

# International Union, Security, Police and Fire Professionals of America (SPFPA)



## Securing Your Future

# Q & A

*...from the President*



David L. Hickey  
International President



*Prepared especially for Security, Police and Fire Professionals interested in Organizing with the International Union, Security, Police and Fire Professionals of America (SPFPA).*

# What's Inside

What is the SPFPA?.....Page 3

How does the Union function?.....Page 3

Is the Union a third party?.....Page 3

What will be our first contract?.....Page 4

What does the SPFPA know about security?.....Page 5

Does the SPFPA belong to the AFL-CIO?.....Page 5

How much are dues?.....Page 5

Why do workers organize?.....Page 5

What are the benefits of joining SPFPA?.....Page 6

How many lawyers does it take to stop a union?.....Page 6

The misinformation you will hear from management..... Page 7

What is the organizing process?.....Page 8



## Question:

What is the SPFPA?



## Answer:

**The International Union, Security, Police and Fire Professionals of America (SPFPA)** is the oldest, largest and fastest growing security, police union in the United States today. The SPFPA represents over 27,000 security police professionals across the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. SPFPA members provide security services for the Department of Defense/NASA, Aerospace, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Federal Courts, nuclear facilities, prisons, detention centers, correctional facilities, armored car, casinos, arts and entertainment, Federal, State and County Buildings, Military Installations, universities, hospitals, public utilities, automotive, airports, seaports, Homeland Security facilities and industries.

The International Headquarters is located in Roseville, Michigan. SPFPA also has an East Coast and West Coast office, as well as 200 Local unions located throughout the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. The SPFPA staff consists of over 1,000 Local Union Officer Representatives, full time Regional Vice Presidents, International Representatives and specialized Department Directors who are on hand to negotiate contracts, settle grievances, enforce contracts, organize the unorganized and assist in answering your questions. The professional and technical staff is available to help members with wage and benefit issues, safety and health issues and legal issues.

After employees vote for SPFPA representation and obtain a labor contract, employees will be designated a Local union. Employees will elect officers and stewards who will be trained and available to assist all employees in any work-related issue.

The SPFPA represents thousands of security police professionals working for such companies as Wackenhut, Securitas, Akal, Loomis Fargo & Co., Boeing, NASA Space Center, Disney, The White House and MGM Casino, just to name a few.

**Basically, the SPFPA is an organization of members who have professional staff available to assist them with all work-related issues.**

## Question:

How does the Union function? Who runs the Union? Are leaders elected or appointed?

## Answer:

**Your union will be run by and for the employees. It will be a democratic organization.**

You will have your own Local union. You may, in some cases, belong to another Local near your facility. Decisions however, will be decided and voted on by your union membership.

Officers of the Local and representatives from every shift will be elected by members throughout the entire facility. Each shift will elect representatives (stewards) to assist with the day-to-day issues that may arise.

**Most unions meet regularly with management, and joint labor-management committees, to handle problems and discuss operation issues, etc. The basic idea is that the Union creates an equal relation between employees and management.**

## Question:

Is the Union a third party?

## Answer:

**The Union is not a third party. It is an organization run by and for the employees, with assistance from the SPFPA International Union.**

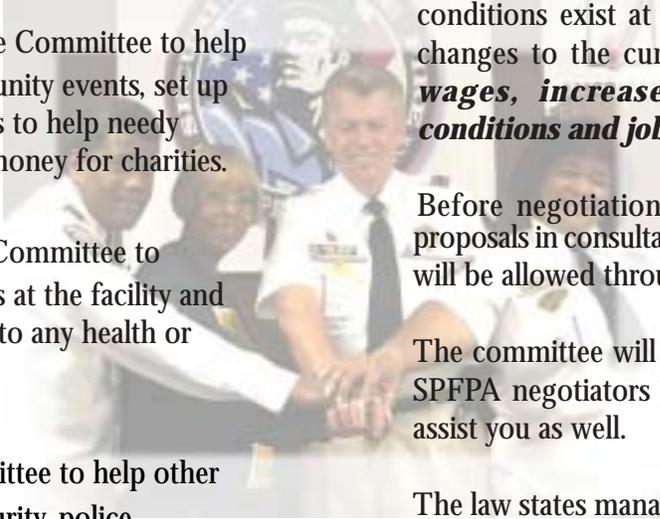
The SPFPA has a strong record of negotiating outstanding wages, benefits and working conditions. The SPFPA will provide experienced negotiators, contract technicians and legal assistance for your elected negotiating committee. SPFPA has over 57 years of experience in dealing with these matters.

The SPFPA will also provide training for your elected officers and stewards.

A union is what employees make of it. Its effectiveness is based on competent representation of employees to run effectively.

**There may also be committees on which employees can serve, including:**

- ✓ Negotiating Committee to represent the group during the bargaining process.
- ✓ Communications Committee to publish a regular newsletter, bulletin boards, community announcements, etc.
- ✓ Community Service Committee to help co-sponsor community events, set up volunteer networks to help needy citizens and raise money for charities.
- ✓ Health and Safety Committee to monitor conditions at the facility and work on solutions to any health or safety problems.
- ✓ Organizing Committee to help other unrepresented security, police professionals form their own SPFPA Local Union.
- ✓ Worker's Compensation Committee that helps employees file their claims and receive proper care for their injuries.



## Question:

**What will be in our first union contract?**

## Answer:

**The newly created Local union will elect a negotiating committee with employee representatives** from all work areas and shifts to negotiate a contract.

When a union committee sits down to bargain a contract with management, negotiations start from whatever conditions exist at that time. They will propose positive changes to the current conditions. This means **higher wages, increased benefits, improved working conditions and job security.**

Before negotiations begin, the committee will develop proposals in consultation with all employees. Everyone's input will be allowed through meetings and surveys.

The committee will be trained and assisted by professional SPFPA negotiators and you will have SPFPA attorneys to assist you as well.

The law states management must bargain in good faith over wages, benefits, working conditions and job security, which are mandatory subjects of bargaining. Areas that need improvement become the focus of negotiations with your employer. The items that employees are satisfied with are secured in a union contract.

After the contract is negotiated, it cannot take effect unless it is voted on and accepted (ratified) by a majority of employees. No worker would vote for a contract unless it was an improvement over what existed before. Without this vote, there can be no contract. Once ratified, this union contract is enforceable to protect your rights and job.

**You Do Not Pay Any Dues** throughout the election and/or negotiation process. You begin paying dues only after the contract is (accepted) by the employees.

## Question:

**Why is management conducting its scare tactics to keep you from having union representation?**

## Answer:

**Management has the right to campaign against the union. We believe they also know the SPFPA is a good union with a record of helping thousands of security and police professionals improve their work lives.** The fact is that management does not want to share their power with you. Presently, management holds all the cards.

That is the real reason they may not want you to form a union.



## Question:

What does the SPFPA know about security?

## Answer:

**T**he SPFPA is the oldest and largest union of security, police and fire protection officers in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico today, with over 57 years experience in representing officers like you.

SPFPA and our legal attorneys are experienced in negotiating under the "Service Contract Act" as well as Enclaves with Federal Provision in right-to-work states.

## Question:

Does the SPFPA belong to the AFL-CIO?

## Answer:

No.

**U**nder Section 9(b)3 of the National Labor Relations Act, the law clearly states, a labor organization is prohibited from being certified by the NLRB if, in fact, the labor organization seeking to represent such guards, admits non-guards into its membership and/or is affiliated directly or indirectly with an AFL-CIO Union.

Because of this law, the SPFPA is prohibited from belonging to the AFL-CIO . However, we have a great working relationship and much support from many AFL-CIO Unions, including the United Steel Workers of America (USWA) AFL-CIO, The International Association of Machinist and Aerospace Workers (IAM), United Auto Workers (UAW), Hotel Employees Restaurant Employees (HERE) and Teamsters, just to name a few.

## Question:

How much are membership dues, which our members call job security? When do we begin paying?

## Answer:

**A**s in any nonprofit organization, dues are used to pay the operating expenses. These expenses include office space, representatives salaries, printing, phones, travel, arbitrations, legal costs, training programs, meeting rooms, negotiations, etc.

**No Initiation Fee for newly organized members like yourselves. This fee has been waived.**

**No One Pays Dues until after a labor contract has been negotiated and ratified by the members through a majority vote.**

Dues are paid based on the amount you earn. There is no set monthly rate. Dues are two and a half times your hourly rate each month. Out of the two and a half times your hourly rate each month, one hour is given back to your Local union to operate.

Even if you sign an SPFPA membership card and/or vote yes for union representation, it does not mean you will start paying dues. You only pay dues after a majority of the employees vote to accept your union contract.

You will be able to see the increases and benefits a union contract brings before you pay any dues.

**In almost all cases, what you achieve in your first union contract with regard to wages, benefits and job security, far exceeds your monthly dues.**



## Question:

Why do workers organize?

## Answer:

**I**n a perfect world, your employer would provide you with decent wages, good benefits, a safe place to work and treat you with respect. Unfortunately, most do not.

In the United States, workers organize unions to protect one another by bargaining collectively to establish rules of conduct, wages and benefits.

**To protect themselves from employers who have taken advantage of them, workers organize over some very basic issues:**

- ✓ When company policies are not clear and understandable.
- ✓ When supervisors are inconsistent with regard to nondiscriminatory work practices.
- ✓ When workers are unclear with respect to work schedules, time-off, work assignments, pay, cuts or any other changes.
- ✓ When supervisors lack fair, consistent and tactful disciplinary procedures.
- ✓ When supervisors and owners mistreat workers.
- ✓ Disrespectful, discourteous and inconsiderate treatment.
- ✓ The inability of the company to listen when workers speak.
- ✓ The unwillingness of the company to address work place problems.
- ✓ Unwillingness of supervisors to represent workers when they are right.
- ✓ Lack of sympathy for workers personal problems.
- ✓ Lack of supervisory training.
- ✓ Poor working conditions.
- ✓ Unresolved grievances.
- ✓ A lack of respect, dignity and work place justice.
- ✓ Low wages, poor benefits and poor retirement plans.

## Question:

What are the benefits of joining the SPFPA?

## Answer:

**T**here are many benefits on why you should belong to SPFPA?

### **Unionized Workers Earn More.**

*According to the U.S. Department of Labor,*

**Unionized workers earn 28% more than nonunion workers.**

**Unionized women earn 31% more than nonunion women.**

**Unionized African Americans earn 37% more than nonunion African American workers.**

**Unionized Latin American workers earn 55% more than nonunion Latin American workers.**

### **Unions Increase Productivity.**

According to most recent studies, the voice that union members have on the job: Sharing in decision making about promotions and work production standards increase productivity and improve management practices. Better training, lower turnover and longer tenure also make union workers more productive.

### **Union Workers Stay Longer.**

Nearly 50% of union workers have been with their current employers for at least 10 years. Only 22% of nonunion workers can make the same claim. Union workers have greater job stability, in part, because they are more satisfied with their jobs, receive higher pay, have better benefits and have access to fair grievance procedures. Even more important, most collective bargaining agreements protect union members from unjust discharge. Nonunion workers are “employees at will” who can be fired at any time for any reason or for no reason at all.



## Question:

How many lawyers does it take to stop a union campaign?

## Answer:

**W**hen employees decide to unionize, most employers react by conducting a strong anti-union campaign to discourage a “yes” vote for union representation.

One of the most predictable things they do is hire outside consultants. These are usually high priced lawyers who have chosen not to practice law the hard way, but instead are specialists in devising ways to intimidate workers.

The consultants are like ambulance chasers. They look for union campaigns, come in and convince employers they can defeat the employees and manipulate the laws that were passed to protect them.

### Lies You Will Hear from Management:

The lies that consultants use are often as predictable as their techniques.

#### The Formula: X + X = BAD FOR YOU

These consultants are paid high fees (often \$1,000 a day) and it comes from money that should be yours. However, they really are not that smart, because they use the same old techniques over and over.

**Consultants train supervisors to carry the anti-union message, so expect a lot of “friendly chats” with your supervisor.**

**They write leaflets and send “love letters” signed by management, to your home.**

**They plan private meetings with groups of employees, where a company spokesperson can speak against the union and beg for another chance.**

**You will hear that the union is bound to strike and that you will be forced to go out.**

**You will hear that you will be required to pay enormous amounts of dues and that corrupt union bosses will steal your dues money.**

**You will hear that the union will be run by a bunch of outsiders who just want to come in and take over the workplace.**

**You will hear that the union cannot guarantee you anything and that you may even lose wages and benefits.**

They foster “anti-union committees” to divide and conquer the employees.

None of the above statements are true, but they can be pretty frightening if you and your co-workers do not have the right answers.



#### Be Prepared:

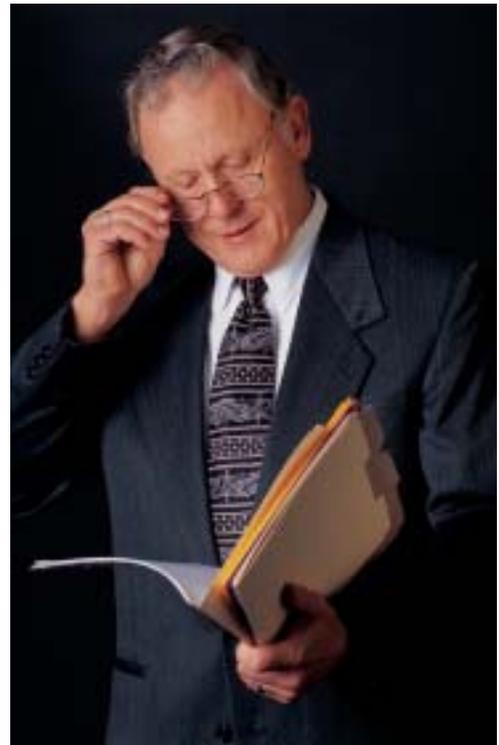
The way to combat all this high-priced “talent” is to know what is coming and to make sure all your co-workers know what to expect.

For all their money and their lies, the consultants and lawyers can be beaten. Labor unions all over the country have been successful at countering their efforts and winning thousands of union election campaigns.

The key to winning is to be prepared and that means letting every worker know what is going on behind the scenes and who is directing the anti-union campaign.

**Finally, to answer the question, how many lawyers does it take to stop a union campaign?**

**Six.** →



**One to intimidate the workers.  
One to intimidate the supervisors.  
And four to count the fee.....**



## Question:

What is the organizing process and how long will it take?

## Answer:

**E**mployees are in the card signing stage. If enough employees show support by signing SPFPA Membership Cards (50% or more, SPFPA's requirement), the SPFPA will petition the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and ask that a secret ballot vote take place.

After a petition is filed, the NLRB will conduct a secret ballot election usually within 60 days from the filing of the petition. Employees will now have an opportunity to vote YES in favor of unionization by SPFPA or vote for no representation. If over 50% of those voting cast a vote in favor of union representation, then your entire group will now be represented by SPFPA and the negotiating process will begin.

## Organizing is Power!

### Organizing is Your Right!

**Only You can make your organizing drive a success!**

Do not be afraid to sign an SPFPA membership card. If you know what to expect, that is half the battle.



Steve Maritas  
Organizing  
Director

**For more information about SPFPA please visit our website at [www.SPFPA.org](http://www.SPFPA.org) or call us at 800-228-7492.**

**You can also reach Steve Maritas Organizing Director, at 646-567-6454.**



**Visit our expanded website.** You will find more useful information and many interesting links for the security and police professional on other topics that will also benefit you.

**Check it out. You'll like what you see.....**