



USW STRIKE AND DEFENSE FUND RULES

The following Rules have been adopted by the International Executive Board of the United Steelworkers to implement Article XIV, Section 15 of the International Constitution which provides for the establishment of a separate Strike and Defense Fund and that “Expenditures from the Fund shall be determined by the International President and the International Secretary-Treasurer, subject to the review of the International Executive Board.”

- 1. Strike Authorization.** Article XVI of the International Constitution provides that “No strike shall be called without the approval of the International President.” There must be strict adherence to this requirement. Strike relief will not be given for a Local Union if a strike is called without the approval of the International President. In order to receive approval, these rules must be read to the members at the meeting at which the vote to strike is taken.
- 2. Amount of Weekly Allotments for Local Unions.** The Strike and Defense Fund does not make payments directly to strikers. Instead, payments are made weekly to the Local Union in accordance with a formula for all strikes which is fixed by the International Executive Board from time to time based on the level of the Fund and the needs of the strikers. In nearly all cases, no strike relief allotments shall be made to the Local Union until after the strike has continued for three (3) weeks. Strike Relief allotments from the Fund will terminate when the strike terminates unless special circumstances exist. At the conclusion of the strike, all remaining monies must be returned

to the International Strike and Defense Fund so that it will be available for other strikes.

3. **Strike Relief Committee.** The success of strike relief is determined by a conscientious Local Committee dedicated to the purpose of allocating resources according to the policies contained herein. Every effort should be made to help all members in need fairly and consistently.
4. **Strike Relief Allotted Only On Basis of Need.** A strike is a hardship to all who participate in it, but a greater hardship for some than others. It makes no sense to pay everyone the same amount when some striking members have gotten jobs, have other sources of income or have lesser needs while others have no sources of income and are in great need of assistance. For this reason, the Local, through its Strike Relief Committee, must allot strike relief on the basis of need. These need determinations must be made by the Strike Relief Committee during the strike. For this reason, no union official should make statements in advance assuring that specific personal bills will be paid and no member should rely on such statements. The principle that strike assistance is paid on the basis of need has been a fundamental part of our Strike and Defense Fund rules throughout the Fund's 30-year history. Countless strikes, many of very long duration, have been waged successfully using these procedures.
5. **All Other Available Resources Must Be Utilized.** Payments from the Strike Fund and Defense Fund are not designed to cover all needs of the members during a strike. For this reason, a Local on strike needs to tap all other available resources. Food, clothing, and other forms of assistance are available to striking employees from a number of different sources in different communities. These sources include agencies of the federal, state, and local governments, private welfare and community services organizations, credit unions, Local Union funds and District strike funds. In addition, employment opportunities may be available for many strikers.

Locals may also receive cash donations from other sources such as other USW locals, other locals from other Unions, individual donations, other per capita funds within the District, etc. These funds must be deposited with the other strike funds and are to be used first before the funds of the International Strike and Defense Fund.

- 6. Disbursements. No funds received by any Local Union from the Strike and Defense Fund may be disbursed except by check bearing the hand signatures of the Local Union President, Financial Secretary and Treasurer, and the hand signature of the Staff Representative assigned the responsibility for overseeing the strike. In a case where the Financial Secretary and Treasurer have been combined, then a third officer must be assigned the duty of signing the checks. They are ultimately responsible for seeing that disbursements are in accordance with these rules.**

- 7. Application and Recordkeeping Procedures. A Local Union must apply for strike relief allotments to its District Director, and must demonstrate compliance with all the requirements of these Rules. The District Director will evaluate the request in light of these requirements and all circumstances, and if the District Director deems relief to be required, recommend to the International Secretary-Treasurer the amount of the weekly allotment.**

The actual amount of the weekly allotment to be made for a Local Union will be determined within the confines of the Board formula by the International President and the International Secretary-Treasurer in accordance with Article XIV, Section 15 of the International Constitution and these Rules. The allotment will be sent to the District Director who will allot assistance to the Local Union as needed.

The International Secretary-Treasurer shall establish record keeping and accounting requirements for District Directors and

Local Unions with respect to strike relief allotments made from the Strike and Defense Fund. These allotments shall be kept separately from the Local Union general fund.

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