

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

Partnership Education Program

PREPARING
AFFILIATE
LEADERS FOR
TODAY'S
CHALLENGES



PARTNERSHIP EDUCATION PROGRAM

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING EVENTS FOR STATE AND PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATIONS



Are you having difficulty finding the resources and time to organize training that is designed specifically for your affiliate leaders? Through the Partnership Education Program (PEP), the IAFF will work with you to provide free, customized instruction developed specifically for affiliate leaders.

How PEP Seminars Can Benefit Your Association:

- Educates affiliate leaders on the latest strategies and information in fire service labor relations
- Provides affiliate leaders with the skills and knowledge needed to meet the challenges they face on the job
- Develops members' leadership skills to strengthen our union

What is Included:

- Interactive skill-based workshops
- Your choice of workshops based on your needs
- Workbooks and materials designed by the IAFF Department of Education
- Workshops led by IAFF instructors who are experts in the field

To Schedule a Seminar:

Per IAFF policy, all training requests must be submitted to the General President's office for approval. For a PEP event at your state or provincial association meeting, kindly submit a written request to the General President with the date, approximate number of students expected and location of the event.

For more information visit the Education and Training web site at: www.iaff.org/pep or call the IAFF Department of Education at (202) 824-1560, (202) 824-1533 or email at education@iaff.org.



WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

COMMUNICATIONS

Crisis Communications (2 hours)

For a local to effectively address a crisis that may hit the Local requires organization and planning. This workshop will address how to plan and organize in the case of a crisis, how to communicate with the public and media when an unexpected event should occur that could have a negative impact.

Internal Local Communications (2 hours)

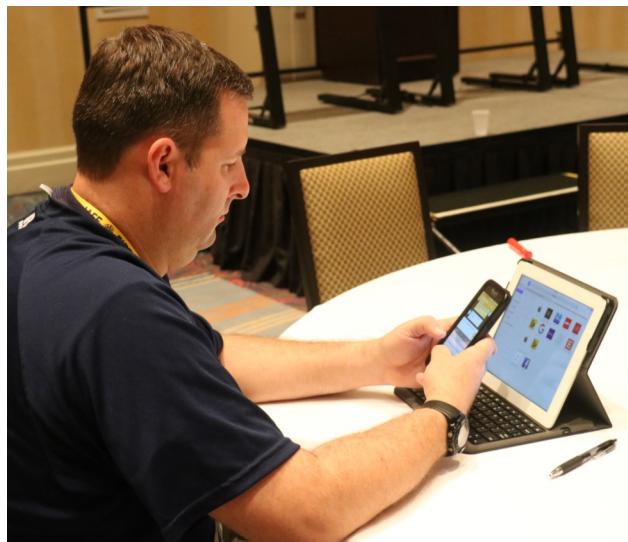
The most important audience for our communications is our local union membership. Lack of communication within a union can seriously weaken unity in purpose and reduce the effectiveness of our efforts. This workshop shows how to move from “fighting back” challenges to unions to taking charge of the message in communications to our membership.

Media Strategies and Messaging (2 hours)

It is important for affiliate leaders to have a media strategy, which should be a part of the overarching public relations campaign. This workshop will address components of media strategy, including understanding why a Local should have a media strategy; knowing the considerations are when developing a media strategy; constructing appropriate messaging based on delivery type and source; and understanding the importance of building coalitions will be addressed.

Organizing and Implementing a Community Outreach Program (2 hours)

One of the most important things an affiliate local can do is to organize and implement an effective community outreach program by reaching out to elderly, faith - and community-based organizations. Through a community outreach program affiliates can create and foster good community relations, which can develop a reciprocal relationship between the fire service and the public. This workshop will provide participants with an understanding of the benefits to both the community at large and the local, as well as how an effective program can reinforce the positive image of fire fighters. This workshop will use case studies from effective community outreach programs developed by other fire departments.



Social Media (2 Hours)

Using social media to communicate with members and the community has become commonplace for affiliate leaders. This module will help affiliate leaders recognize several different social media tools that are common in today's society and learn how to utilize them safely and effectively for strengthening their local's social media presence. It will also help leaders understand several guidelines for proper use and how to communicate effectively with their local and also with the community.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Writing Gooder (2 hours)

Affiliate leaders are the voice of their locals and their members. Often, they find themselves communicating with different types of stakeholders: management, elected officials, members, the media, and the community. Effective business writing is a vital skill for conveying the local's message. Writing well involves identifying the appropriate audience, establishing the purpose of the written piece and drafting the product. This workshop will provide participants with a formula to develop polished final pieces and techniques for improving their writing skills.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

An Introduction to Behavioral Health (2 hours)

The fire service has traditionally recognized the need for medical and physical fitness. However, the need to further develop knowledge and awareness about common behavioral health issues is also being recognized as an important function within the fire service. This workshop will address the importance of developing a behavioral health program, recognizing common signs of behavioral health concerns, where to attain outside assistance, as well as understanding and minimizing the barriers and stigmas often associated with seeking support.

Cancer Awareness: Tools for Affiliate Leaders (2 hours)

It has been clearly documented in multiple studies that fire fighters are more likely to develop a number of occupational cancers resulting from their exposure to toxic chemicals and carcinogens over the course of their employment. This workshop will review recent studies on incidence of cancer in fire fighters, and will guide affiliate leaders on the resources available to educate their members on exposure hazards from fire scene contaminants and diesel exhaust, and the necessity of post-incident decontamination. In addition this workshop will review the tools necessary to affect personal commitment and organizational accountability to minimize the contraction of occupationally related cancers.

Disaster Relief: Assisting Members in Preparation and Recovery (2 hours)

When disasters strike, fire fighters are called to respond even while their own families may be displaced and their homes damaged or destroyed. Therefore, it is important that IAFF leaders be aware of several preparation and recovery tools in order to best protect their members in the event of a natural or manmade disaster. This module will detail how affiliate leaders can best prepare members and their families for a disaster by learning about proactive family and department plans, communication tools, and disaster relief resources.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Fighting Performance/Service Level Threats (2 hours)

Departments are being asked to do more with less. Many jurisdictions are hiring consultants to examine budgets and find ways to save money; affiliate leaders need to understand how to be proactive if their jurisdiction hires a consultant. This workshop will provide affiliate leaders with an understanding of the possible negative impacts on staffing and performance/service levels. In addition, this workshop will address strategies and ways in which to combat potential negative recommendations.

Fire Fighter Safety and Deployment Study: Report on Residential Fire Ground Field Experiments (2 hours)

In a landmark study, NIST investigated the effect of varying crew size, first apparatus arrival time and response time on firefighter safety. The results of the study show the differences in time for overall task completion on the fire ground based on crew size, as well as the effects of time-to-critical tasks on fire growth and interior structural tenability. The study was conducted on a low-hazard residential structure and the results proved compelling for departments with 2-, 3-, and 4-person crews. This workshop will help local affiliate leaders understand the importance of the study's results and assess whether the findings are applicable to their department.

Introduction to the NFPA 1710 (2 hours)

The passage of NFPA 1710 Standard is one of the most important advancements in fire service and public safety. It is essential that local affiliate leaders have a complete understanding of the NFPA 1710 Standard and are able to communicate this knowledge effectively. This workshop is designed to help local affiliate leaders understand the importance of the NFPA 1710 Standard and become familiar with its requirements for Fire Suppression Services, Emergency Medical Services and Support Systems. This is the first workshop in a three-part series addressing the NFPA 1710 Standard.

Investigations: Near Miss, Serious Injury and Line-of-Duty Death (2 hours)

A line-of-duty death or any incident where a fire fighter has been seriously injured may be one of the most difficult situations a local has to deal with. A thorough investigation is critical to preventing future injuries and deaths. This workshop uses the new edition of the IAFF Fire Fighter Line-of-Duty Death and Serious Injury Investigations Manual, and will provide participants with an overview of the investigation process, how to construct an investigation team and conduct the investigation as well as how to get assistance during that critical time.

The NFPA 1710: Evaluating Your Fire Department (2 hours)

In this workshop, you will learn how to identify which areas local fire departments comply with the 1710 Standard and which areas, if any, fall short. After identifying the potential problem areas, you will learn how to develop a plan to bring your fire departments into compliance. This is the second workshop in a three-part series addressing the NFPA 1710 Standard.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

NFPA 1710: Implementation (2 hours)

This workshop provides information on how to build a campaign to implement the NFPA 1710 Standard. This workshop will provide guidance on how to develop a campaign strategy and deliver the message effectively. Affiliate leaders will learn how to create a campaign, develop a political action plan, and communicate with the media.

Staffing for Safety: An Introduction (2 hours)

Fire suppression and emergency medical activities are labor-intensive jobs that require an adequate number of fire fighters on scene to safely and effectively protect property and save lives. Recent studies by the National Institute of Standards and Technology and updates to the National Fire Protection Association 1710 Standards have shown that inadequate staffing can result in unnecessary loss of life and property and serious injury to fire fighters and the citizens they protect. In this workshop, you will be introduced to standards and studies that indicate best practices regarding staffing and will begin to make decisions regarding staffing in your community.

HUMAN RELATIONS

Building on a Culture of Teamwork (2 hours)

Effective fire and emergency services requires that individuals work together as a team, and over the years this “culture” of teamwork has become second nature in our firehouses. This workshop helps build on this culture of teamwork to extend it to issues of workplace inclusion, respect for a diverse workforce and ethical behavior.

Building an Inclusive Workforce: Reflecting the Communities We Serve (2 Hours)

An inclusive and diverse workforce won’t happen overnight – it takes a continuing, multi-year effort, with the jurisdiction, the fire service management and the union to build a workforce that reflects the communities it serves. This workshop provides the education and information required for affiliate leaders to construct and implement recruiting and retention programs that will increase the diversity of their local’s workforce.

Human Relations at the IAFF (2 hours)

The fire service is composed of professionals that represent numerous populations differentiated by age, race, ethnicity, gender, language, religion and sexual orientation, among others. First responders serve equally diverse communities. While our Human Relations efforts tend to focus on the diversity within the fire service, it is imperative to remember that by drawing on the strengths of our differences we can better serve those in our communities that do not fall into the majority. Participants will gain an understanding of the path the IAFF has taken to achieve to our current state of Human Relations – initiatives that have improved not only the quality of the workplace for our members, but in turn, the service we provide to our communities.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Local Human Relations Committee: Getting Started (2 hours)

The IAFF recommends that every local affiliate establish a human relations committee. Establishing a committee is a proven way to help locals sort through the opportunities and challenges that diversity presents. It can assist locals in resolving conflict and developing a proactive strategy for change. In this workshop, local affiliate leaders will learn about the benefits of having a local human relations committee and strategies for developing their own committee.

Local Human Relations Committees: Next Steps (2 hours)

Once you have developed your committee, you are ready for action. In this workshop, you will learn how to assess membership needs, develop and carry out long-term strategic plans, report progress to key stakeholders, and devise strategies to fund your committee's activities. In addition, you will explore strategies for forming a cohesive team among committee members and learn how to keep them productive and energized.

Making it Work: Addressing Work/Family Issues (2 hours)

When it comes to daily life—children, spouse, parents, job, house, car and everything else—challenges arise and responsibilities overlap. This workshop provides IAFF leaders with the tools to assist members in working out the issues between work and family—through a collective bargaining agreement, advocacy, or labor-management relations.

LEADERSHIP

Advanced Leadership: Conflict Resolution (2 hours)

The third in the series of Leadership workshops, this workshop will teach you how to become more effective in resolving conflicts. In this workshop, you will complete a profile that will allow you to see how others may perceive you during a conflict or disagreement. You will then move through a series of steps that will take you from judging others to valuing those who have differing opinions. *Dimensions of Leadership* and *Principles of Leadership* are pre-requisites for this workshop.



Building Better Business Relationships (2 hours)

Communication skills are essential for effectively conveying ideas. Those skills are sometimes challenged when interpersonal communication is used to address differing opinions. By conscientiously employing rules of civility, leaders can rise above mere communication to achieve stronger working relationships. This workshop will explore the meaning of civility, distinctions made by different generations and strategies for employing civility in everyday situations.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Dimensions of Leadership (2 hours)

This workshop is designed to assist participants in better understanding their leadership qualities. During the program, you will complete a Dimensions of Leadership Profile to discover your leadership characteristics. You will learn how to capitalize on your strengths and use them in bargaining, team building, or command situations. In addition, you will learn how to encourage other potential leaders within your local to contribute when a combination of skills are needed to complement your own.



Ethics for Union Leaders (2 hours)

Most IAFF leaders are public employees and have fiduciary responsibilities to their membership. Due to the nature of your position, you are subject to higher ethical standards than the average member or employee. These standards must be upheld in order to maintain the trust of your members and run an effective local. Failure to do so can result in loss of credibility, loss of union position, or even criminal charges. This workshop will cover the principles of ethics, the requirements of public employees, and strategies of making ethical decisions. You will use these strategies to analyze scenarios and case studies.

Generational Differences (2 hours)

Currently, there are as many as four generations employed and working side by side in fire departments throughout North America. Each generation brings its own individual values and behaviors and these values and behaviors can be the source of conflict in the workplace. This workshop will examine each of the four generations in a fun humorous way providing a better understanding of generational behavior, the value that each generation brings to the workplace, why conflict exists among them and identifying communications styles that work for each.

How to Run a Meeting (2 hours)

The manner in which you run your union meetings will affect member attendance and how you are perceived as a leader. A well-run meeting with meaningful and timely agenda items will draw more attendees and help you earn the respect of your membership. In this workshop, you will learn: IAFF meeting protocol and etiquette; how to plan for and conduct an efficient and productive meeting; and methods for handling conflict. This workshop is ideal for local union officers with limited experience running local union meetings.

Increasing Membership Participation (2 hours)

The strength of a local union depends on the active involvement of its members. Whether it's a committee meeting, political campaign or public relations effort, your members make the difference between success and failure. This workshop provides methods to increase member participation and build an effective union.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Internal Union Organizing (2 hours)

For a local union to be most effective in achieving its goals, it must have the majority of the fire department (or EMS organization) as members. A united membership has more resources at its disposal and more bargaining power. In this workshop, you will determine the key reasons for lack of affiliation within your local and develop strategies to increase your membership.

Overview of Membership Services (2 hours)

This overview provides essential information for new affiliate leaders so they can be effective in their roles. This course is ideal for affiliate leaders with up to two years of experience or seasoned veterans who want to refresh their skills. Overview of Membership Services examines the various IAFF departments/divisions and the services provided to members, as well as an understanding of their respective state or provincial organization.

Principles of Leadership (2 hours)

This workshop builds on the Dimensions of Leadership workshop by addressing leadership theory and application in day-to-day practical situations. You will address the concepts of leadership principles, micromanagement, change, leadership perspective, and labor/management synergy using several examples.

Recruiting and Developing Leaders (4 hours)

Your local relies on the strength of its members. Between dwindling active participation and your local's organizational history retiring with past union leaders, it becomes harder to run an effective union. New leaders become involved when they understand the local's core values and find a calling for their talents and passions. This class will provide current local leadership with a framework on how and why they should recruit and develop new leaders, strategies for reaching out across different generations, a brief overview of labor history to help new members understand the value of their membership and a plan for mentoring rising leaders to carry your local into the next generation.

LEGAL ISSUES

Discipline: Your Rights and Responsibilities as Union Officers (2 hours)

This workshop will provide union leaders with an overview of their rights and responsibilities during the employment disciplinary process. Union leaders will learn how to best represent their members in accordance with their contract, civil service laws, and the Weingarten, Loudermill and Garrity decisions. This workshop is applicable to affiliate leaders in collective bargaining and non-collective bargaining environments.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Duty of Fair Representation (2 hours)

As an affiliate leader, you may be subject to a legal standard known as “duty of fair representation” that governs how you represent your members in contract negotiations, grievances and other labor matters. In this workshop, you will study relevant case law to learn what is required of you, how the courts have applied this standard to local unions, the consequences of violating the standard, and best practices to avoid DFR lawsuits.



Overview of Employment Law (4 hours)

This workshop will provide you with an overview of the employment laws that affect fire fighters and emergency workers. You will learn how the courts define harassment and discrimination in the workplace and how to respond to members who believe their rights have been violated. This workshop will help you better serve the needs of your membership.

Overview of The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (2 Hours)

The FMLA is a U.S. Federal law, passed in 1993. It provides for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to bond with a child or for serious health conditions, or because you have to take care of a parent, spouse or child with a serious health condition. This workshop will give you an overview of the FMLA so you can help your affiliate membership take advantage of its provisions.

Understanding the Fair Labor Standards Act (4 hours)

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a federal law that sets requirements for minimum wage and overtime compensation for employers in the United States. You should become familiar with these requirements to ensure that your department is in compliance with the law. This workshop will teach you how to calculate overtime compensation and recover lost wages if your employers are in violation of the FLSA.

NEGOTIATIONS

Advanced Skills for Negotiators (6 hours)

To get results at the bargaining table, a negotiator must be able to develop a bargaining strategy and master key negotiation skills. In this six-hour workshop, you will learn how to strengthen your bargaining position, determine an acceptable settlement range, respond to common management tactics and objections, make concessions and package your proposals. You will have opportunities to practice these skills and participate in mock negotiation sessions. This workshop is designed for experienced negotiators who wish to improve their skills at the bargaining table.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Conducting Negotiations: Collective Bargaining (2 hours)

Actively negotiating a contract is one of the most important functions IAFF affiliate leadership can perform for members and is the key ingredient in fire fighter-employer relations. In this workshop, you will learn how to create ground rules that benefit unions, participate in mock negotiation sessions, and learn how to apply bargaining techniques.

Fundamentals of Costing Contract Proposals (4 hours)

Wages represent a significant portion of contract negotiations, but to successfully negotiate improvements to compensation, affiliate leaders must thoroughly understand their contracts and the true economic cost of their current agreements. Before presenting management with proposed improvements at the negotiation table, affiliate leaders need to have a firm grasp of how the improvements they seek will impact the totality of contract's costs. This module will introduce students to the key concepts required to conduct a successful contract costing exercise and the fundamental processes of costing base salary, fringe benefits and proposed increases for a multi-year contract.



Municipal Financial Analysis (2 hours)

This workshop is designed to educate local affiliate leaders about Municipal Financial Analysis. In order to ensure proper staffing and reasonable wage and benefit increases, a local must know the basic financial condition of its government as well as what monies are available to fund its needs. Municipal Financial Analysis is a service provided by the IAFF that examines a jurisdiction's financial records and determines its financial condition. The value of the analysis is dependent upon local affiliate leaders effectively understanding the key indicators of a government's financial condition and knowing how to use the information appropriately.



WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Negotiating Strategies for Tough Economic Times (2 hours)

We are a union regardless of the status of the economy. Therefore, when we are in tough economic times, we may adjust our mission but not change our vision to continually advance. These challenges may be in the form of decreased tax revenues, cuts in state aid to local government or cuts in other sources of revenue. The reductions in revenue that result in municipal budget cuts have affected IAFF locals by influencing wages, benefits or operational resources. This workshop will provide an understanding of how the fiscal crisis impacts the negotiation process, as well as providing insight on how to address wages, benefits, working conditions and staffing issues in tough times. The workshop will specifically address the above outlined issues for locals with collective bargaining agreements or a formal negotiation process.

Negotiating the First Contract (4 hours)

A solid first contract forms the foundation for all subsequent agreements. A common mistake made when negotiating a first contract is to focus on the “nice to have” items, rather than the “must have” items. This workshop will focus on identifying “must have” items, such as terms and conditions of employment, purpose and scope of the recognition clause, how to identify work rules, and the jurisdiction ordinances and statutes that need to be incorporated into specific contract language to protect the working conditions and benefits of our members. Additional topics covered in this workshop include; how to prepare for negotiations, review of mandatory versus permissive subjects of bargaining, and how to avoid common negotiation pitfalls.

Negotiation Strategies and Tactics (6 hours)

Skilled negotiators are proficient in the key strategies and tactics that significantly improve their bargaining positions. In this workshop, you will analyze the power structure of negotiating committees, determine the real impact of your proposals, identify typical management tactics, interpret hidden meanings behind signals at the bargaining table, and make timely and appropriate counter-offers. This workshop will give you exercises to practice each of these new skills.

Non-Collective Bargaining Environments: Achieving Goals (2 hours)

It can be a challenge to secure wages and benefit improvements in jurisdictions that do not allow collective bargaining. Despite the absence of collective bargaining laws, there are many things you can do to help your membership achieve its goals. In this workshop, you will learn how to use the strength of your membership to win over the opposition.

Preparing for Negotiations: Collective Bargaining (2 hours)

The collective bargaining process allows you to negotiate for wages, benefits and other conditions of employment. To be successful at the bargaining table, you must thoroughly research and develop your strategy. In this workshop, you will learn how to set realistic goals for your membership and collect the data needed to support your case. This workshop is a prerequisite for Conducting Negotiations: Collective Bargaining and it is recommended that you also register for Municipal Financial Analysis.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Understanding Municipal Budgets (2 hours)

Involvement in your municipal budget process will help ensure that fire suppression, rescue and EMS delivery are top priorities in your community. This session provides an overview of the components of a municipal budget as well as real-life case studies that demonstrate skills leaders need to succeed in this arena. Participants will learn that taking an active role in the budgeting process can lessen the fights over funds after the budget is passed. This is an opportunity for participants to learn how to create their future, not have it dictated to them.

Writing Contract Language (6 hours)

When drafting contract language, affiliate leaders must choose their words carefully so that each article reflects their intent, placing them in the best bargaining position. The language in a collective bargaining agreement is precise, and one word could alter the meaning of an entire section. This workshop will teach you how to interpret a labor agreement, draft clear and unambiguous language, work with “borrowed” contract language, and understand the full impact of their goals. You will be able to practice these skills by drafting articles of a contract and initial proposals to bring to the bargaining table.



POLITICS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Building Coalitions (2 hours)

A coalition is a group of individuals or organizations that work together to achieve common goals and solve problems. A coalition can be formal or informal in structure depending upon its purpose. Due to its size and scope, a coalition can accomplish significantly more than an individual organization. This workshop will teach you how to build coalitions and use them to achieve your goals.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Introduction to Political Action (2 hours)

Local government officials are ultimately responsible for making decisions that affect the wages and benefits of fire fighters. To secure the best working conditions for your members, it is essential that your local union becomes politically active to ensure that those candidates who support fire fighter issues are elected and remain in office. This workshop will give you an overview of the political process and teach you how to set up a political action plan that is most effective in achieving your goals.



Introduction to Public Relations (2 hours)

A strategic public relations program will enable your local to use public support to achieve its goals and handle an unforeseen crisis. By communicating effectively with the public and local officials, a union is more likely to secure better wages for its members, improve staffing and avoid budget cuts. This workshop is designed to give you the tools and tactics you need to set up a successful public relations program for your local unions.

Lobbying 101: Understanding the Local Legislative Process (2 hours)

Whether at the local, state or federal level, learning and knowing how to lobby elected officials is one of the most effective ways to gain favorable legislation. Understanding the process and learning how to identify, organize and implement an action plan is an asset to provide a positive impact for fire fighter issues. In this workshop you will examine the basics of lobbying and how to effectively address and organize an action plan in dealing with elected officials.

Establishing and Maintaining a Political Action Committee (2 hours)

State and local officials, and state and local laws, affect your wages, benefits, labor laws and working environment. With a state and/or local Political Action Committee (PAC), fire fighters can help support the campaigns of officials, candidates and ballot issues that represent their communities' best interests. This workshop addresses not just the laws and regulations affecting state and local PACS, but also how to promote a PAC, raise funds and plan contributions.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Planning a Fire Ops 101 Event (2 hours)

Fire Ops is a unique event that teaches elected officials and community leaders about the risks and challenges involved in the fire service. At this event, decision-makers suit up in protective gear and put out fires, rescue victims and perform other duties that fire fighters and EMS workers do on the job. Through Fire Ops 101, participants learn about the importance of sufficient staffing and the critical role that time plays on the scene of an emergency. A Fire Ops 101 event is one of the most effective ways an IAFF local can build relationships with elected officials, the media, and department management. This workshop will focus on how to customize a Fire Ops 101 event in your community.

Recruiting and Endorsing Candidates (2 hours)

For political candidates the endorsement of fire fighters is the most coveted endorsement in campaigns today. The political action of an affiliate is what it takes to move fire service issues forward. In this workshop you will learn how to select a candidate and campaign for political action, explain the endorsement process, and create a local endorsement process.

RETIREMENT

Regulatory Changes to Defined Benefit Public Pension Systems (2 hours)

This workshop will focus on providing participants with an overview of the regulatory changes being imposed on traditional defined benefit public sector employee pension plans. This workshop will specifically address the changes in GASB pension accounting statements 25 and 27 and changes in the IRS tax code pertaining to defined benefit plans.

Understanding Public Pensions (2 hours)

As a union labor leader and a public pension participant, it is vital that you are aware of the various components of public pension plans and how they operate. There is a vested interest to ensure that your public pension plan is adequately funded and prudently invested in order to achieve long-term goals for you and your members. With public pensions under attack, it is important more than ever to become involved in the oversight and monitoring of your pension system. This workshop will address how public pensions operate, some pitfalls to be cautious of and questions that should be asked of the pension board, trustees, plan administrators and other stakeholders.



WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

UNION ADMINISTRATION

Best Practices in Joint Labor Management Health Care Committees (3 hours)

As the price of health care continues to rise, affiliate leaders must develop strategies to maintain their level of coverage while minimizing costs. This workshop outlines best practices in forming a joint labor/management health care committee, including its structure, function and duties. You will use these skills to work in a mock committee and handle real-life challenges that might be faced by their locals. Introduction to Health Care is recommended before taking this workshop.

Budgeting for Local Unions (2 hours)

Budgeting is an essential function for those who safeguard local union assets. In this workshop, you will learn the art of planning your local's income and expenditures. Topics discussed will include preparing, adopting, and amending your budget as well as common income and expenditure categories that should be part of your plan.

Duties of the Secretary and Treasurer (4 hours)

Students will gain a better understanding of the role and responsibilities of the secretary, treasurer or the secretary-treasurer as a union officer. Students will also acquire knowledge on maintaining their Local's records, running a meeting, fiduciary responsibilities and common IRS filing mistakes.

Introduction to Grievances (2 hours)

The manner in which you process grievances will determine how quickly they are resolved and how your members will perceive you. A good understanding of the grievance process will better enable you to enforce the collective bargaining agreement and avoid costly arbitration hearings. In this workshop, you will learn how to evaluate and file a grievance, reduce your chances of receiving a DFR claim, and develop effective grievance strategies. This workshop is ideal for local union officers and grievance committee members who have limited experience with grievances.

Introduction to Grievance Arbitration (2 hours)

Despite your best efforts to resolve all disputes internally, some grievances cannot be settled at the local level and must be heard by a neutral arbitrator. To win at arbitration, a union leader must be well prepared and have a good understanding of the arbitration process. This workshop will give you an overview of arbitration procedures and protocol, methods for selecting an arbitrator, and strategies for cutting costs. This workshop is ideal for local union officers and grievance committee members who work in collective bargaining environments and have limited experience with grievances.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Investigating and Processing Grievances: Non-Collective Bargaining Environments (2 hours)

The quick and efficient resolution to a grievance is the best strategy, but in order to resolve a grievance the process must be understood. Understanding the grievance process will enable you to assist your membership in navigating the process. In this workshop, you will learn how to determine if a grievance has merit and how to provide assistance to a member who is filing a grievance. This workshop is ideal for local union officers and grievance committee members who have limited experience with grievances in a non-collective bargaining environment.

Local Union Administration (2 hours)

Designed to help affiliate leaders achieve the goals of their locals, this course teaches the skills necessary to be effective in any role as a union officer. Information is provided on the duties of each local union officer, as well as responsibilities of the executive board and other committees in the local. It will also acquaint participants with the various services and assistance available from the IAFF.

Managing Consultant Reports (2 hours)

It is important for affiliate leaders to know how to protect wages, benefits and working conditions for their members. While attacks on public sector unions continue to increase, jurisdictions are often relying on consultant reports to guide where cuts can be made. This workshop addresses how affiliate leaders can take pre-emptive action to mitigate consultant reports and how to address the negative impacts of consultant reports, specifically relating to consolidation, the creation of fire districts, PSO's and station closures.

Negotiating Health Care Benefits (2 hours)

As the cost of health care continues to rise, employers may attempt to offset these increases by reducing benefits, raising the employee contributions, or switching to more restrictive health plans. This workshop reviews other strategies available that may help departments maintain their existing level of insurance in a manner that benefits both the employees and management.

Introduction to Health Care (2 hours)

Obtaining and protecting quality health care coverage is a key issue for affiliate leaders. This workshop provides an overview of the health insurance industry including current trends, key concepts, health care terminology, and a comparison of the major types of health plans. In this workshop, you will learn how to read basic benefit statements and how to serve as health care advocates for your members.



WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Preparing for Grievance Arbitration: Contract Language (2 hours)

The collective bargaining agreement is a contract between union and management that outlines the wages, benefits, and working conditions for fire fighters. To maintain flexibility in the workplace, negotiators sometimes include language in the agreement that is ambiguous or general in nature. Occasionally, this ambiguity leads to disputes between the two parties over the meaning of the contract. When these disputes are brought to arbitration, the arbitrator must determine which interpretation is the most reasonable and best reflects the mutual intent of the parties. This workshop will teach you how arbitrators consider contract language, past practice and other contributing factors in order to reach a decision.

Preparing for Grievance Arbitration: Evaluating Evidence (2 hours)

To win your case in grievance arbitration, it is crucial to have evidence to back up your arguments and assertions. Without sufficient evidence, it is difficult to convince an arbitrator to rule in your favor. This workshop will teach you how to gather evidence, identify the types of evidence admissible in arbitration, and determine which types carry the most weight with arbitrators. This workshop is ideal for local union officers and grievance committee members who have limited experience with grievances.

Shop Steward Basics (2 hours)

Being a shop steward is a multi-faceted position within the local union structure. Understanding the various roles of a shop steward is important to becoming effective. This workshop will focus on the role and responsibility of being a shop steward including communication with members, handling workplace issues, including grievances and understanding how shop stewards can make a local stronger.

Understanding Union Leadership (2 hours)

This workshop will address many facets of being a union officer, including the responsibilities associated with their roles. This workshop will also address how to be a union advocate, utilizing the skills of the executive board and how to organize members and increase their participation in order to build a stronger local.

**The IAFF is currently developing additional workshops.
Contact the IAFF Department of Education at (202) 824-1560 or
(202) 824-1533 to learn more.**





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