



## **How to Guide: New Member Orientation**

New member orientations are the first contact that many of our new members will have with our local – and often with any union. Sometimes, this orientation will be the only time a member will have contact with their local in their entire career. It's important to show new members who the local is, the work that we do to support members, and how they can get in touch with us if they need to.

Look to your Collective Agreement to see if you have any New Member Orientation rights. In terms of scheduling, you can regularly inquire with the employer about when they have scheduled the new member orientation. A good place to discuss the schedule is at Labour Management – make it a standing item. The employer will provide the Lead Steward, Stewards, or the Business Agent with the details for the upcoming new member orientation as to where and what time it will be held, as well as how many new members will be in the session.

In the City/Parks agreement, there are 15 mins allocated to deliver a new member orientation presentation. The PNE agreement does not allow for employer paid time for the new member orientation. Science World agreement provides up to 60 minutes. Every unit is a bit different. We encourage you to raise this with your employer regularly and if you are being denied time to connect with your new members to raise that with the Local leadership in preparation for next round of bargaining.

## **Getting Ready**

Once you know of an upcoming new member orientation session, please reach out to the local's Support Staff (you can call the office directly at 604-324-2440 or email [admin@cupe1004.ca](mailto:admin@cupe1004.ca)) to get the materials you will need ready for you. Please give them at least two days notice before you plan to pick up so they can print and gather the materials. Make sure you will have time to swing by the 1004 office during office hours (9am-4pm, M-F, excluding stat holidays) to pick up the materials before the orientation.

You will need enough of each of these for everyone attending the orientation:

- Department-specific new member pamphlets
- 1004 swag (stickers, pens, lanyards, pins, etc)
- Business cards with QR code to Collective Agreements
- Right to Refuse Unsafe Work cards
- Yellow union cards (in case the employer has run out of them)
- CUPE Local 1004 "Who We Are" one pager sheets
- Branch-specific Steward's list and contact info
- "Welcome to CUPE" envelope package

You will also want to bring a few things for yourself as well:

- Your collective agreement to help you answer questions
- Any of your own contact/business cards or general Steward business cards
- A notepad and pen in case you need to note something down
- A CUPE Local 1004 "Who We Are" one pager sheet for your talking points
- And if you find it helpful, bring this document as well to help you cover your talking points

## **Opening the Meeting**

Welcome the new members into the union and congratulate them. They have accomplished something big by going through the hiring process and landing the job. This is a huge day for them!

Hand out the materials and swag you brought.

Introduce yourself:

- Name
- Pronouns
- How long you've worked there
- What you do for your job
- What is your position in the union
- What motivates you to do union work

Let them know they can raise their hands for questions as you go along.

## **Talking Points During the Meeting**

- A brief intro to CUPE National and Local 1004. The CUPE Local 1004 "Who We Are" one pager will help you with this if you don't already know.
- The benefits of being a union member. The CUPE Local 1004 "Who We Are" one pager will help you with this, too.
- Ask: "Has anyone worked in a union environment before?" This is a great icebreaker and get to know them question if you've got a group that's not very engaged and talkative.
- Point out the handouts and cards you've given them and provide a high-level overview of each document.
- Inform them where the Union bulletin boards are located.
- Point out the Steward's List and explain the ways that Stewards support the other members in their unit.
  - o Let them know that you are their support and advocate in the workplace so if they have any issues or questions, don't hesitate to reach out to any of the Stewards.
  - o Stewards provide advice and guidance on how the collective agreement language works.
  - o Stewards attend meetings with management when there are concerns about conduct.
  - o Stewards bring forward issues to monthly labour management meetings with the employer.
  - o Stewards are the backbone of this local!
- Stress the Right to Refuse unsafe work. These are new employees, so we want to make sure that they, and everyone around them, works safely. Make sure they know that you're not saying not to do work, just to make sure they are doing the work safely. Encourage them to ask more senior staff questions when they are unsure, ask for help if they are feeling uncomfortable with a task, etc.
- Run through ways that they can get involved in the local. Stress the importance of coming out to monthly membership meetings - even just once to check it out. Let them know that they will likely see a site visit/unit meeting or two happen in their workplace every year and they are encouraged to come by and say hi. Let them know that there will also be union social events happening fairly regularly and to come out and say hi if they can.
- Ask for final questions and once you're done answering, thank them all for their time and to reach out to one of their Stewards if they need anything.