

# **SEIU Local 503 2020 Sub-Local Elections: How to Run for Union Office**

Many SEIU Local 503 members are uncertain how to go about running for union office for the first time. The following guidelines are meant to assist members contemplating running for union office.

**Step 1. Identify the position you wish to run for and any applicable deadlines.** You can find the list of positions up for election in your sub-local in the Voice which was sent by mail, or online, linked from [www.seiu503.org/weare503/](http://www.seiu503.org/weare503/). This includes the deadline to submit your nomination form. Your field organizer or other leaders in your sub-local can answer questions about the responsibilities of different positions if you need more information to determine what position you'd like to run for.

**Step 2. Identify if your sub-local permits candidate statements and/or photographs.** You can check the online nomination form to determine if your sub-local permits candidate statements and/or photographs. If yes, work on preparing your 200-word candidate statement. Microsoft Word software usually lists a word count in the bottom left of the screen to help you identify if you've gone over the limit. (Statements that go over the limit will have any words exceeding 200 words cut off at the end.) There is no specific information you have to include a candidate statement and this is your choice. Many candidates like to share information about their job, how long they have worked for the Employer and/or have been an SEIU member, and prior experience with union activism, if any. Members may recount how they turned out to rallies to support bargaining, legislative lobby days, or their record of attendance at member meetings. Members may also note what they hope to accomplish in the role(s) they are running for office.

If your local permits a photograph, identify a head and shoulders photograph. Note that the photograph will be published in black and white in a square aspect ratio, so you may wish to crop it prior to submission. Photographs must picture the candidate only so be sure to crop out anyone else in a photograph. Photographs do not need to be professionally taken – this is just a way for members to recognize who you are.

**Step 3. Submit your nomination form!** Once your candidate statement and/or photograph is ready for submission, you'll be ready to submit your nomination form. If you have any difficulty with the online form, contact your field organizer or the Union at **1-844-503-SEIU (7348)** to request a paper form.

**Step 4. Review your confirming email.** You will receive a confirming email from the Union, usually within 1-2 business days of submission of the online nomination form. (Receipt of the confirming email may take longer after submission of a paper form.) If you do not receive a confirming email, contact your field organizer or resubmit the nomination form before the nomination closing deadline to ensure your form was received.

**Step 5. Review the Candidate FAQs for detailed information on rules surrounding elections.**

**Step 6. Start campaigning for office!** See the reverse side of this page for additional suggestions on campaigning.

## Talk to Your Co-Workers

If you are a member in a worksite based sub-local, talking to your co-workers and asking that they vote for you face-to-face can be one of the most effective ways to spread the message about your candidacy. However, because of restrictions in the law regarding the use of employer or union resources to promote your candidacy, you should be aware of the following:

- **DO** campaign before or after work or on your lunch break.
- **DON'T** campaign during paid time.
- **DO** talk to members about your candidacy before or after union meetings (e.g. outside of the meeting in the hallway).
- **DON'T** announce your candidacy during a union meeting (unless all candidates were invited to do so by the meeting sponsors in advance).

## Seek Endorsements or Run on a “Joint Slate”

Candidates will often seek to inform members of other union leaders who have endorsed their candidacy. A local or sub-local as an entity cannot make an endorsement of a candidate, but you can list the individual name of a member who supports your candidacy in campaigning literature or in your candidate statement.

Some candidates choose to run on a “joint slate” where they encourage members to vote for everyone on that slate and collectively prepare campaigning literature or communications. Members can still choose to vote only for certain members on the slate if they wish.

## Hand Out Campaigning Literature

In addition to talking to your co-workers, you can distribute campaigning literature. Some members create flyers for themselves or ask other members or family members for help creating a flyer.

## Hand Out Campaigning Literature (continued)

In addition to the restrictions listed surrounding talking to your co-workers:

- **DO** create and print flyers at home or at a print shop.
- **DON'T** create, print, or copy flyers at the union hall or using your employer's equipment, including employer computers, printers, or copiers.

## Social Media

Social media provides another opportunity to reach out to members about your candidacy, but there are important restrictions to note. Union-operated Facebook pages and groups (including those operated by SEIU 503 or sub-locals which are administered by union officers in the sub-local) cannot be used for campaigning in Union elections in any way. However, you may post on your own page to encourage members to vote for you. You may also attempt to contact members to ask that they vote for you through Facebook or other social media platforms.

## Email and Mail

Candidates may not send any campaigning communications to members using employer email, either to a members' employer email or from their own employer email. Candidates cannot use contact information accessible to the candidate only through a union or employer resource to contact members to promote their candidacy.

Candidates do have the right to request that the Union send campaigning communications by email or mail to eligible voters if they pre-pay for the cost to send the communication. Candidates interested in doing so should contact [communications@seiu503.org](mailto:communications@seiu503.org) for more information.