



Starting a USW Political Action Committee

Steelworkers engage in political action to have a positive impact on our workplace, our communities and our lives.

Political action adds workers' voices to the issues that affect us – like pensions, trade, health care, ability to join a union, health and safety, women's rights, human rights and more. Political action is taking part in member-to-member education on political issues with workers' interests at heart.

Political action is also taking part in elections. Implementing pro-labour policies and electing pro-labour politicians is important work. We support our partner in politics, the NDP, because it is the party that consistently fights for the policies that are important for our members and our union. The NDP has always been there for us.

As working people and union members, we know the power of solidarity and working together to make better change. Political action is a way for us to harness our power for good.

If your local does not have a political action committee (PAC), you can get one started. Start small and build as you go.

STEPS for Starting a Political Action Committee in your USW Local

- 1. START GETTING THE WORD OUT** within your local. Approach the local union president or an executive member with your interest. Ask to speak at the next meeting to seek others who are interested. Make the case for starting a committee by sharing some ideas of the activities you want to engage in.
- 2. PASS A MOTION** at your local meeting. Ask the local to pass a motion to create a Political Action Committee.
- 3. RECRUIT MEMBERS** to join you in a Political Action Committee. Make a special effort to reach out to women and others who are often under-represented in these activities. Post a note on a bulletin board and on your local's Facebook page seeking interested members.
- 4. SET A MEETING** time and location and invite interested local members.
- 5. GET ACTIVE!** Let the group choose the activity or action they want to get involved in.

If your local isn't interested in starting a political action committee, try your USW Area Council or the area labour council.

Some Activities for your Political Action Committee

The best way to attract members and build enthusiasm is to engage in activities. Here are some ideas:

- ✓ Invite a local NDP candidate to your political action committee meeting or as a guest speaker at a union meeting.
- ✓ Host an event with a guest speaker (NDP candidate or party activist) and invite your PAC committee and co-workers to attend.
- ✓ Create a Facebook group for those interested in getting involved in your PAC.
- ✓ Organize around an issue important to you or your community – ending pension theft, affordable child care, better labour standards, anti-racism, anti-harassment, etc.
- ✓ Connect with your local NDP riding association and attend their events and trainings. Promote these to your local.
- ✓ Organize informal educational or social events in partnership with progressive community groups, your USW Area Council or your area labour council.
- ✓ Organize plantgating with local NDP candidates during elections so your USW members get to meet your local NDP candidate.
- ✓ Connect with your Health and Safety Committee and the USW's Stop The Killing campaign and find a municipality near you that has yet to pass a resolution endorsing the campaign.
www.stopthekilling.ca
- ✓ Recruit union members to volunteer for NDP election campaigns.
- ✓ Organize USW members to attend rallies or actions for social justice.
- ✓ Monitor and share political information relevant to your employer and your local.
- ✓ Share positive information about the NDP with your committee and members of your USW local. The NDP is often overlooked in news coverage. We can help get the NDP word out amongst our members.
- ✓ Organize a phone bank to members during a provincial, federal or municipal election with USW members contacting members to identify support and volunteers for progressive NDP candidates.

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