

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING POTENTIAL UNIONIZATION

1. If someone claims to represent a union, do employees have to listen to them?

No, you are not required to listen or answer questions. It is your choice to speak with them.

2. If someone will not take no for an answer, is there anything I can do to make them stop?

Yes, you can close your door or walk away. If the individual will not respect your wishes and persists, or if you feel threatened, call the police.

If you have any concerns, you may also contact the Public Information Officer of the Educational Labor Relations Board (312-793-3170).

3. If employees choose to listen, can the employee ask the individual for identification?

Yes. If they are unable or unwilling to do so, be cautious. Any solicitor should present ID upon request.

4. If someone claims to be from ISU, can the employee ask them for identification?

Yes, but if they are unable or unwilling to do so, be cautious. Anyone from ISU will have proper University ID. Anyone claiming to be from ISU who wants to discuss unionization is not doing so on behalf of ISU.

5. Do employees have the right to vote in an election before a union is certified?

Not necessarily. Illinois law allows for certification of a union through either an election or by a "card check" procedure whereby a union demonstrates to the Labor Board that it has a "majority interest" of employees in the proposed bargaining unit. Such majority interest may be shown by the union producing a petition, dues deduction authorization cards, or similar documents signed by a majority of employees in the proposed bargaining unit. If you are presented with a petition, card, or document from a potential union, read it carefully, and if you sign it, understand what you are agreeing to. You can see an example [here](#).

6. Are employees "voting" for a union if they sign union authorization petition, card, or document?

Yes, if a union chooses to submit such petition, card, or document as proof of support for the certification of a union, they can do so without an election. Illinois law permits unions to be certified by the Labor Board based on verification that more than 50 percent of bargaining unit members have signed such union authorization petitions, cards, or documents.

7. What if an employee misunderstood or wishes to revoke a union authorization petition, card, or document that he/she previously signed?

Employees who have questions about this should contact the Public Information Officer of the Educational Labor Relations Board (312-793-3170). Based on our understanding of the law, employees can revoke their signature by notifying the union in writing of their decision to revoke and request that the cards be returned to them. If employees decide to revoke and withdraw their signature, it should be done before any representation petition is filed with the Labor Board. If such a written revocation and request is submitted to the Labor Board, employees should sign and date the request and keep a copy for their records.

8. Would collective bargaining help protect employee's current pension rights?

No. Benefits under the State Universities Retirement System are set by State statute and are not subjects of negotiations in any of the University's collective bargaining contracts. In fact, the University would have no authority to negotiate alternatives or guarantees concerning the statutory pension plan.

9. What are the consequences if a union becomes the collective bargaining representative of ISU's employees?

Loss of Individuality:

Unions are the "exclusive representative" for bargaining unit employees, and represent everyone in the bargaining unit collectively. This precludes individual employees from negotiating individual pay arrangements with their colleges/deans/departments that take into account their unique circumstances. University labor relations representatives must present proposals to, and secure the agreement of, union officials before altering wages, hours and terms and conditions of employment for anyone in the bargaining unit.

Employees would incur expenses:

Employees who join the union would be responsible for union dues. Annual union dues in the current unions representing Illinois State University employees can be several hundred dollars to several thousand dollars.

10. Are departments required to allow unions to solicit employees in University facilities or speak at departmental meetings?

No. Union officials are not allowed to disrupt or interfere with employee's performing their normal work activities. This does not preclude making space available for meetings involving union officials in the same manner as any other requests for meeting rooms for non-departmental activities or purposes. Nor does it preclude union organizers from soliciting an employee during nonworking time (including breaks) in non-working areas of campus.

11. Will collective bargaining change current roles and relationships between employees and department heads and other administrators/supervisors?

Yes. The University administration has a duty to deal exclusively with a union concerning decisions pertaining to pay, hours and working conditions. In other words, administrators would no longer be able to have direct interactions with individual employees on these subjects, unless a union representative is present and participates at such interactions.

12. Are there legal restrictions concerning what administrators may say or do during a period of unionization activities?

Yes. Department heads and other administrative/supervisory officials cannot threaten, promise, interrogate, retaliate or conduct surveillance(i.e., photographing and videorecording or giving the impression of photographing and videorecording) concerning individual employees' interests in or support for a union or request employees to inform the University of other employees' views or support for the union. In addition, employees cannot be prohibited from wearing union buttons or insignia.

13. Who may I contact if I have questions or need assistance?

Public Information Officer of the Illinois Education Labor Relation Board at (312) 793-3170 or visit <http://www2.illinois.gov/elrb/Pages/default.aspx>

Mike Kruger – Director, Labor Relations at (309)438-5563 or mdkruge@ilstu.edu.