

# **New Membership Card Sign-Up and Engagement**

## **Points to Consider When Talking to Your Members**

- Unions and their members have been facing several threats to maintaining the rights, salaries, and benefits that we and the members that came before us fought hard to achieve. Rights, salaries and benefits that have helped create good middle-class jobs and strong families that have been the foundation of our communities.
- The Janus vs. AFSCME Supreme Court Case is an attempt to weaken unions by opening the door for their members not to pay their fair share of union dues. The goal is to shrink the membership of unions like PEF and weaken our power to fight attacks on your rights, salaries, and benefits.
- We need you to stand together like we did when we defeated the Constitutional Convention. PEF's strength is in our numbers; 52,000 + members strong. The union is not me or other elected leaders; the Union is you, the members. PEF is very democratic and that is a great thing, even if it gets a little messy sometimes. We, like any organization, are far from perfect.
- Staying in the Union is not about being a Republican or a Democrat; it's about your salary, benefits, job protections, and the ability to maintain good middle-class jobs in our communities – salaries and benefits that help lift the salaries and benefits of other workers too.
- We need everyone to stand together. If you are not happy with your union, get more involved and help make the Union better. Leaving the Union will not make things better; it will only weaken us and open the door to diminishing what you have.
- Signing a new membership card also addresses changes to the Taylor Law that guarantee only dues-paying members access to PEF-specific benefits from our Membership Benefits Program; protections against the Justice Center; representation through the discipline process; and a voice to vote, participate, and make your Union better.
- Compare your contractual, health and pension benefits to others in your community. If you believe being in a Union helped you obtain benefits that others don't have, then isn't it worth sticking with your Union?
- Unions ensure equal pay for equal work regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation. Even if the boss doesn't like you, you still get your contractual raise, salary advances, and protections.
- We need everyone to stay in the Union. Every member we lose decreases our ability to maintain and improve what we have. We will be negotiating a new contract next year (2019). We need to stay strong.

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Please sign the new membership card. If you have any questions, let us know.

**Thank you!**

## **Anticipated Concerns and Talking Points**

### *Anticipated Concerns*

#### 1. Individual interest:

- Save 600 bucks
- I want to get promoted
- I don't use the union
- My 600 bucks won't make a difference

#### 2. Upset with service:

- I can't ever get an answer from them
- Only fights for certain titles
- Wouldn't take my grievance
- Can get pay equity with private sector (nurses)
- They didn't fight for Paid Family Leave
  
- Union does nothing
- Civil Service system sucks
- The union isn't protecting the Civil Service system enough

#### 3. Upset with leadership:

- Hate the leaders
- Facebook drama
- Only protects the crazy and the lazy

#### 4. Politics

- The union is too political
- It's all democrats
- I don't support the legislation the union supports

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## *Talking Points*

Regardless of which area people express concern we want to lead with the fact that our bargaining power at the table is based on our membership numbers and the resources we have to enforce our contract and labor law.

“The employer watches our membership numbers – if we have strong numbers, we are more likely to win strong contracts.”

Suggested talking points for each category (these are flexible):

### 1. Individual interest:

Your dues are .9% and your typical raise is 2%, this is more than a 100% return on investment

- Your union dues are approximately the cost of only two days of accruals
- You actually can deduct your union dues from your state income taxes now. The provisions of legislation we were able to get passed and signed into law last year allow you to deduct your union dues from the state income tax – beginning this year – 2018.
- The PEF contract is worth 4 billion dollars and has been built over the last 40 years.
- You have used the union every time you receive a paycheck, take time off, or go to the doctor. The union doesn't just protect people from discipline; we bargain for your contract and enforce it.
- Rights, salaries and benefits that have helped create good middle-class jobs and strong families that have been the foundation of our communities.
- Defunding the Union means fewer resources to fight for better pay and benefits. Your dues AND your membership absolutely make a difference.

### 2 - Upset with service:

- The union is constantly working behind the scenes. If you don't see the union often, it means we are enforcing your benefits and protections well enough that you do not even notice. In fact, I bet there are many positive changes in your workplace that you think management gave you, when in fact it was your union that negotiated the change for you by enforcing our contract and through strong and regular labor management meetings.

## PEF New Membership Card Sign-Up and Engagement

- If we were unable to pursue your grievance it just means we need even stronger numbers to strengthen the provision of the contract that pertained to your concern and if you opt out of the union, we may no longer be able to represent you in certain grievances and disciplinary cases, or on other employment matters that fall outside of our contract, such as civil service violations, performance evaluation appeals, professional licensing matters, or before the Justice Center, to name a few. You would also not be able to vote on new contracts when they are re-negotiated or to participate in how our union is run, such as electing union leaders, and running for election to union leadership.
- If we were unable to get back to you quickly, it is because we truly are very busy working to protect our members and enforce the contract with a very limited staff.
- Whatever aspect of our service you were upset with there are just too many tradeoffs for dropping your membership to be worth it. Even before we start losing strong contracts with raises and affordable health insurance you would lose out right away on Membership Benefits such as:
  - Short term and long term disability benefits. Public Sector Employees do not receive NYS disability benefits and PEF MBP offers coverage at a discount for this reason.
  - Our Membership Benefits Program also provides incredible educational benefits beyond those provided for in the contract including free online associates degrees.
- Every member we lose decreases our ability to maintain and improve what we have. We will be negotiating a new contract next year (2019). For example, we will need strong membership numbers to obtain Paid Family Leave provisions.

### 3. Upset with leadership:

- PEF is very democratic and that is a great thing, even if it gets a little messy sometimes. We, like any organization, are far from perfect.
- The PEF contract is worth 4 billion dollars and has been built over the last 40 years. Even if you don't like your leaders right now, the contract is bigger than them. We get strong contracts because of membership numbers.
- Defunding the Union does not fix whatever issue you may have with the leadership; it does mean fewer resources to fight for better pay and benefits.

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Politics:

- Staying in the Union is not about being a Republican or a Democrat; it's about your salary, benefits, job protections, and the ability to maintain good middle-class jobs in our communities – salaries and benefits that help lift the salaries and benefits of other workers too.
- PEF's Political Action Committee has routinely voted to support republicans and democrats. It makes these decisions based on candidate's records with regard to supporting labor, not party lines.
- If you are not happy with your union, get more involved and help make the Union better. Leaving the Union will not make things better; it will only weaken us and open the door to diminishing what you have.

A person who chooses to opt out would be entitled to only the benefits secured by the contract. That includes, for now, dental and vision. However, non-members get no PEF representation during:

- Any questioning by the employer, including interrogations by the employer and/or the Justice Center.
- In statutory or administrative proceedings or to enforce statutory or regulatory rights - for example, licensing or credentialing matters, PERB cases, Civil Service Law matters/violations, PESH complaints, and other litigation and legal matters during which members' due process rights are at stake.
- In any discipline grievance or arbitration seeking to penalize an employee for alleged misconduct — PEF members are provided with expert free legal representation when the State seeks to terminate them.

Non-members can't wait until they need representation to join the union. PEF will not provide representation in these matters unless the individual is an active, dues paying PEF member at the time of the conduct which is the subject of the matter at issue, and remains an active dues paying PEF member during the course of the representation.

Here is a list of MBP Benefits that would be lost if they are not a PEF member:

Protection Beyond Compare:

- Group Term Life Insurance
- Short-Term Disability Insurance
- Long-Term Disability Insurance
- Accident Indemnity Insurance
- Cancer Care Insurance
- Auto/Home/Renters Insurance
- Emergency Travel/Identify Theft Protection

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## Legal, Financial, Educational & Travel Services:

- Free College Benefit
- Justice Center Benefit
- Legal Defense Benefit
- Discharge of Official Weapon Benefit
- Assault, Trauma, & Captivity Coverage
- Voluntary Legal Service Plan
- Financial Planning & Credit Counseling
- Purchase Power Financing Alternative
- Payroll Deduction
- Defensive Driving Course
- Exam Fee Reimbursement
- PEF Travel Services & Rebates

## Discounts, Special Events & Savings Offers:

- Movie Tickets
- Ski Tickets
- Theme Parks & Water Parks
- Performing Arts Events
- Sporting Events
- Attractions
- Discounted Gift Cards
- Family Day Events