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## **INTRODUCTION**

AFGE established the Fair Practices Department in 1968 to function as the union's civil rights arm and to strengthen and enforce equal employment opportunity laws. The objectives of the department are to eliminate discrimination in the government work force, promote a level playing field, develop and promote action policies designed to eliminate discriminatory barriers to employment opportunities, and to assure the protection of every member against unlawful discriminatory actions based on race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age or physical, mental disability or sexual orientation.

In 1974, AFGE became the first government employee union to establish a women's department. The goal of the Women's Department is to improve the status of women in government service and to eliminate artificial barriers to the progress of women. This department's priority is to help AFGE members and officers, government officials, and Congress identify situations that cause gender discrimination and eliminate the problems once they are identified.

Today, the Women's and Fair Practices Departments work closely together under the guidance of the National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices. These departments provide support and information to AFGE members in four areas; Education and training, member mobilization/organizing, representation through litigation and legislative political action. The NVP supervises the employees who function in these departments.

The NVP for Women and Fair Practices is an elected official of AFGE and serves as a member of the National Executive Committee. Delegates to the AFGE National Convention vote on this position. The AFGE National Convention is held every three years. AFGE is one of a few unions which recognized the importance of fair practices and women's issues by having an elected officer at the national level whose responsibility is to address the issues of fair practices and women.

## INTRODUCTORY WORDS



***Affirmative Action or Affirmative Employment*** is a plan by which employers are required to equalize and end under-representation in the work force. Employers are required to take positive steps to end discrimination by enhancing recruitment from women and minority populations, eliminating application criteria which unfavorably effect one population, and/or creating programs which encourage women and minority individuals to apply for positions. ***Affirmative action is not a preference or a quota system for unqualified applicants.***

***Constituency Groups*** are labor organizations that are affiliated with the AFL-CIO and they represent different groups of workers and are our allies on different issues.

***Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)*** is a promise not to base a job-related decision on a factor that is unrelated to the job. Federal laws have made it illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status and disability. Federal laws have also required equal pay for women and no discrimination on the basis of pregnancy. Other bases not currently protected under the Federal law include personal appearance, sexual orientation, sexual preference, marital status, and family responsibility.

***Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)*** is a government agency that oversees the discrimination complaint process for federal employees.

***Discrimination*** is the act of perceiving an individual as a categorization instead of as an individual. Discrimination is often related to bigotry and/or prejudice. It occurs in the workplace when a job related decision regarding hiring, promotion, training opportunity, assignments, responsibilities, benefits, discipline or termination is based on a factor or factors unrelated to the job.

***Diversity*** is often one of the results of Affirmative Action (AA) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). Diversity, however, is broader than AA and EEO for it encompasses everybody and not only protected classes. Diversity is the representation of all races, nationalities, cultures, religions, gender, abilities, sexual preferences and orientations, social backgrounds, and educational backgrounds in the work place. Diversity allows for the presentation of different ideas,

perspectives and beliefs in order to improve the work place environment and work product. Time and studies have proven that a diversified workplace is valuable and highly desirable.

**Harassment** is a form of discrimination. It is unwelcome conduct of a sexual or hostile nature that references one's protected status in an annoying, offensive or irritating manner. Harassment is often repetitive or persistent.

**Protected Class** is the group of individuals that the Affirmative Action (AA) or Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws and regulations cover. Under AA, only women and minorities (African-American, Asian, Hispanic and Native American) have a protected **status** and therefore are protected classes. Under Federal EEO, the protected classes are individuals of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age and disability.

**Reverse Discrimination** is a misnomer. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws were originally created to protect individuals of color, women and religious groups that have been historically discriminated against. However, the law was broadly written and states that an employer is not to discriminate on the basis of "race", "religion" or "sex." As a result, individuals who are a race, sex or religion that was not originally intended to be included, but under the broad language are included, have successfully sought protection under the EEO laws. For example, individuals who are White (White is their race) that have been discriminated against based on their race have successfully sought protection under the laws' prohibition against discrimination against race. This has been called "reverse discrimination" even though under the plain language of the law, it is simply discrimination.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

The National Human Rights Committee (HRC) is comprised of the National Vice President for Women's and Fair Practices and the 24 elected district officers called the National Fair Practices Affirmative Action Coordinators (NFPAAC) and the National Women's Advisory Coordinators (NWAC). The purpose of the HRC is to study and propose legal, legislative and administrative plans relating to the improvement of working conditions, with a focus on eliminating employment discrimination in the government. These proposals may be presented to the National Executive Committee (NEC) through the NVP. The topics of these proposals include, but are not limited to, eliminating discrimination based on race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, disability/handicap, political affiliation, personal appearance, family responsibility, and sexual preference or sexual orientation as they relate to the quality of life for AFGE members, their families and their communities. These proposals once adopted by the NEC may be lobbied for or implemented internally and externally to accomplish the goals of AFGE.

#### **NATIONAL FAIR PRACTICES AFFIRMATIVE ACTION COORDINATORS (NFPAAC)**

The National Fair Practices Affirmative Action Coordinators (NFPAAC) represent members on EEO issues. They monitor trends in EEO laws and regulations and they may recommend a national action plan for AFGE. They also provide training on EEO issues throughout the District that they represent. These Coordinators are elected at their District Caucus meeting every three years and are sometimes referred to as District Coordinators.

#### **NATIONAL WOMEN'S ADVISORY COORDINATORS (NWAC)**

The National Women's Advisory Coordinators (NWAC) monitor trends in women's issues. They represent members on women's issues and may recommend a national action plan for AFGE. They also assist locals in training sessions throughout the District where they were elected. These Coordinators are elected at a District Caucus meeting every three years and are sometimes referred to as District Coordinators.

### **LOCAL COORDINATORS**

The most significant component of the AFGE Human Rights Network is the Local Coordinator. Your roles are diverse and challenging; you assure that your Local's EEO and affirmative action needs are being served. Your role also requires that you develop an action plan for your Locals approval and implementation. The Locals determine if these positions will be appointed or elected.

#### **LOCAL WOMEN'S COORDINATORS (LWC)**

The LWC is primarily concerned with issues that have an adverse impact on women in the work force. The main objective of the LWC is to assure that the agency maintain policies and practices which are free from artificial barriers to the progress of women. Among the areas of concern are child care, gender-based wage discrimination, sexual harassment, alternative work

schedules, upward mobility, career development, family friendly leave policies, health and safety matters, and leadership skills development. These issues are but a few addressed by the Coordinators. Actions to resolve issues may require you to pursue solutions within the agency, or seek legislative solutions. Finally, don't forget the importance of organizing new members and mobilizing the work force around these issues.

### **LOCAL FAIR PRACTICES COORDINATORS (LFPC)**

The LFPC is principally concerned with EEO and affirmative employment in the workplace. The primary focus of the LFPC is direct assistance and/or counseling to members with inquiries or complaints of discrimination. An LFPC should be familiar with EEO laws and regulations so they can take an active role in the complaint process by assisting stewards with strategies for winning complaints. Another major focus is to assure that agency officials properly identify under-representation of minorities, women and persons with disabilities. Once an under-representation has been identified, the LFPC will take actions to correct the situation. These corrections may be addressed by working with the agency's EEO Committee and/or through the negotiation of strong contract language.

The LFPC's activities should also include grassroots mobilization on EEO or civil rights legislation. Let's not forget the importance of organizing new members around these issues.

Together, AFGE National, District, Council and Local offices can effectively work toward eliminating discrimination in government.

### **NATIONAL COUNCIL COORDINATORS**

Each National Bargaining Council has been urged to develop a council structure to assist the federation in achieving its goals of inclusion and unity. In 2003, the National Convention approved the election and appointment of Local Women and Fair Practice Coordinators in every Local, including Locals in the Bargaining Councils. Their roles are identical within the specific Council concerns.

**CHAPTER 2**



The main priority of AFGE Local Women's and Local Fair Practices Coordinators is the empowerment of our women and minority members. As the civil, human, women and workers' rights advocate for the Local, the Coordinator:

- Advises Local officials on issues that impact women and minorities.
- Mobilizes members and recruits non-members around civil, human, women and workers' rights issues.
- Counsels Local members on specific problems that adversely affect employment.
- Keeps the Local and National Union informed on the status of women and minorities in the government agencies within their jurisdiction.
- Assists Locals in developing the union and Local's strategic plan for civil, human, women and workers' rights issues.
- Examines the agency's Affirmative Employment Plan (AEP) or diversity plan and is active in the preparation and/or the publicizing of failures in meeting plan goals. Offers positive input for implementation after consultation with other union officials.
- Advises and assists local officers in contract negotiations and contract language affecting women and minorities.
- Chairs the Human Rights Committee; assists the committee in developing an annual work plan and recruits members to serve.
- Represents members with EEO discrimination complaints before the EEOC, the Merit System Protection Board (MSPB), or in arbitration.
- Assists the Local with developing a Voter Protection Program.

- Participates with community, national, local and AFL-CIO constituency groups.
- Writes articles for Local newsletters.
- Keeps National Women's and Fair Practices officers informed of the Local's activities and concerns.
- Prepares reports on the Human Rights Program for their Local.
- Pursues and encourages women and minorities to search for leadership roles within AFGE.

**GET IN THE INTERNAL AFGE "NETWORK"**

- Request that your name and title appear on all appropriate mailing and union routing lists.
- Phone the Women's and Fair Practices Departments to tell them of your election/appointment.
- Make sure that your District Women's and Fair Practices Coordinators are aware of your election or appointment.
- Attend Union, Federal Women's Program, and Council meetings.
- Make sure you are on your agency's EEO mailing lists.
- Check with personnel to make sure you receive training and vacancy announcements, new management directives, etc.

**GET IN THE AFL-CIO "NETWORK"**

The AFL-CIO "Network" is a powerful resource for the union; it is one way we connect to different communities, creating and strengthening partnerships to enhance the standard of living for all workers and their families. Using this network enhances our union's strength at the bargaining table, in organizing campaigns, and in the political arena.

Request that your name and title appear on all appropriate mailing and routing lists for AFL-CIO Constituency Groups. These groups promote the full participation of women and minorities in the union movement and ensure unions hear and respond to the concerns of the communities they represent.

The following is a list of current AFL-CIO Constituency Groups you can join.

- A. Phillip Randolph Institute (APRI)  
815 16<sup>th</sup> St., N.W.  
Third Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202) 508-3710  
[www.apri.org](http://www.apri.org)

APRI is a national organization of black trade unionists; their mission is to fight for racial equality and economic justice. They work with people suited to serve as a bridge between labor and the black community.

- ❑ Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA)  
815 16th St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 508-3733  
[www.apalanet.org](http://www.apalanet.org)

The first and only national organization of Asian Pacific American union members, it organizes and works with Asian Pacific American workers, many of them immigrants, to recruit and train union members and labor activists to become leaders in the labor movement, mobilizes voters to increase Asian American participation in the political process and involved with local communities to increase their awareness of the issues that affect workers.

- ❑ Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW)  
815 16th St., N.W.  
Second floor South  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 508-6969  
[www.cluw.org](http://www.cluw.org)

CLUW's goals are organizing unorganized women, promoting affirmative action in the workplace, engaging in political action and legislation, and increasing participation of women within their unions. Not only should you use CLUW as a constant resource, but you should become part of that resource. Join CLUW and encourage other women in your local to do the same.

- ❑ Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU)  
1625 L St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(202) 429-1203  
[www.cbtu.org](http://www.cbtu.org)

CBTU is a voice for black workers within the trade union movement, challenging organized labor to be more relevant to the needs and aspirations of black and poor workers. They are recognized as a potent economic and political force within the African American community. In the political arena, CBTU has leveraged the vast resources of unions to mobilize black voters to influence elections and public policy at every level of government.



- ❑ Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)  
815 16<sup>th</sup> St., N.W.  
Suite 310  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 508-6919  
[www.lclaa.org](http://www.lclaa.org)

LCLAA was founded by local Latino trade union committees to promote participation by Hispanic trade unionists in a more responsive labor movement. LCLAA builds political empowerment of the Latino family, supports economic and social justice for all workers, and promotes greater cultural diversity at the workplace.

- ❑ Pride at Work (PAW)  
815 16th St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
[www.prideatwork.org](http://www.prideatwork.org)

The purpose of Pride at Work is to mobilize mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender Community around organizing for social and economic justice. We see full equality for LGBT Workers in their workplaces and unions.

### **MEETING WITH MANAGEMENT**

Shortly after your election or appointment, the Coordinator should interact with the agency Federal Women's Program Manager and/or EEO officials and other agency officials responsible for women and minority rights. The Coordinator should become a part of any agency committee (such as the agency diversity committee or Federal Women's Program Committee) which meets regularly for the purpose of improving the status of women and/or minorities in the work force and therein provide input from the Local to further this goal.

### **EDUCATING YOURSELF**

- ❑ Check with your District Coordinators, your Local, the EEO office, and the AFGE website to see what kind of training is available.
- ❑ Keep your eyes open for any kind of training opportunities that may help you do your job.
- ❑ Incorporate your EEO training requirements into your official career development plan. It may be that funding for your EEO training can come from the EEO Office rather than your Local's budget.

## SUGGESTED TRAINING FOR COORDINATORS

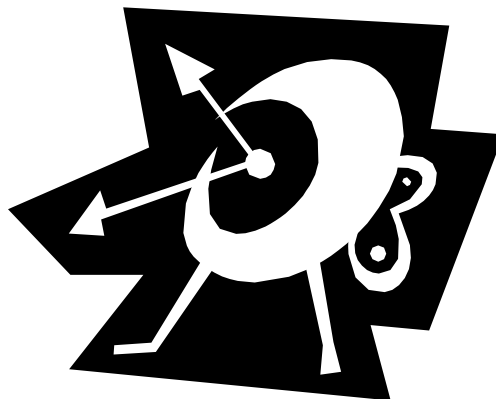
To do the best job possible in your position as a Coordinator, the courses below should be considered:

- Basic and Advanced Coordinator training
- EEO plans, affirmative employment plans, and diversity management plans
- Career counseling
- Sexual Harassment
- Arbitration, FLRA and MSPB hearings
- Affirmative recruitment: FEORP
- Program management
- Communication skills
- Presentation techniques
- Identifying racism and sexism
- Effective briefing techniques
- Diversity and team building
- Conflict Resolution
- Organizing and Mobilizing Institute
- Legislative Political Institute
- Editor's Training

You also learn by participating in AFGE action conferences such as the Legislative Conference; Human, Civil, Women's and Workers' Caucus and various District trainings and Metropolitan initiatives.

## GETTING TIME TO DO YOUR JOB

One of your first tasks will be to see what provision has been made, if any, for official time by your union contract. Some contracts may specifically have coordinator's roles defined as well as their official time. Others may simply define steward's and officer's time with either a specific amount of official time allocated or there may be a "pool" of time. Whatever the case, ask to receive official time. You can then use a percentage of your time to serve as a coordinator. Arrange with your Local President which hours you can spend as a Coordinator and guard your time jealously. **DO NOT** do other work during your Coordinator work time. Show your Local regular written progress reports on your projects.



Please note that Part 1614.605 of the EEO regulations grants “reasonable” official time for an employee complainant or his or her representative to work on EEO complaints. The regulation states that a representative “shall have a reasonable amount of official time, if otherwise on duty, to prepare complaint and respond to agency and EEOC requests for information....[or] when their presence is authorized or required by the agency or the Commission during the investigation, informal adjustment, or hearing on the complaint.” This time is in addition to any other time that you would negotiate for other coordinator's tasks.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **MOBILIZING USING CIVIL, HUMAN, WOMEN AND WORKERS' RIGHTS ISSUES**



#### **ESTABLISHING A COMMITTEE**

The Coordinator's work is best achieved by establishing local committees because committees have turned members into activists and activists into leaders. The Coordinators should organize around existing civil, human, women's and workers' rights issues, join other constituency groups and attend AFGE's Legislative Training Conference, the Women's and Fair Practices Human Rights Training Conference, the Annual Legislative Conference and the Organizing and Mobilizing training.

There are a few simple steps to establish a women's and/or fair practices committee(s) and to assure support for the committee's goals:

- Review your constitution/bylaws. Who appoints committees? How can you assure participation of all areas, occupations, etc.?
- Talk to leadership and get their support for the committee. Stress that the purpose is to build the union. Some areas that support District and National goals are legislative and political action, member mobilizing around key issues and EEO representation.
- Talk to co-workers/members about issues and the idea of establishing a committee. Simply stated - see who is interested.
- Get a chair/committee appointed or elected. (Ask people to get involved.)
- Stress issues of concern to members. Get their ideas and their commitment to participate. (Do not limit the volunteers to current activist or individuals with unlimited time to give. A member willing to spend fifteen minutes a week stuffing envelopes or doing a distribution should be activated rather than ignored.)
- Hold the first meeting:
  - Orientation - Explain the purpose and how often the committee will meet.
  - Conduct a survey of the membership (see pg. 20)
  - Set priorities and determine goals.
  - Begin planning program (See Section on Planning Successful Issues Campaign).

## **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL ISSUES CAMPAIGN**

The following steps can be used to put together winning programs on many issues of concern to women and minorities:

A. Select an Issue

- You may want to conduct a survey to determine exact needs, or you may already know what issue is the current hot topic.
- Talk to co-workers/members for ideas. Ask them to get involved with the project.
- Talk to leadership to get their support and ideas for proposed projects.
- Look at the District and National annual work plan.

B. Developing Your Tactical Work Plan

1. Identify the target population you wish to reach with the specific issue.
2. Know the theme of your message. This comes from the content of your issue and the medium used to communicate with the prospective member.
3. Determine the timing of your plan. It should be relatively short and precise. Ninety days from issue to action is a good timeframe to select:
  - The first 30 days are used to design the campaign, allocate resources, and produce/acquire the needed materials.
  - The second 30 days can be used to prepare the union activists who will mobilize the target population and have them communicate the overall theme.
  - The last 30 days are for the target population to carry out their tasks so that on the last day, the desired action is taken or completed.

C. Define The Program

Make sure that whatever the committee chooses to work on is going to meet the members' needs. For instance, getting an on-site child care center is not useful if members don't want to have their children commuting downtown with them.

D. Consider Alternative Solutions

- Get ideas from committee members and other leaders.
- Get information/do homework on the issues.
- Know the rules (contract language, union bylaws, state regulations or whatever pertains to the project).

E. Set an Objective

- It should be short-term; most should take not more than six months to one year.
- Make sure the objective is realistic and within the scope of the committee.

F. Communication Considerations

1. *Establish a communications plan.*
2. *Determine the purpose of each communication.*

- Agitate?*
- Educate?*
- Organize?*
- Other??*

3. *Methods!*

- News article in Union Paper
- Editorial column in Union Paper
- Local Stewards Newsletter
- Union e-mail
- Space on Union's web site
- Leaflet
- Pamphlet
- Survey results
- Radio commercial
- Bill boards
- Video cassette
- Bumper sticker
- Phone bank
- Speech at meeting
- Letter
- Focus group
- Flyer
- Survey Form
- Public service announcement
- Television commercial
- Poster
- News conference
- Button
- Phone tree
- Memorandum

G. Determine Resources Needed

- Put together a timetable with steps along the way.
- Develop a budget.
- Identify what material is needed.
- Determine your likely friends. Who is likely to be a supporter? Who has a problem?
- Build coalitions with: other unions, AFL-CIO, women's organizations, civil rights organizations, community groups, religious groups, elected officials, and senior citizen groups.
- Determine your likely opponents - Management, business groups (could also be an ally), community groups, elected officials
- Prepare for opposition List all possible objections/arguments and counter-arguments.

H. Develop Task Lists with the Committee

- It is important that the right person is on the right job. Make sure people feel comfortable about the job they have selected to do, and that they have enough people and resources to help them get it done. Ask people what they would like to do once they see what the full requirements are.

- Keep in touch. Check progress to make sure that members have what they need. Make any necessary adjustments.
- Set up a report system to make sure things are going smoothly at points along the way. Don't assume that because you haven't heard anything that the job is getting done

I. Evaluate Success

- What did we do well?
- What would we do differently next time?
- Give recognition and thanks to members who worked hard. Don't omit this step! People need recognition for a job well done.

J. Publicize Your Victory

- Submit articles to all newsletters (Local, Council, District, National)
- AFL-CIO
- Local media
- Union meetings
- Meetings of groups who provided support



K. Select a New Project

- Keep the team together and begin the process over again on a new issue or get another team together of interested members on the new issue.

L. Maintaining/Rebuilding Momentum

- Make sure projects are attainable, and keep them short-term until the committee has established a record of success. Publicize success -- it will attract volunteers for the next project.
- For each activity get an agreement on group goals. Achieving them will give a real feeling of accomplishment. Where there are no challenging goals, members feel that activity is unimportant.
- Get enough people to do the job. Overworked volunteers stop volunteering, and besides, the extra lift of the group really begins when there are at least seven or eight people involved.
- Be sure each member knows his or her job and position in the group. It is not enough for the chair to know.
- Do things at meetings. Transact business, make decisions, review past work, and plan new things. People will be more committed to things that have been agreed on in the

group. They will be on record with the others. Besides, they won't keep coming to meetings unless they accomplish something.

- Invite union leaders to meetings. People want to hear directly from them, and to make sure that their own views are carried to higher levels.
- Make the meetings interesting. Hold the work and "mechanics" down to an hour or so. Use audio-visual aids such as films when possible. Leave time for informal discussion.
- Encourage people to help each other out on jobs.
- Recognize good work and reward it. Commend active supporters at meetings, express appreciation in person, and write letters of thanks and mention committee members in union publications.

## CHAPTER 4

### SPONSORING EEO/WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES



A good way to increase the visibility of your Local's Coordinators and their programs is to **expand the number of persons** involved in or affected by the program, and to train employees and supervisors for the union to sponsor occasional programs. You or the Coordinator's Committee may decide that periodic "brown bag" lunch programs, or one week of workshops annually, or one special event quarterly will best fit the needs of the employees in your organization, or an annual event to honor a national program; Women's history month, Equality Day, Martin Luther King's birthday, etc.

#### **Caution:**

Planning and conducting programs take a lot of time. The time you spend setting up such activities is time which otherwise could be spent in identifying systemic barriers to the employment and advancement of minorities and women, devising strategies to eliminate the barriers, and working with other union officials to implement the strategies. As you evaluate the need for union-sponsored activities, ALWAYS ask yourself if a program will contribute to the enhanced employment of minorities and women and if the time to be spent arranging the program could be better spent on systemic, substantive employment initiatives. Union-sponsored activities are a means, NOT an end.

The mission of the Union's Coordinator Program is equality in employment. If your organization is to take the union seriously as a substantive, integral part of the organization's operations, everything associated with the coordinators must convey that message. Therefore, while topics such as cancer detection, rape prevention and fashion may be of interest, these should not be the main focus of the programs offered by the union.

Don't exclude any groups i.e., white men, black women, gays, lesbians and bisexuals, etc. from your program planning. Although the focus of an activity might be Women's History Month, the activities can be a celebration and an educational event. Attendance of all groups will increase understanding throughout the organization.

To insure success of the program, plan the logistics carefully. Estimate the number of participants and be sure to reserve a room that is the right size. Make sure that the room contains enough chairs. If the group size permits, arrange the chairs in a horseshoe or double

horseshoe, rather than classroom style, to facilitate discussion. If a program or session lasts more than 3 hours, schedule a coffee break.

Check with the speakers in advance to find out if they will need flip charts, a podium, or audiovisual equipment. Find out if they will need handouts duplicated for participants. Plan publicity for the program carefully to maximize the value of the program. Consider sending personal invitations to persons whom you would like to attend. An announcement from you or from the head of the Local should give the time, the place, and the details of the programs.

If your Local has a women's or fair practices committee, you will probably want to delegate responsibility for programs to the committee members. If there is no committee you may want to establish one.

### **PROGRAM IDEAS**

Successful Coordinators and committees around the country have sponsored the following programs and activities:

- Conferences of one or two days with speakers and workshops.
- Educational programs (such as sexual harassment, disability rights, etc.) set up separately or in conjunction with other union events or meetings.
- Broadcast information on the radio regularly.
- Lobbying and advocacy on state or federal legislation of interest to women and minorities - pay equity, dependent care, family leave, etc.
- Petition drives on issues.
- Speaking in schools about unions (career day).
- Annual awards dinners recognizing contributions to women's and civil rights.
- Monthly or quarterly newsletters with updates on local, state and national issues and events.
- Columns on issues in general union publications or newsletters.
- Targeted health fairs.
- New member information packets containing brochures, a copy of the contract, etc.
- Union office/bulletin board displays on women's and minority's rights and history.
- Activities relating to Black History Month (February), Women's History Month (March), etc.

AFGE's Women's and Fair Practices Departments can provide further information or assistance with any of these ideas, or help committees develop new programs.

### **WORKSHOP IDEAS**

The list of possible workshops for your committee to hold is endless. The AFGE Women's and Fair Practices Departments, as well as District Coordinators, can conduct many of these workshops for locals or can provide advice on using other resources to obtain speakers and workshop leaders. The following are a few which have been of interest to other locals and councils:

Affirmative Action

AIDS

Alternative Work Schedules: Flex-time/Flex-hours

Assertiveness Training

Bargaining for Work & Family Issues

Brain Storming

- Child Care
- Elder Care
- Family Leave

Building Community Support for the Right to

Organize

Changing to Organize

Child Care

Common Sense Economics

Communication Skills

Contingency Workers' Rights

Creating our Song

Disability Rights

Diversity Issues

Domestic Violence

Elder Care

Electing Women to Public Office

Equal Employment Opportunity

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Gay & Lesbian Workplace Issues

Getting the Policies We Want

Grassroots Ballot Initiatives

Immigrant Workers

Intro to Low-Wage Worker Org.

Intro to Working Women Vote

Job Placement (RIF Rights)

Leadership Skills

Legal Rights/ Family Law

Legislative Initiatives/Issues

Living-Wage Campaigns

NAFTA/Fast Track

Pay Equity

Organizing

Political Action

Problems of Single Parents

Public Speaking

Reasonable Accommodations

Retirement Planning & Security

Sexual Harassment

Staging a Press Event

Stress Management

Superwoman/Juggling Roles

Sweatshops across Borders

Violence in the Workplace

Welfare Reform

Wills and Estates

Workplace Safety and Health

## **SUGGESTED SURVEY FOR AFGE WOMEN'S COMMITTEES AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEES**



The following survey is a draft for use by local, district and council committees to assess the needs and interests of AFGE members. The survey could be distributed by stewards or committee members at the worksite, union meetings, conventions, or in Local newsletters.

This draft survey is only one suggested form. Depending on the kind of follow-up the committee wants to do, it may be a good idea to add questions relating to your local interests and asking for the name, address and local number of the member who fills out the survey. The only reason not to ask for names is if the committee feels that it might cause some members to decide not to fill it out.

The Women's and Fair Practices Departments at AFGE can help committees with information, program ideas and educational programs.

**Sample Committee Survey of Members**

The \_\_\_\_\_ Committee will be planning programs for members and would like to give you an opportunity to express your interests, needs and ideas.

1. What time would generally be best for you to attend educational programs or meetings?
  - \_\_\_\_ a. Saturday
  - \_\_\_\_ b. Sunday
  - \_\_\_\_ c. Weekday evening (which evening \_\_\_\_\_)
  - \_\_\_\_ d. Lunchtime
  
2. Please check the areas which you would like the \_\_\_\_\_ committee to work on:
  - \_\_\_\_ a. Educational programs or conferences
  - \_\_\_\_ b. Legislative issues - Which issues? \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_ c. Pay discrimination/pay equity/ promotional fairness
  - \_\_\_\_ d. Health issues
  - \_\_\_\_ e. Sexual Harassment
  - \_\_\_\_ f. Affirmative action
  - \_\_\_\_ g. Domestic violence
  - \_\_\_\_ h. Stress Management
  - \_\_\_\_ i. Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Please check 5 of the 17 workshops/educational programs listed which would be of most interest to you?
  - \_\_\_\_ a. Pay Equity -- How "women's work" is paid lower than comparable men's jobs -- and how to start doing something about the problem.
  - \_\_\_\_ b. Sexual Harassment -- What the union can do to help members deal with, and prevent, unwanted sexual advances or other harassment which may occur in the workplace.
  - \_\_\_\_ c. Leadership Skills -- How to develop the qualities that will help you become a more effective leader.
  - \_\_\_\_ d. Public Speaking -- How to improve your ability to speak in front of groups.
  - \_\_\_\_ e. Collective Bargaining -- Techniques for bargaining with management about issues of special concern to women and minorities.
  - \_\_\_\_ f. Political Action -- How to increase the union's political power by becoming involved with political campaigns.
    - g. Legislative Action -- How to improve the Locals influence on elected leaders; Local, State and National
  - \_\_\_\_ h. Grievance Handling -- Techniques for investigating and processing on-the-job grievances.
  - \_\_\_\_ i. Stress -- How to recognize and manage stress through union action.
  - \_\_\_\_ j. Parliamentary Procedure -- How to effectively chair and participate in meetings.

- \_\_\_\_k. Assertiveness Training -- Techniques for dealing more effectively with people. How our work impacts our community and environment.
- \_\_\_\_l. Alcoholism and Drug Abuse -- What the union can do to help members with these problems.
- \_\_\_\_l. Domestic Violence -- The union's role in fighting spouse and child abuse.
- \_\_\_\_m. Child Care -- Union programs to assist members in getting affordable child care.
- \_\_\_\_n. New Technology -- The union's role in helping members cope with new technology in the workplace.
- \_\_\_\_o. Women's Committees -- How to start a local women's committee and maintain momentum.
- \_\_\_\_p. Other (please list ideas)

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4. Are there any issues which the union might develop as special projects which you might be interested in working on?

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5. Your job title:

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6. Sex: Female\_\_\_\_\_ Male\_\_\_\_\_

7. Are you an AFGE member?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ Why?\_\_\_\_\_

No\_\_\_\_\_ Why Not?\_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: \_\_\_\_\_

(Surveys are best handed out and picked up personally and should be less than 10 question)

Return By \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_.

## CHAPTER 5

### FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM

One of the major areas where the Local Women's Coordinator can have input is the Federal Women's Program (FWP). The FWP was established in 1967 to enhance employment opportunities for women in the federal work force, and to address the employment needs and problems of women as they relate to Federal personnel policies and practices. While most experience with the FWP has been a perception of it as an "agency management program", union activists should attempt to balance the program with their increased participation.

The FWP seeks to:

- Provide management with information and strategies for enhancing the advancement of women.
- Assist the agency in achieving equal opportunity for women in personnel management policy and practice, for example, recruitment programs, training, selection, career development and promotion.
- Assure that managers and supervisors evaluate all employees fairly and equitably.
- Promote the equitable distribution of women throughout professional, administrative, technical, clerical and other occupations as well as advancement into managerial and supervisory positions.
- Assure employment practices are in accordance with merit principles through the elimination of any attitudes, customs, and habits which may deny women entry into certain occupations.
- Assist management in developing and implementing affirmative employment program plans.

The FWP is run by the National Federal Women's Program Manager, Regional FWP Managers, Headquarters FWP Coordinators, and Field Office FWP Coordinators. While the FWP Coordinators are in place to carry out management policy, the union nevertheless can and should have input into the program.

Indeed, the selection of the Federal Women's Program Coordinator is a legitimate subject for labor-management negotiations. AFGE has the right to negotiate that at least 50 percent of the nominees for this position be offered by the union. In addition, AFGE may negotiate that the union have representatives on Federal Women's Program Committees.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **RESOURCES**

As you shape your role as Women's Coordinator, it will be very useful for you to turn to the many resources that exist that can guide you and give you ideas. Here is a list of possibilities:

You should use the resources of the National Office whenever possible. Call or write to:

#### **AFGE Women's/Fair Practices Departments**

80 F Street, N.W.

Washington, DC 20001

(202) 639-6417 or 6418 (voice) or (202) 639-6474 (TDD)

#### ***AFGE Publications***

The following publications are available from the AFGE Women's/Fair Practices Departments:

##### *On The Subjects of Child Care and Family Leave --*

"AFGE's Guide To Your Rights Under the Family Friendly Leave Act and The Family and Medical Leave Act" -- a pamphlet explaining the 1993 law that gives workers up to 12 unpaid weeks of leave to care for a newborn or adopted child, a sick family member or themselves.

AFGE's pamphlet explaining the "Federal Employee Family Friendly Leave Act" (FEFFLA).

##### *On the Subject of Sexual Harassment --*

Sexual Harassment Leaflets -- explaining briefly what it is and what to do if it's happening to you.

"Stop Sexual Harassment before it Stops You: A Guide For AFGE Members" -- a handbook explaining to the AFGE member in detail what sexual harassment is, the effects of sexual harassment on the victim, what to do if it is happening to you, what the steward's role is, and what the union can do about it.

##### *On the Subject of Discrimination --*

"Working With AFGE To Fight For The Rights of Employees With Disabilities" -- a pamphlet explaining the rights of employees with disabilities and what AFGE can do to assist these employees.

"Fighting Discrimination In The Federal Government" -- a workbook for AFGE Representatives to assist them in representing AFGE members who file Equal Employment Opportunity complaints.

"Compensatory Damages For Federal Employees" -- a workbook that explains the damages available to federal employees.

"Working With AFGE To Stamp Out Discrimination In Employment On The Basis of Sexual Orientation" -- a pamphlet explaining the law regarding discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and giving members ideas on how to fight this still accepted form of employment discrimination.

A guide on the rights of individuals with disabilities and etiquette issues – to be released in Winter 1999.

*Other Subjects -- Now Available*

"Domestic Violence - An AFGE Guide for Union Action" (Pamphlets and books).

"Women and AIDS - Know the Facts" (Pamphlet).

***Current and Former Coordinators***

An excellent resource for you should be other current and former women's coordinators. No doubt, other women's coordinators have dealt with some of the same questions and concerns you have. Sound them out. Find out what has succeeded and what has failed.

***Other Resources***

There are many other organizations you can turn to for advice, assistance, literature, and ideas. In addition to the constituency groups listed on pg. 8, the following organizations may also be of assistance:

**AFL-CIO**

Working Women's Department  
815 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20006

**Alliance for Retired Americans**

8403 Colesville Road  
Suite 1200  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**American Association for Affirmative Action**

Howard University  
2900 Van Ness Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20008

**Amnesty International USA**

322 Eight Street  
New York, NY 10001  
(<http://www.amnesty-USA.org>)

**Americans for a Fair Chance**

1730 Rhode Island Avenue, NW  
Suite 303  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**American Civil Liberties Union**

Women's Rights Project  
22 E. 40th Street  
New York, NY 10016

**Center for Women in Government**

1400 Washington Ave.  
Albany, NY 12210

**Center for Women's Policy Studies**

2000 P Street, N.W., Suite 508  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**CLUW Center for Education and Research, Inc.**

2000 P Street, N.W., #615  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues**

2471 Rayburn Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Cuban American National Council (CANC)**

1223 SW Florida Street  
Miami, FL 33135  
(305) 642-3484

**Democratic National Committee**

430 South Capitol Street, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
(202)863-8000

**Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**

1901 L Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20507

(202)663-4264 (voice) or (202)663-4494 (TDD)

**Federally Employed Women**

1400 I St., NW, Suite 425  
Washington, D.C. 20005

**Feminist Majority**

1600 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 801  
Arlington, VA 22209  
703-522-2214  
703-522-2219 (fax)

**George Meany Center for Labor Studies**

10000 New Hampshire Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20903

**Jewish Labor Committee**

25 East 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10010  
(212) 477-0707

**League of Women Voters**

1730 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**National Advocacy Coalition on Youth and Sexual Orientation (NACYSO)**

1711 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20009  
(202) 319-7596

**National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium 1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.**

Suite 522  
Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 296-2300

**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**

4805 Mt. Hope Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21215  
(410) 358-8900

**National Center for Women & Family Law**

799 Broadway  
Suite 402  
New York, NY 10003  
(212) 674-8200

Addresses issues relating to parental leave and child care.

**National Child Day Care Assoc.**

1501 Benning Road, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

**National Commission on Working Women**

2000 P Street, N.W., Suite 1110  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**National Committee on Pay Equity**

1201 16th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**National Council of La Raza (NCLR)**

1111 19<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Suite 1000  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(202) 785-1670

**National Council of Negro Women**

1819 H Street, N.W., Suite 900  
Washington, D.C. 20006

**National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**

2320 17<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20009-2702  
(202) 332-6483

**National Institute for Women of Color**

1712 N Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**National Labor Law Center**

2000 P Street, N.W., Suite 612  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**National Urban Coalition (NUC)**

2120 L Street, N.W.  
Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20037  
(202) 986-1460

**National Urban League (NUL)**

120 Wall Street  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10005  
(212) 558-5300

**National Women's Law Center**

(202)328-5160  
1616 P Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(Provides legal assistance to women to advance women's rights.)

**National Women's Political Caucus**

1275 K Street, N.W., Suite 750  
Washington, D.C. 20005-4051  
(202)898-1100

**Nine to Five, National Association of Working Women**

(216)566-9308

Assists and advises women in the workplace with regard to their legal rights.

**Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA)**

1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W.  
Suite 707  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(202) 223-5500

**Operation PUSH**

Chicago, IL

**Pension Rights Center**

1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W., #1019  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)**

334 Auburn Avenue, N.E.  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 522-1420

**Southern Poverty Law Center**

400 Washington Ave.  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
(Teaching Tolerance, Militia Task Force, Kloneoatch)

**Union WAGE (Women's Alliance to Gain Equality)**

37-A 29th Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110

**Wider Opportunities for Women**

1511 K Street, N.W., #345  
Washington, D.C. 20005

**Women's Action Alliance**

370 Lexington Ave., Room 603  
New York, NY 10017

**Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor**

(202)219-6611

Responsible for formulating policies promoting the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunity for profitable employment.

**Women Employed**

5 S. Wabash Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60603

**Women's Equity Action League (WEAL)**

805 15th Street, N.W., #822  
Washington, D.C. 20005

**Women's Legal Defense Fund**

(202)986-2600  
1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009

Provides legal assistance to women to advance women's rights

**Women's Occupational Health and Resources Center**

320 E. 43rd Street  
New York, NY 10017

**Working Women -- National Association of Office Workers**

1258 Euclid Ave., Room 206  
Cleveland, OH 44115

*Here is a listing of some literature that may also be useful:*

**"A Commitment to Children"**

(1977) By the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), 15 Union Square, New York, New York 10003. Surveys child care services in Israel, Sweden, and France. Highlights the lack of progress by the U.S. in this area.

**"Bargaining for Equality"**

(1980) By the Women's Labor Project of the National Lawyers Guild. This book is perhaps the most comprehensive and well-written compendium of legal and collective bargaining ideas relating to issues of special concern to women in the labor movement (and in the work force generally). It is available from the National Labor Law Center, 2000 P Street, N.W., Room 612, Washington, D.C. 20036.

**"Effective Contract Language for Union Women"**

By the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), 15 Union Square, New York, New York 10003. This booklet describes sample clauses for many bargaining issues of concern to women.

**"Guidelines on Pregnancy and Work"**

(1977) Health-related guidelines on working while pregnant, including information on lifting, standing, and reproductive hazards. Available free from: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Publications Dissemination, National Technical Information Service, 4676 Columbia Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45226.

**"Handbook for Union Staff Women"**

By the Women's Project of the AFL-CIO Department for Professional Employees. This handbook is an excellent training and source guide for women who work for unions. A companion training curriculum for staff development is also available. Both items can be ordered from the Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

**"Local Union Guide for Establishing Child Care Centers"**

(1979) By Carol Haddad. Provides a good discussion of the basic issues and includes a list of resources. Available from: Michigan State University, School of Labor and Industrial Relations, Labor Program Service, 432 Kedzie Hall, E. Lansing, MI 48824.

**"Manual on Pay Equity: Raising Wages for Women's Work"**

(1980) By Joy Ann Grune, ed., Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, 2000 Florida Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Outstanding 224-page resource. Provides background information on the problem and information on job evaluation systems, legal remedies, state and local government actions dealing with wage parity for public employees, collective bargaining activities, and guides for action. Also lists individuals and groups who are doing work in the area.

**Office of Personnel Management National Training Guide**

**Social Security and U.S. Department of Labor Bridging Career Books**

**The Hispanic Yearbook**

**"We Gave At The Office: Professional Women Office Workers' Safety and Health Risks"**

Committee on Salaried and Professional Women, Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Examines common health-related hazards of office work, including stress, lighting, ventilation, and display terminals.

**"Women's Health and Safety Fact Packs"**

CLUW Center for Education and Research, 2000 P Street, N.W., #615, Washington, D.C. 20036. A series of three fact packs containing informational fact sheets on women's occupational health hazards. Good resources included.

**"Women, Work, and Wages: Equal Pay for Jobs of Equal Value"**

(1981) By Donald J. Treiman and Heidi I. Hartmann, eds., Washington, D.C., National Academy Press. The final report by the National Academy of Sciences to the EEOC Committee on Occupational Classifications and Analysis. It concludes that "women's jobs" pay less than men's, that there is bias both in job evaluation systems and the marketplace, and that the comparable worth approach "merits consideration." Available from Office of Publications, National Academy of Sciences, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20418.

**Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor**, 200 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210 has several publications, including "A Women's Guide to Apprenticeship," and "Women in Non-Traditional Jobs -- A Selected List of Publications, Slides and Films."

**Feminist Literature** - Almost every bookstore now has a section titled "Women's Studies" or something similar. You will find books in that section covering a wide variety of topics of interest to women.