

# USWA STRIKE AND DEFENSE FUND RULES

The following rules have been adopted by the International Executive Board of the United Steelworkers of America to implement Article XVI section 15 of the International Constitution which provides for the establishment of a separate Strike and Defense Fund and that: "Expenditures from the Fund shall be determined by the International President and the International Secretary-Treasurer subject to the review of the International Executive Board."

- 1. Strike Authorization.** Article XVI of the International Constitution provides that: "No strike shall be called without the approval of the International President." There must be strict adherence to this requirement. Strike relief will not be given for a Local Union if a strike is called without the approval of the International President.
- 2. Strike Relief Allotted Only On Basis of Need.** The resources of the Strike and Defense Fund leave no alternative but to allot relief to the members on the basis of need and not as a matter of right. Plans for expenditures from the Strike Fund must take into account the potential needs of the entire membership. To pay adequate benefits as a matter of right (that is to pay all striking members a flat amount) would require a much higher contribution rate while working, and would jeopardize the entire Fund should long strikes occur in any Local Union where our membership is large. In such cases, the Fund would be in danger of being depleted and our members would be left without strike assistance should they be required to strike to obtain fair and equitable contracts.
- 3. All Other Available Resources Must Be Utilized.** In order to obtain strike relief allotments from the Fund, a Local Union must demonstrate that all other available resources are being utilized, and that the effective strike assistance program has been organized. Food, clothing, and other forms of assistance are available to striking employees from a number of different sources in different communities. These sources include agencies of the federal, state, and local governments, private welfare and community services organizations, credit unions, Local Union h d s and District strike h d s. In addition, temporary employment opportunities may be available for many strikers, and all strikers can draw upon any of their own assets to help tide them over.
- 4. Minimum Waiting Period.** NO strike relief allotments shall be made from the Strike and Defense Fund until after a strike has continued for three (3) weeks. This is the minimum waiting period for all strikes. Allotments, however, will not automatically start in the fourth week, since in many instances where other resources are available, it will not be necessary for a Local Union to seek allotments from the Fund until the strike extends for a longer period. Exceptions to the minimum waiting period will be made to take care of cases of more immediate need which may confront individual strikers such as those in a new Local Union.
- 5. Termination of Allotments.** Strike relief allotments from the Fund normally will terminate when the strike terminates. Exceptions will be made for a limited period when necessary to take care of emergencies which may confront individual strikers.
- 6. Amount of Weekly Allotments for Local Unions.** The International Executive Board, from time to time, will fix the formula to determine the maximum amount of the weekly allotment which may be made for a Local Union whose members are on strike. While the formula will establish the maximum weekly allotment, the actual amount of the allotment frequently may be less than the maximum depending on the availability of other resources, the number of temporary jobs obtained by strikers, the needs of the strikers and other relevant factors. The Board will review the formula in light of any special needs or emergencies which may arise.

**7. No funds received by any local Union from the Strike and Defense Fund may be disbursed except by check bearing the hand signature(s) of the Local Union President, Financial Secretary and Treasurer, and the hand signature(s) of the Staff Representative(s) who has been assigned the responsibility for overseeing the strike.**

**8. Strike Relief Committee.** The success of strike relief is determined by a conscientious Committee dedicated to the purpose of allocating resources according to the policies contained herein. No member in need should go without assistance if the Committee is fully aware of all resources available and committed to assisting the membership fairly and consistently. Careful selection of the Committee is therefore extremely important.

**9. Procedure.** No allotments from the Strike and Defense Fund will be made directly to individual strikers.

A Local Union which anticipates a strike must, prior to taking a strike authorization vote or making a decision to strike, have these Rules read to its members at a Local Union meeting. The Recording Secretary shall record in the Local Union minutes the fact that the Rules were read to the membership at the meeting.

A Local Union must apply for strike relief allotments to the appropriate District Director, and must demonstrate compliance with all the requirements of these Rules. The District Director will evaluate the request in light of these requirements and all circumstances, and if he deems relief to be required, recommend to the International Secretary-Treasurer the amount of the weekly allotment.

The actual amount of the weekly allotment to be made for a Local Union will be determined within the confines of the Board formula by the International President and the International Secretary-Treasurer in accordance with Article XIV, Section 15 of the International Constitution and these Rules. The allotment will be sent to the District Director who will allot assistance to the Local Union as needed.

The International Secretary-Treasurer shall establish record keeping and accounting requirements for District Directors and Local Unions with respect to strike relief allotments made from the Strike and Defense Fund. These allotments shall be kept separately from the Local Union general fund.