

Campaign Conduct

ISSUED BY THE LOCAL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE, TNG-CWA 39521, NOVEMBER 2013

1. Use of union money & equipment

No union monies may be used to promote, endorse or criticize a particular candidate. Included in this prohibition is a Local's executive body or other person or group's endorsement, promotion, or criticism of an individual's candidacy by use of any union's letterhead or other stationery paid for by union funds or bearing the union's seal or insignia, by use of a union's newspaper or website, or by use of a union's equipment, including computers, email systems and electronic bulletin-board access paid for by the union.

Union monies may be used, however, for notices, factual statement of issues not involving candidates, and other expenses necessary for the holding of an election. It also is permissible for a union to publish in its newspaper, website, or newsletter statements submitted by candidates, or letters to the editor about candidates, as long as all candidates are treated equally. A union may use its website to post links to candidates' websites, as long as all candidates are treated equally, and as long as the candidates pay any associated costs.

2. Use of Union Staff

Local officers and staff involved in campaigns must do so on their own time and at their own expense.

3. Use of employer time, money and equipment

Employer monies may not be used to promote a candidate. Thus, neither candidates nor members involved in campaigns should use employer time, money or equipment to promote a candidate. This prohibition extends to use of employer copying equipment, computers and email systems, including work email addresses. Campaigning must be done on the employee's own time and at his or her own expense.

4. Candidate access to union meetings

Union officers and staff are free to permit or deny candidate access to union meetings, as long as all candidates are treated equally.

5. Candidate access to mailing addresses

A candidate who wishes to mail campaign material to members may do so via a third-party mailing house, paying his or her own costs of supply, postage and labor. All candidates should be informed that this option will be available.

6. Candidate access to e-mail

The Pacific Media Workers Guild Election Committee has ruled that all candidates in the 2013 election should have equal access to member e-mail lists to send out campaign material and information. This includes e-mail lists of members for the various units of Local 39521.

We direct PMWG staff to inform candidates of this decision and respond to requests for use of lists by providing the candidates with the lists. We also request that a notice of the guidelines for the limited use of the lists be sent. We recommend that candidates are allowed to only contact members by e-mail no more than two times before the ballots are due (Dec. 19), that they do not contact members through employer e-mail addresses, and that they do not call members at their place of work.

Candidates are directed not to retain lists after the election, not to pass them on to third-parties, and not to use them for any purpose other than campaign messages.

The LEC and the PMWG are not obligated to make available any mailing addresses and phone lists. The LEC expects that candidates will respect the privacy of members. The LEC is tasked with ensuring that the election is fair and transparent; since some candidates have already used e-mail lists, we found it necessary to clarify how lists should be used and to allow equal access to lists for all candidates.

Member use of Google Groups and listservs to discuss election issues and campaigns is acceptable; the LEC recommends that all candidates be informed of the existence of the different groups so that there is equal access for all candidates to participate in all forums. All candidates are directed to disclose the names and purposes of existing member e-mail groups and listservs. Candidates should be permitted to join discussion groups that are union resources.

7. Distribution of campaign material.

Upon request by a candidate, Locals may distribute campaign flyers in the workplace and post them on union bulletin boards, to the extent not restricted by the relevant collective bargaining agreement or legally implemented employer policy, as long as all candidates are treated equally.