

INTERMEDIATE STEWARD TRAINING



NATIONAL UNION OF
HEALTHCARE WORKERS



INTERMEDIATE STEWARD TRAINING

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ROLE OF A STEWARD

NUHW CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS ARTICLE 7: STEWARDS

1. Stewards are the worksite leaders of the Union. A strong, democratic, and effective union is built on a solid foundation of stewards at each worksite. The responsibilities and roles of a steward are defined by this Constitution and Bylaws, union policies and procedures, as well as the provisions of the collective bargaining agreements that are negotiated with the employers.
2. The diversity and complexity of the Union only allow for a general description of the steward's roles and responsibilities in this Constitution and Bylaws. The Executive Board shall set policies as necessary on all matters relating to stewards, except the basic policies that stewards be members in good standing, and that they be elected, by ballot or petition, in a work area (unit or department or cluster) defined by the appropriate worksite steward council.
3. A steward has no greater rights than any of the members in their area. However, the responsibilities of a steward do outweigh those of other members. Being a steward requires that personal opinions and preferences are subordinate to that which represents the highest good to the members.
4. Stewards shall serve without compensation. However, based on the financial ability of the Union, the Executive Board shall consider and establish guidelines and policies regarding reimbursement for lost time wages and "out of pocket" expenses.
5. The responsibilities of a steward shall include, but are not limited to:
 - A. Mobilizing members to action. Supporting the Union's efforts to process grievances and resolve worksite issues;
 - B. Orienting new workers to the Union;
 - C. Maintaining the Union's internal organization at the worksite;
 - D. Completing core steward training and any other required training;
 - E. Participating in the grievance appeal process, as appropriate;
 - F. Distributing and posting all appropriate information they receive from the Union and updating the union bulletin board;
 - G. Collecting dues or other monies if so authorized by the Union;
 - H. Representing their worksite in appropriate meetings of the Union and representing the interests of the members in their absence;
 - I. Attending facility, worksite, geographic, and other appropriate meetings;
 - J. Effectively leading members to defend and advance the interests of the membership;
 - K. Participating in, promoting, and recruiting for the Union's organizing and political programs;
 - L. Communicating with and leading members to implement the policies and programs of the Executive Board and the division steward council.
6. Stewards shall be re-elected or reconfirmed by a vote of the membership in their work area (unit, department or cluster, as defined by the worksite steward council) every three years.
7. In between the three (3) year election cycle, a steward may be elected by submitting a petition signed by a majority of the members in their constituent work area (unit, department or cluster, as defined by the worksite steward council).
8. In the event of dissatisfaction with a steward, the member(s) must first present the issues of concern to the worksite steward council and allow the steward council to investigate, mediate, and resolve the issues or take satisfactory action to address the issues. After the steward council's dispute resolution process, a ballot election to recall a steward may be called by filing a petition signed by a majority of the members in the constituent's work area (unit, department or cluster, as defined by the worksite steward council).
9. The Union shall not be legally liable in any court of law or other forum for the actions and/or inaction of its stewards.

ROLE OF A STEWARD

THE ROLE OF LEADERS

Building a well-organized, high-functioning union at the worksite:

DISORGANIZED GROUPS	WHAT LEADERS DO	HIGH FUNCTIONING GROUPS
Divided		United
Confusion		Shared understanding
Reactive - just putting out fires		Proactive
Low participation		High participation
Problems continue		Problems are solved things get done

ROLE OF A STEWARD

QUALITIES OF A GOOD ORGANIZER: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Effective organizers are **good at their jobs** and respected by the people they work with.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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They have the **trust of their co-workers**. When they offer advice, people listen.

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The best organizers are motivated by a **strong sense of justice** and clear principles.

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They're **responsible, honest, and compassionate**.

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They're confident, even **courageous**. They're willing to **stand up to management**—and they can inspire others to stand up for themselves as well.

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Organizers must be **good listeners**. They keep an open mind, stay curious, and practice empathy.

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They **bring people together**, welcoming new workers and looking for ways to involve every member.

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Organizers **move people to collective action**. They don't just solve problems alone—they equip their co-workers to solve problems together.

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They don't operate as lone rangers. They **respect group decisions** and put **the interests of the group first**, ahead of their individual concerns.

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Good organizers are **knowledgeable about their contract**, but not afraid to admit when they don't know the answer.

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They can stay **cool under pressure** and handle stress and conflict.

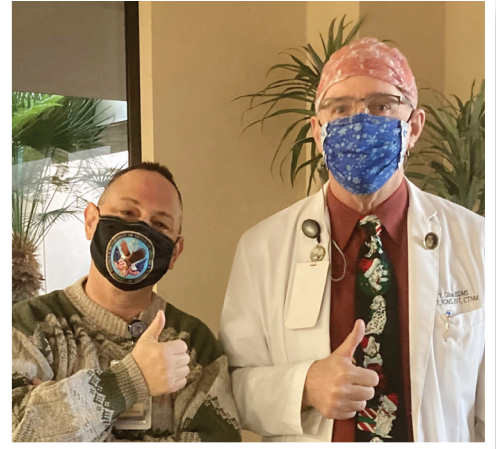
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Adapted from Labor Notes "Secrets of a Successful Organizer" training: <https://labornotes.org/secrets>.

ROLE OF A STEWARD

PORTRAIT OF A WELL-ORGANIZED WORKPLACE

The union is visible to members and management every day.



- **Face-to-face visits.** Stewards or union volunteers walk through the workplace regularly. They have relationships with all members, not just elected leaders.
- **Complete coverage.** There is a steward or union volunteer on every shift, in every department. The list is written down, regularly updated, and widely available.
- **Lively meetings.** Membership meetings are regular and well-attended.
- **New hires join.** A union representative attends every new employee orientation.
- **Word gets around.** There is regular communication through newsletters, flyers, up-to-date bulletin boards, and a member-to-member network. We defend our standards and enforce our contracts.
- **Action is the norm.** Members mobilize and use collective action to solve everyday problems. Grievances are not our primary line of defense.
- **We know our rights.** Contracts are widely available and promptly distributed, both electronically and in print.
- **Stewards do it.** Stewards are trained and empowered to resolve issues at the lowest level, including filing grievances.
- **Boss knows it.** Managers do not act unilaterally or abusively, because they know they will get pushback.

Members own the union.

- **Confidence.** Members feel that their union is strong and can resolve problems.
- **Easy access.** Through stewards, members have immediate access to resources to resolve their problems, without having to track down the union rep.
- **Participation.** Members participate in union-wide programs and campaigns.
- **Pride.** Members are glad they belong to the union. Social events are well-attended.

Adapted from Labor Notes "Secrets of a Successful Organizer" training: <https://labornotes.org/secrets>.

PLANNING SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS

PLANNING WORKSHEET: MOVING A PETITION

Imagine you just learned management is planning to do layoffs in the Housekeeping (EVS) department. But the housekeepers are already spread too thin, and people complain all the time about the hospital being dirty. Management has emailed asking to meet in one week to bargain over these layoffs, so you have one week to circulate a hospital-wide petition calling on management to cancel the layoffs.

Use the below worksheet to make a plan for circulating the petition.

- **What is your percentage goal for signatures?** _____

**Tip: We should always aim for AT LEAST 70% of the total bargaining unit to sign on to a petition.*

- **What is the total number of leaders or stewards you will have circulating the petition?** _____

- **How many total members can these leaders reach?** _____

- **What's the plan for getting petitions into leaders/stewards hands?
For following up to collect signatures?**

Think about how many shifts there are, the best place to reach people before and after their shifts, etc.

PLANNING SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS

MOCK FACILITY CHART

DEPARTMENT	LOCATION	TOTAL EE	AM LEADERS	TOTAL AM	PM LEADERS	TOTAL PM	NOC LEADERS	TOTAL NOC
Centralized Scheduling	980 Building	10	Gabbi					
Laboratory- outpatient	980 Building	10	Erica, Jen					
Nursing Asst Float Pool	All Floors	40	Hermie		Cathy, Elaine		Sandra	
Cancer Center	Cancer Center off of Main Hospital	5	Jill					
ICU	Herman Pavilion	3	Cindy, Juan				Charlie	
Laboratory- inpatient	Herman Pavilion, 1st floor	20	Jenna, Lindsey		Shiela, Pascual			
Sterile Processing	Herman Pavilion, 1st floor	10	Martha		Mary Lu			
Surgery	Herman Pavilion, 2nd floor	6	Jay					
Dietary	Main Hospital	40	Jesse, Anne		Katie, Susan			
ED Registration	Main Hospital	10	Maria C.		Tracy			
Purchasing	Main Hospital	5	Curtis		Margarita			
3rd South	Main Hospital	5	Joy G		Joy L			
3rd North	Main Hospital	3	Rachel				Sonia	
Emergency Services	Main Hospital	10						
2nd North	Main Hospital	3	Shundell					
Housekeeping/Environmental Services	Main Hospital (basement of old hospital)	40	Maria M., Ramon		Bertha, Susana		Heidy	
PBX Communications	Main Hospital Basement	5	Tammy		Sandra B.			
Ultrasound	Main Hospital Basement	8	Charlene				Nick	
CT Scan	Main Hospital Basement	6						
Cardiac Cath Lab	Main Hospital Basement	5	Mary Ann					
Nuclear Medicine	Main Hospital Basement	3	Jon					
Patient Access Rep	Main Hospital Front Entrance	10	Kathy					
Radiology-Diagnostic	Main Hospital, 1st Floor	20	Misha		Ray			
OB	Main Hospital, 1st floor	6	Diana		Josie		Janet	
Pharmacy	Main Hospital, 2nd floor	15	Gavin		Donn, Vanessa			
Medical Records	Main Hospital, 2nd floor	7						
Respiratory Therapy	Main Hospital, 2nd floor (old building)	20	Jeanine, Ellen				Stacey	
Procedure Center	Outpatient Surgery Center	3	Judy					
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	Profil Imaging Center	5	David					
Mammography	Wellness Center, 2nd floor	7	Daisy					
Physical Therapy	Wellness Center, 1st floor	10						
TOTAL		350						

PLANNING SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS

MARCH ON THE BOSS: PLANNING WORKSHEET

Imagine members at your facility got 80% of their coworkers to sign a petition protesting layoffs in Housekeeping (EVS). The next step is to organize a march on the boss to deliver the petition to the employer.

As the steward, your job is to help plan the action. To whom should we present the petition? When and where should the march happen? What is the turn-out goal? What is our ask of management? What do we do after the march concludes?

Fill in the below worksheet with the steps you'd need to take to help members organize this action.



- What needs to happen **1-2 weeks prior** to the march?
- What needs to happen **a few days before** the march?
- The day of the march is here! What needs to happen **during the action**?
- What needs to happen **after** the march?

JUST CAUSE

SEVEN TESTS OF JUST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

If the answer to these seven questions is YES, Management has a just cause for discipline:

FAIR NOTICE

Did Management make the worker aware of the rule or policy which they are being accused of violating?

PRIOR ENFORCEMENT

Has Management recently enforced the rule or policy or penalized other workers for violating the same rule or policy?

DUE PROCESS

Did Management conduct an interview or hearing before issuing the discipline, take action promptly and list charges precisely?

SUBSTANTIAL PROOF

Was Management's decision to accord discipline based on credible and substantial evidence?

EQUAL TREATMENT

Is the punishment Management is proposing consistent with the punishment other workers received for the same or substantially similar offense?

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

During the disciplinary process, did Management issue at least one level of discipline that allowed the employee an opportunity to improve?

MITIGATING AND EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Was the discipline proportional to the gravity of the offense, taking into account any mitigating, extenuating or aggravating circumstances?



JUST CAUSE SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Last week, Ronnie came to you, as the chief shop steward, to report out that he has been disciplined for underperformance. He has been given an unpaid suspension for three days. Ronnie wants to fight it.



EXERCISE: Create a list of questions for both Ronnie and Phyllis to determine if this case meets the Seven Tests of Just Cause for Discipline.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

NUHW GRIEVANCE FORM



GRIEVANCE FORM/ FORMULARIO DE QUEJA

Name of Grievant/Nombre del Agraviado _____		Facility/Hospital o Lugar de Trabajo _____
Address/Dirección de Trabajo _____	Phone/Teléfono _____	Job/Puesto de Trabajo _____
Steward/Delegado Sindical _____	Department/Departamento _____	Phone/Teléfono _____
Date Filed/Fecha en que se presentó la Queja _____	Supervisor/Supervisor _____	
Step 1 Meeting Date/ Fecha de Reunión del Paso 1 _____	Skelly Hearing Date/Fecha de Reunión Preliminar _____	
Statement of Grievance/Declaración de la Queja: _____ _____		
Applicable contract provisions include but are not limited to (article/section paragraphs)/Estipulaciones del Contrato aplicables pero no limitados a (artículo/sección/párrafo): _____		
Requested Resolution/Solución Solicitada: _____ _____		
Grievant/Firma del Agraviado: _____		
Pursuant to the Employer's duty to bargain in good faith, the union hereby requests the following information and/or documents which are necessary and relevant to process this grievance/Es deber del empleador negociar de buena fe y del Sindicato solicitar la siguiente información y/o documentos que son necesarios y relevantes para procesar la queja: _____ _____		

Received by Administrator: _____	Title: _____	Date Received: _____
Step 2 Answer: _____ _____		
Answered Received by Union Rep: _____	Date Received: _____	Satisfactory? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Received by Administrator: _____	Title: _____	Date Received: _____
Step 3 Answer: _____ _____		
Answered Received by Union Rep: _____	Date Received: _____	Satisfactory? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Request for Arbitration Submitted by Division Director: _____	Date: _____
Date Closed: _____	Precedent-Setting: _____ Non-Precedent-Setting: _____

ORIGINAL: SUPERVISOR/ORIGINAL: SUPERVISOR

COPY: STEWARD/COPIA: DELEGADO

COPY: UNION FIELD REP/COPIA: REP DE LA UNION

GRIEVANCES

TIPS FOR FILING A GRIEVANCE



LESS IS MORE

The written grievance simply activates the grievance process. So, just write a statement with basic facts; NOT your argument. Use very simple, short, clear sentences so they aren't misinterpreted.

“ON OR ABOUT __DATE__”

This will keep you from a technical error from a possible wrong date.

“VIOLATES THE CONTRACT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ARTICLE __, SECTION __.”

Use this statement so you are not limited – keeps the door open for other articles/sections to be included.

“MAKE WHOLE IN EVERY WAY”

This is a term used in the remedy section in reference to compensating a party for a loss sustained.

“DISCIPLINED WITHOUT JUST CAUSE.”

This is a catch-all for any disciplinary grievances.

“AND ALL AFFECTED.”

This term is used when filing a class action grievance, or when we're not sure who else might be impacted.



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