

**OPEIU Local 50/Hawaii Nurses Association  
Unit Steward/Chief Steward (Formerly Unit Representative/Unit Chair)  
Selection Process**

**Initial steps to initiate the selection process:**

- 1) Labor relations specialist/Labor Representative agent of each facility will identify the interim unit steward/Chief Steward.
- 2) Together, they will identify currently active unit representatives and steward volunteers by following the "steward selection process" (see below),
- 3) Once the stewards are in place, that group will elect a chief steward for their facility from amongst themselves.

**Steward selection process**

- 1) Candidates from each department or clinic (as contractually designated) will be identified and provided a position description stating responsibilities (see Appendix A).
- 2) LRS/ Labor Representative for each facility will assist in identifying candidates.
- 3) Candidates must then obtain a "Union Steward (formerly unit representative) Petition of Intent" (see Appendix B), signed by candidate's department/clinic coworkers or as contractually designated.
- 4) If more than one *person is interested in becoming the steward for a department/clinic*, and the applicable collective bargaining agreement imposes caps, then they can choose to either:
  - a. Represent another department or clinic and obtain signatures on a "Union Steward (formerly unit representative) Petition of Intent" from that department; or
  - b. Choose to have a departmental election for the contested position; or
  - c. Abide by any applicable bargaining unit contract language, or
  - d. Be named an alternate steward (without super seniority).
- 5) Stewards and Chief Stewards take appropriate training provided by OPEIU LOCAL 50/HNA within three (3) months of selection, or as soon as practicable. Attendance at membership meeting qualifies as training.
- 6) Stewards and Chief Stewards must then be appointed, (as per contractual language), and confirmed by the OPEIU LOCAL 50/HNA Board of Directors who are the elected collective bargaining officials.

## Appendix A

### Position Requirements for Union Steward

- **Requirements:**
  - Must be OPEIU LOCAL 50/HNA member in good standing
- **Length of Terms:**
  - Chief Steward and stewards shall be elected for a 3 year term. The facility stewards may vote by majority to remove the Chief Steward from office if the Chief Steward does not meet the requirements, or responsibilities, or role, or obligations of the role. Removal will take place within the BOD's approval.
  - Stewards are confirmed by the BOD. They may remain in office for a 3-year term; or until they resign; or are asked to leave the position due to not meeting the requirements, or responsibilities, or obligations of the position. The Chief Steward will present evidence and testimony from stewards' unit/clinic to the BOD for approval of removal of said steward.
  - An Interim Steward may be appointed by the LRS with approval of the OPEIU LOCAL 50/HNA President for a maximum term of 2 months while going through the formal selection process. Interim stewards do not have super seniority.

## Appendix B

## Steward Duties and Responsibilities

### A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

An OPEIU LOCAL 50/HNA Steward is a representative of the union whose function shall be to communicate effectively between the union and members, and to promote harmony and solidarity in the workplace. The Steward is also responsible for upholding the terms of the collective bargaining contract and OPEIU LOCAL 50/HNA Constitution and Bylaws.

### B. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main roles of an OPEIU LOCAL 50/HNA Steward are to be a leader, educator, communicator and organizer.

#### The Steward as a Leader:

- Leads by example to establish trust, reliability, and credibility with union members, co-workers, and the supervisor or administration.
- Establish working relationship with respective labor relations specialist.
- Perform good listening skills to understand the issues, show concern and effectively and provide problem solving techniques.
- Advocate for the protection of member rights and benefits.
- Develop teamwork to promote unity and solidarity of members.
- Act promptly and decisively in handling workers' concerns and problems.
- Motivate members to attend and participate in union and community activities.
- Attend steward training programs and other professional development on the union's collective bargaining agreement, work rules, organizational structure, goals and objectives, and positions on issues and how members are affected.
- Provide feedback to members on various training program and professional development. Act promptly and decisively.
- Provide information on union programs and issues such as the grievance process employee rights and responsibilities, legislative programs, and history of the labor movement.
- Educate members on the importance of participating in the political process.

### The Steward as an Educator:

The Steward is responsible to educate all members at the worksite about the union's collective bargaining agreement, work rules, organizational structure, goals and objectives, and position on issues of how members are affected.

### The Steward as a Communicator:

Communication is a key function and the Steward is the primary link between the union and the members.

- Provide information on the different methods of communication: regular mail, e-mail, E-bulletin, web site, unit meetings, telephone, fax, bulletin boards, etc.
- Use the different methods of communication with members.
- Practice active listening techniques to reflect concerns and appreciation of all members.
- Promote the union in the community and work site.
- Report union concerns to the members; and report member concerns to the union.
- Inform members on union proposals

### The Steward as an Organizer:

A major task of the Steward is to organize members at the worksite.

- Greet new employees and recruit new members through filing membership registrations and provide new member packets to new members.
- Establish friendly relations with members.
- Maintain contact with members.
- Keep a list of non-union members.
- Utilize and maintain a bulletin board.
- Recruit membership participation in union activities.
- Encourage to attend as practical, general membership meetings.

## Appendix B

### CHIEF STEWARD'S DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES

The following duties of a chief steward are guidelines each chief steward follows while functioning in their steward leadership role within the OPEIU Local 50/HNA.

#### A chief steward:

- Has taken or will be taking advanced steward training in one of the next two offerings after election to chief steward.
  - Mandatory on-going advanced steward training: attending at least two training sessions annually
- Ensures that all those represented by OPEIU Local 50/HNA have equal and complete access to all rights in contract, law and tradition.
- Is a role model: You represent the best and brightest of OPEIU Local 50/HNA. Conduct yourself accordingly. Take pride in, and do your job well. Do not give the employer, nor your union, any reason to limit your activities as an advocate.
- Provides leadership, organizes and positively motivates the membership: Keep members and stewards informed. Be visible at the work site. Be a strong and clear voice for the union. Encourage others to become more active. Is a loyal advocate for OPEIU Local 50/HNA and furthering the mission and goals of the union's leadership.
- Under the direction of the OPEIU Local 50 HNA President, the Chief Steward may handle grievances, assist other stewards with grievance handling, and advance steward training in coordination with the OPEIU Local 50 President: Know the contract and grievance procedure. Track grievances and keep records on their status. Be readily available for questions on grievance issues, grievance status and follow up quickly with answers. Maintain contact with the Labor Relations Specialist assigned to your facility. Maintain close contact with stewards and review their progress on grievances. Make sure that LRS's and stewards know you must receive copies of all grievances filed and be kept informed of their status. In coordination with the OPEIU Local 50 President, hold biweekly or monthly meetings and provide training for facility stewards. Match new stewards with experienced stewards. Arrange for new stewards to accompany experienced stewards and LRS's to grievance hearings.
- Recruits new stewards.
- In coordination with facility LRS, the Chief Steward may file grievances when appropriate: it is not the Chief Steward's responsibility to file or handle every grievance.

- Monitors issues at respective facility: Keep your eyes and ears open for issues that affect the membership - responding quickly to issues builds member confidence in the union. Reports all new issues and concerns to LRS and the OPEIU Local 50/HNA President,
- Attends and prepares facility reports which will be shared by the Co-Chair of Chief Steward Council at all membership meetings: Attend every local meeting if possible. Make sure the membership meeting agenda includes a report from the Co-Chair of the Chief Steward Committee. The Co-Chair of the Chief Steward Committee will take this opportunity to update the membership on important issues that are being addressed through the grievance process, will also stress the successful resolution of grievances. Chief Steward from each facility will introduce other stewards from their respective facility in attendance. Express pride in, and publically recognize individual stewards for their and successes.
- The Co-Chair of the Chief Steward Committee will take the opportunity at membership meetings to present certificates of achievement to stewards who attended trainings
- Attends Chief Steward Committee Meetings: Your voice is important at these meetings. This committee of chief stewards hears grievant appeals of the Arbitration Committee and any decision to not take a grievance to Arbitration.
- Other roles, the chief steward: Is a proponent of stewards within the union. Prepares electronic agendas for steward meetings and training for respective facility. Advanced notification of all agendas/meetings/training provided to steward, the facility LRS, and the OPEIU Local 50/HNA President.

**EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP**  
**Compassion, Competence, Confidence**

**When a member lodges a complaint:**

- Your first responsibility is to "aid and comfort" your member in times of need. Be a good listener, not a critic.
- Do not be judgmental of your member. You are an advocate of his or her rights, not their judge or a mediator.
- Do not feel that you must "do something" beyond what you are trained to do. Your Labor Relations Specialist is your primary resource.
- Know the contractual deadline for filing a grievance. When a member complains to you, immediately determine when the alleged offense occurred.
- Never say, "No, you don't have a grievance" to your member. Your union's duty of fair representation applies to all dues payers, whether or not you believe them to be right or a good union member. Pass him or her on to your Labor Relations Specialist.
- Try to investigate the facts of any complaint, but don't go beyond your competence. If management underestimates you, thereby providing you with information they might not otherwise give to the union, you've provided a valuable service.
- Write down what you know. Ask for a written statement of the complaint from your member. Turn it all over to your Labor Relations Specialist.

**When acting as a conduit between the Union and the member:**

- Establish and maintain a proper Union Bulletin Board.
- Be timely in posting the information that you receive from the Union.
- Know the various ways to keep in touch with the Union: your LRS, the website, the E-Bulletin, the newsletter, etc.
- Know the union resources and benefits available to your member.
- Establish and maintain a telephone tree for quick communication with all the members that you represent.
- Keep current with Union activities; keep your members informed.
- Remember that you are the Union to your member; represent us well.

***Your image is our image!***

## Appendix C

### Union Steward (formerly unit representative) Petition of Intent

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Facility: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am requesting your endorsement to be your unit or clinic steward.

I understand the steward job description and the responsibilities that this position entails. I pledge to represent you, be knowledgeable about our contract, and assist you to the best of my ability as your union steward.

If a majority of bargaining unit RNs in my unit or clinic signs this petition then it signifies their endorsement of me as their unit or clinic steward. However, it is understood that if the position is contested than a selection process will occur pursuant to the process outlined in the document entitled "Unit Steward/Chief Steward (Formerly Unit Representative) Selection Process."

By signing this petition of intent, you are endorsing me as this unit/clinic's steward.

|              |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Name:</b> | <b>Date:</b> | <b>Unit:</b> |

May use reverse side for additional signatures



## Appendix C

### Union Steward (formerly unit representative) Petition of Intent

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Facility: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**Union Steward's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Contact Number**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Best Time to Contact You**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Email Address**