT TO BE UNINTENTIONAL?

Yes. It may result from someone's ignorance of the impact of his/her behaviour. Constant chauvinistic comments can count as harassment but the person directing these comments may not see it that way. It may very well be that the person seriously meant no harm. It is crucial that it be made clear to the alleged harasser that the behaviour is offensive or threatening and is unacceptable.

However, whether or not the alleged harasser intended to offend has no bearing; it is the impact that is significant. The Canadian Human Rights Commission has eliminated ignorance as a defence and considers as harassment what should reasonably be known to be unwelcome comments or conduct.



WHAT SHOULD A MEMBER DO IF HE/SHE IS BEING HARASSED?

- tell the alleged harasser that his/her behaviour is unacceptable
- attempt to resolve or clarify any possible miscommunication
- document what has happened and continue to document incidents
- If the problem persists, the member should contact a union representative
- Contact the EAP (Employee Assistance Program) representative for help in dealing with the stress of the situation

WHAT IF THE HARASSMENT PERSISTS?

The employee normally has access to an internal complaint process and to the grievance procedure. An employee also has the right to file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission. It is advisable to contact a union representative to decide which process to follow.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN AN INTERNAL COMPLAINT?

- Usually the member files the internal complaint with the deputy head or authorized representative
- The case proceeds to mediation if this is acceptable to both parties

- If mediation is not possible or fails, the deputy head or authorized representative will appoint an investigator to investigate the allegations
- Both parties have the right to challenge the decision of the investigator through the grievance process
- All matters relating to the complaint must be treated as confidential and cannot be discussed with others outside the process

WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS OF COMPLAINANTS?

- to file a complaint
- to obtain a review of the complaint without fear of embarrassment or reprisals
- to be represented and accompanied by a person of his/her choice during the interviews related to the complaint (including a local steward or union representative)
- to ensure that the written complaint or written comments related to the fact that the employee has lodged a complaint be excluded from one's personal files
- to be kept informed throughout the process and to obtain information subject to the *Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act*
- subject to the provisions of the *Privacy Act*, to be informed of the corrective, including disciplinary, measures implemented as a result of a founded complaint
- to receive fair treatment



WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS AGAINST WHOM A FORMAL COMPLAINT HAS BEEN LODGED?

- be informed that a complaint has been filed
- be presented with a written statement of allegations and to be given the opportunity to respond
- be represented and accompanied by a person of his/her choice during the interviews related to the complaint (including local steward or union representative)
- receive information related to the review, subject to the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*
- receive fair treatment

WHAT IF THE HARASSMENT INCLUDES SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ASSAULT?

Physical and sexual assaults are covered by the *Criminal Code* and in such cases the police should be contacted immediately.

WHO IS LIABLE IF NOTHING IS DONE TO STOP HARASSMENT?

Recent court rulings indicate that both employers and unions may be held legally liable if they are aware that harassment is occurring and do nothing to stop it.

WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

To discriminate against someone is to treat that person in a different, negative or unfavourable manner, for no

valid reason. In particular, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the supreme law of the land, states: “Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.”

The Charter contains qualifications to this prohibition. There can be discrimination if it is deemed to be justified in a free and democratic society, or if the discrimination arises because of an act or program that works to end discrimination against a traditionally disadvantaged group. The federal *Employment Equity Act* may be viewed as one such program.

WHAT ARE THE GROUNDS FOR DISCRIMINATION?

The *Canadian Human Rights Act* identifies the following prohibited groups of discrimination:

- race
- national origin
- ethnic origin
- colour
- religion
- age
- sex
- sexual orientation
- family status



- disability - mental or physical
- conviction for an offense for which a pardon has been granted.
- marital status

WHAT RECOURSE MECHANISMS ARE AVAILABLE TO EMPLOYEES BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST?

Most collective agreements contain language prohibiting such actions therefore employees can access the grievance procedure. Often employees prefer to make a complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. It is advisable to contact a PIPSC staff member to discuss these options as there are time limits to file complaints.

Furthermore, since 2005, the Public Service Labour Relations Board (PSLRB) is empowered to rule on grievances alleging violations of human rights.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY = FAIRNESS FOR ALL

WHAT IS EMPLOYMENT EQUITY?

It is equality in the workplace so employment opportunities are not denied for reasons unrelated to ability, and to correct disadvantages in employment (with special measures) experienced by women, aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.

WHO ARE MEMBERS OF VISIBLE MINORITY GROUPS?

Persons who, because of their race or colour, form a visible minority in Canada.

WHO ARE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE?

Persons who are a North American Indian or a member of a First Nation, a Métis, or Inuit.

WHO ARE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES?

Persons who, for the purpose of employment, may be considered disadvantaged, consider themselves or believe that a potential employer would likely consider them disadvantaged by reason of any persistent physical, mental, psychiatric, learning and/or sensory impairment.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY?

- to establish and maintain a workforce in which aboriginal people, members of visible minority groups, persons with disabilities and women are equitably represented and distributed
- to identify and remove barriers in employment systems, policies, procedures, practices, attitudes and established behavioural patterns that have an adverse effect on the employment and career progression of members of designated groups



- to implement special measures to correct the effects of employment disadvantages and promote the full participation of designated groups in the departmental workforce

INSTITUTE STAFF

The staff is responsible for the following functions:

- **National Representational Services**
 - collective bargaining, consultation and national employment relations
 - classification services
 - representational services to members
 - advice/representation on pensions/superannuation and insured benefits
- **Regional Representational Services**
 - representational services to members
 - development and administration of a steward network
 - steward and member training
- **Research**
 - preparation of analytical studies and surveys on compensation, labour relations and related topics
 - provision of support for broader policy issues including career development, privatization and pay equity

- **Communications**

- publication of “*Communications Magazine*”, the *Annual Report* and other briefs, reports and documents
- Development and implementation of campaigns
- Media and government relations
- Translation and interpretation services

- **Membership**

- collection of dues
- update of membership lists
 - printing and mailing out newsletters
 - maintenance of records (filing system)

- **Finance**

- maintenance of accounts
- payment of members expense claims
- preparation of budgets

- **Informatics**

- maintenance and support of the computer network
- development, maintenance and technical support of the Institute Web site
- development and maintenance of the membership data base



PIPSC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Institute has a parallel structure by occupational groups and by region. All members are part of a Region and a Group. They may be part of a Branch and a Sub-Group, if such a constituent body exists in their area.

The structure by **Group** allows each bargaining unit to determine its bargaining priorities and strategies, and to deal with current concerns specific to its members' profession.

Five or more members of a Group in a geographical area or department and/or location may form a **Sub-Group** that reports to the Group.

The structure by **Region** ensures that the broader concerns of the Institute also reflect the interests specific to particular geographic regions.

Ten (10) or more members from more than one Group employed in the same geographical area may form a **Branch**.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the supreme governing body of the Institute. Although any member may attend, voting delegates are selected by the Groups and Regional Councils on a representational basis.

The Board of Directors oversees the operations of the Institute between AGM's. It is composed of the Executive Committee (President, 4 Vice-Presidents), nine regional directors, and one director elected by the Advisory Council (composed of all PIPSC Group presidents and the presidents of Treasury Board departmental consultation teams)

UNION BENEFITS

WHAT IS THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND?

This is a fund established by the Institute which is used exclusively to provide scholarships for post-secondary education of children and grandchildren of Regular and Retired members in good standing.

WHAT IS THE RETIRED MEMBERS GUILD?

The Retired Members Guild provides retired and retiring members with information and advice on retirement-related issues, coordinates activities and mobilizes Retired members on retirement issues as required, and deals with matters referred to it by the Board of Directors.



WHAT IS SERVICE**Plus**?

Service**Plus** is the Institute's enhanced member benefits program.

Quick and convenient, Service**Plus** offers preferential rates and savings on group home and auto, life, and travel insurances, car rentals, home heating fuel, computer systems, cellular phones, hotels across the country, retirement and financial planning, travel packages, and banking services.

Service**Plus** offers lifestyle protection, consumer products and financial services, exclusively for members.

UNION TRIVIA

*To celebrate **International Women's Year** in 1975, all the **women of Iceland** staged a **24 hour strike**. The country screeched to a halt. Ten years later, on October 24, 1985, they did it again: **70,000 women**, a third of the population, stopped working for a day. And this time, the President of Iceland joined them. Her name is Vigdis Finnbogadottir.*