

THREE STEPS TO ESTABLISHING A LOCAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

A local Women's Committee should be established per the CWA Constitution with the support of the local leadership. The committee, as with other local committees should function under the direction of the local's executive board. If you are interested in establishing a local women's committee you should follow these steps to success!

STEP 1

Approach the local leadership with a proposal identifying needs and opportunity within your local and your community.

The chairperson and all members of the committee should be appointed by the local executive board, or elected according to local bylaws, past practice and constitutionally acceptable practices.

Those members serving on the committee, to the extent possible should be reflective of the over-all membership. To determine interest, the local executive board can put out a survey, flyer or post on worksite union boards and the local website.

You can start small: a good committee need not have lots of members, but rather ones that are committed to the idea. However, it is recommended that an odd number be selected to serve for no tie votes.

Once your committee is established you should meet regularly—at least as often as local union meetings are held.

Many local women's committees have budgets; however this must be determined once the committee goals and agenda are set. Active committees often conduct fundraisers to help implement programs.

STEP 2

Local women's committees across CWA are involved in a wide range of activities working along every side of the CWA Triangle. These programs help to educate members on women's issue. Examples of successful programs are:

- Voter Registration and Get-Out-The-Vote drives.
- Educating members on legislation that impact working women.
- Organizing
- Community service projects such as women's shelters, breast cancer and AIDS awareness, literacy programs, and our newest partnership—Dress for Success.

STEP 3

Once your committee is fully established, the committee should set short-term priorities and long-range goals.

When establishing priorities and selecting specific activities to begin its work; the committee should keep the following in mind before getting started:

- Communications should be established with other committees and stewards in the local.
- Rank-and-file members should be informed of the existence of the women's committee.
- A "success" is needed to establish the credibility of the committee, which could be the establishment of a new program.
- The local women's committee should always keep the local president/executive board, the membership, the district coordinator, and the national women's committee representative informed of its activities and progress. Information gathered helps to develop national programs, conferences and to encourage locals that have not established women's committees to get one started in their local.