

The Representation Advantage

At Washington Public Employees Association, we empower our members through education, representation, support and collective action. We work with you to improve working conditions and to protect your wages and benefits.

WPEA unites nearly 5,000 public employees in Washington. With WPEA representation, you have a strong voice and are part of the negotiating process. Without representation, you are subject to policies and procedures developed by management.

Representation Benefit	WPEA Representation	No Representation
Recognized agent	Employer is legally required to negotiate with WPEA over wages, benefits, and working conditions	No recognition No negotiations
Collective Bargaining Agreement	Constitutes legally binding contract of employment	No contract
Compensation	Pay raises are negotiated by WPEA as part of contract	Management discretion
Health Benefits	Benefits are negotiated by WPEA as part of contract	Management discretion
Labor-Management Committee	Allows employees to participate in a wide range of agency decisions affecting their employment	No labor-management committee
Full-time lobbyists	Provides for constant communication with lawmakers	No lobbying staff
Grievance procedure	Steps and time lines explained in the contract; final step is binding arbitration, which is out of management's hands	None or limited grievance procedure
Disciplinary procedure	Using legal principle of "just cause" as the basis for all disciplinary issues	College policy
Performance evaluation	Provides for direct evaluation by supervisor and employee participation in evaluation	College policy
Reasonable accommodation	Provides for alternative assignment for employee during accommodation process	College policy
Reduction in force	Procedures and rights of employees bargained in contract	College policy
Union activities	Provides for paid time away from normal duties to investigate grievances and participate in labor-management committees	None
Contract development and negotiations	Members work with WPEA representatives to develop proposals and negotiate the contract	None
Other working conditions	Also negotiated in the contract are: hiring and appointments, hours of work, overtime, training and employee development, licensing and certifications, holidays, vacation and sick leave, suspended operations, safety and health, etc.	College policy