

# Why Join the Fight?

*Answers to questions you may have about voluntary membership in your AFSCME Local Union.*



## AFSCME in Wisconsin

The year was 1932 and the country was in the midst of the worst economic depression in its history when a small band of public employees met in Madison to discuss what could be done to save our state's civil service system. That's when AFSCME was started, born to protect worker rights; rights to dignity on the job, a fair wage and a safe working environment. This is what AFSCME stands for and why we must continue our fight in Wisconsin. We will never allow Scott Walker or any other right wing politician to define our union, because "We are Wisconsin".

**Why should I join the Union?** The answer is simple, the only thing that stands between you and Scott Walker's total disregard for the job you do is the Union, and the Union is only as strong as its members.

These are unprecedented times, never in the history of Wisconsin has any Governor showed such a total lack of respect for the jobs we do. Your union has stood tall and taken on every challenge, in every venue available to us.

We have:

- Built coalitions with other unions and like-minded organizations to mobilize against these attacks.
- Mounted recall efforts to hold legislators accountable for their actions.
- Spearheaded numerous legal challenges to the Walker Administration's actions.

Our fight continues to get us back to the Wisconsin Idea of governing cleanly, debating openly, abiding by the laws and rules of our great state and having respect for all workers and the work they do.

### Local Union

**Your Local Union will continue to operate as in the past. They will:**

- Elect Local Leadership by a membership vote.
- Have well trained stewards
- Continue to have local union meetings
- Continue Labor/Management Meetings to resolve workplace issues
- Enforce Workplace safety rules

**Local Unions will represent only members who sign up to pay voluntary dues. There is no longer a requirement to represent those who do not join. Members will be represented in:**

- Investigatory interviews via Weingarten Rights
- Pre-disciplinary hearing via the Loudermill decision
- The first two steps of the civil service grievance procedure

## **Council 24**

Council 24 will continue to provide an array of services to our dues paying members. These services include:

### **Representation**

- Council 24 will represent members in the civil service grievance procedure starting at the 3<sup>rd</sup> step (agency level) and at the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC)- the new arbitration level with OSER representatives as our counterparts.
- WERC filing fees will be paid for by Council 24
- A grievance review procedure will remain in place giving appeal rights to Local Presidents and the grievant.

### **Legal Representation**

WSEU retains expert attorneys lead by Peg Lautenschlager (former Wisconsin Attorney General) to represent members and the Council in Unfair Employment actions and any other legal action that will ensure our members rights.

### **Local Leadership Training**

Council 24 will continue to provide training to Local Leadership on how to better represent their members.

### **Lobbying Team**

Council 24 has the best lobbying team in the capital and will continue every effort to lobby legislators on issues important to our members.

### **Political Action**

Council 24 has a very active political action committee through SEPAC and our SEPAC website ([www.wseu-sepac.org](http://www.wseu-sepac.org))

### **Member Only Benefits**

Council 24 will continue to provide members only benefits such as:

- Union Dental Insurance
- Scholarships for members dependant children, as well as a members only scholarship
- Additional members-only benefits through the International Union

### **Communication**

Council 24 has a Union Information Network and will soon begin a Members Only Network to keep members up to date on Union activities. Our websites will be continually updated, and in the future we will be introducing expanded communication through social networks.

## **AFSCME International**

AFSCME International was started in Wisconsin and has a strong relationship with Council 24. They have declared Wisconsin as “ground zero” in the fight to save middle class workers.

Additionally AFSCME has:

- 1.6 million members assisting us in fighting for our rights
- Invested an incredible amount of real dollars in Wisconsin’s fight and continues to assist monetarily and with staff resources
- Many departments to assist Local Unions and Councils with research, organizing and technical assistance
- A wide array of members-only benefits

AFSCME will continue to be a partner in our fight to regain ALL our rights

AFSCME is a member of the AFL-CIO which has been instrumental in the solidarity movement and has brought many other unions and resources to the table to continue our fight.

**There has never been a more critical time in our lives to band together and fight for dignity in the workplace and for the middle class as a whole.**

**The choice is clear; become part of the Union family and the fight to save the middle class by continuing your union membership!**

[www.wseu-24.org](http://www.wseu-24.org)  
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