

Roles and responsibilities of local union officers

Source: OPSEU Course, *LEC Leadership and Team Development: A course for Local Executive Committees to take together*

Candidates for local president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and chief steward must be an elected steward.

Please note: Training is available for all positions within OPSEU and regional office staff are readily available for assistance.

Steward

Candidates for steward must be a signed-up OPSEU member in good standing.

A steward is responsible for and to a small group of specifically-identified members. Core responsibilities for stewards include:

- Listen for and identify members' diverse issues and carry these to the LEC/Unit Committee for decision
- Communicate union information to members, including LEC decisions affecting members
- Bring together diverse members to build solidarity and seek support for workplace actions authorized by LEC/Unit.
- Attend LEC/Unit Committee meetings to participate in decision-making
- Do basic preparation and investigation on grievances arising from members
- Represent members in step 1 and other meetings with management

Stewards may expand their core responsibilities to other areas including health and safety, bargaining, labour management committees, union counselling, building links outside the local, etc.

Local President

- Oversees healthy functioning of the LEC and the local
- Keeps the union visible and credible with employer(s) and in the workplace(s)
- Represents the local to the rest of OPSEU, the labour movement and the community
- Shares leadership roles with other LEC members
- Encourages and mentors new and diverse leadership in all parts of the local
- Works with the treasurer to maintain financial health of the local

- Maintains and encourages communication between stewards, units, regional office and executive board members

Vice-President

- Provides support to the local president and other LEC members
- Actively shares the workload of the LEC in carrying out local action plans and programs
- Acts on behalf of the local president if absent

Secretary

- Oversees the healthy day-to-day operations of the LEC and the local
- Documents decisions made by the LEC and the membership (minutes)
- Sends out information to the LEC and the membership (e.g. notices, memos and bulletins)
- Maintains current information helpful to the LEC's programs (e.g. membership info, participation in education, union and community resources)

Treasurer

- Responsible for all financial transactions of the local
- Issues cheques and has signing authority
- Keeps financial records of the local
- Ensures that trustees have financial information in order to complete trustee audit reports
- Develops and presents an annual budget to LEC and membership reflecting the local's program priorities for the year

Chief Steward

- Oversees, supports and mentors other stewards to do their jobs well
- Provides information, references and training to stewards, the LEC and members on representation issues
- Identifies, with stewards, common workplace issues to address with the employer, or for bargaining
- Keeps records of grievances for use of the membership in dealing with the employer
- Represents members through the higher levels of the grievance process

Trustees

Trustees cannot hold any other office in any local. (Constitution, Article 29.6.1)

- Ensures the integrity of the local's bookkeeping, by reviewing the local's financial records at least twice a year.
- Reports briefly, twice a year, to the membership that the trustee audit reports (TAR) for the local are complete.