

Membership has its privileges

Some people have been asking...

“What is the difference between a bargaining unit member and a union member?”



Bargaining Unit Members

The bargaining unit is defined by PERC. All of the employees in the defined unit are bargaining unit members. The contract between the union and the employer covers all of the bargaining unit members. Thus everyone in the bargaining unit is a bargaining unit member and subject to all of the articles in the contract.

Union Membership

WPEA Union Membership is bestowed onto a bargaining unit member when they have satisfied their obligation under the union's bylaws and the Union Security article in the contract. They have submitted a signed MEMBER APPLICATION and have all the rights and responsibilities of a member in good standing. They can vote on matters affecting WPEA as a whole or on those issues affecting the bargaining unit. They are MEMBERS of the Union.

These distinctions have been upheld by the courts, by PERC and the NLRB. The NLRB ruled in *NLRB vs. Allis Chambers Manufacturing Co.* that a union is entitled to limit its internal political processes to its members. The Court revisited the subject area in *NLRB vs. Financial Institution Employees* where they stated:

“The Act allows union members to control the shape and direction of their organization and ‘non-member’ employees have no voice in the affairs of the union. It went on to specially cite as an example ‘to ratify a collective bargaining agreement’ as an example of an internal union matter which non-union employees may be excluded from voting.”