

R2-R15 Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Committee Recommendation: ✓ Do pass as amended

Union Operations Committee: Patty Falkenstein (Homecare Sublocal 99), Shaun Parkman (DHS/OHA Sublocal 219), Hismelia Cardier (DHS/OHA Sublocal 203), Angela Jelley (Sublocal 99 Homecare), Diana Lobo (Sublocal 99 Homecare), DeAnna Wanke (Sublocal 99 Homecare), Leigh Roberts (University of Oregon Sublocal 85)

Committee Report

The Committee is sending this to General Council delegates with a **“do pass as amended”** recommendation. We heard no testimony against this resolution. Making Union communications accessible to the blind and visually impaired was underscored as a Union value by many of the members who made pro statements and committee members also agreed with this. The resolution author shared an amendment to the resolution that they had discussed with our legal department to comply with federal union election law, which requires some elections (such as private sector union elections) to always provide paper ballots. The committee adopted this amendment unanimously to be in compliance with the law. Every committee member voted to send this forward with a “do pass” recommendation. One committee member spoke about how her autistic son benefits from such technologies and was excited to see our Union move in this direction.



Service Employees

Budget Impact/Cost Estimate: No fiscal impact outside of operating budget, as long as SEIU 503 moves to electronic voting for this sublocal.

International Union

Local 503,

2020 Committee Recommendations:

Oregon Public

Do Pass

Pass as Amended

Employees Union

Do Not Pass

2020 General Council Ballot & Resolution Number:

Round 2 Resolution 15

Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

1 **Subject: SEIU Local 503, OPEU website, elections, Sublocal elections, updates and communications**
2 **need to be made accessible for union members who are blind or visually impaired.**

3 **Authored by: SEIU Sublocal 585, Commission for the Blind**

4 **Resolution Endorsed by: Sublocal 585 vote at member meeting on 4/28/2020**

5
6 **WHEREAS**, the SEIU Sublocal 585, Oregon Commission for the Blind, has many union members who are
7 blind or visually impaired and require accessible communication from SEIU 503, and

8 **WHEREAS**, Article V, Section 1. Rights and responsibilities of Union members in the Union include the
9 following: (a), The right to have opinions heard and respected, to be informed of union activities, to be
10 educated in union values and union skills; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Article V, Section 1. Rights and responsibilities of Union members in the Union include the
12 following: (h) The responsibility to be informed about the internal governance of the Union and to
13 participate in the conduct of the Union's affairs; **WHEREAS**, Article V, Section 1. Rights and

14 responsibilities of Union members in the Union include the following: (j) The responsibility to treat all
15 workers and members fairly; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the above articles reflect the values of the union and its membership, much of the
17 communication from SEIU 503 to its members comes in the form of paper flyers, which are not
18 accessible to members who are blind or visually impaired,

19 **BE IT RESOLVED by the General Council of SEIU Local 503, OPEU**, that the SEIU Local 503 Administrative
20 Policies and Procedures (AP&P), Article XXVI, Communication Guidelines, (a) shall be amended to

21 require that communication from Local 503 be accessible to members who are blind or visually impaired
22 by making all announcements, updates, and other communication **also** available in an electronic format
23 that is accessible for screen readers such as JAWS. In addition, **to the extent permitted by law**, ~~that~~
24 ballots, including elections of Sublocal and Local 503 officers shall be made accessible so that screen
25 reader users can participate in in the voting process independently without assistance from a sighted
26 person. Lastly, the SEIU Local 503 website shall be made accessible to screen readers in its entirety.

27

28 ***BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the Union's AP&Ps shall be amended as follows:***

29

Article XXVI (AP&P)

30

Communication Guidelines

31 ***Section 1.*** The following statement of criteria will be published by the Union once each year for use by
32 Locals in setting editorial policies.

33

...

34 ***Section 2.*** *The Union shall ensure that its website and all announcements, updates, and other*
35 *communications are accessible to members who are blind or visually impaired to the greatest degree*
36 *possible. This includes but is not limited to the use of electronic media that are compatible with the use*
37 *of a screen reader or other assistive device. To the extent permitted by law, accessible electronic ballots*
38 *shall also be made available for all Union elections to ensure blind or visually impaired members can*
39 *participate in the voting process independently without assistance from a sighted person.*

Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Equity Statement

This resolution has a **positive** equity impact. This resolution makes union processes and information accessible for members who are blind or visually impaired. It improves inclusion by making it easier for members who are blind or visually impaired to engage with and participate in our Union.

Political Statement

No political statement.

Legal Statement

No legal statement.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Sheila Spencer

Sub-local: 585

Pro

My name is Sheila Spencer. I am the president of sub-local 585, Commission for the Blind and the author of this resolution. Understanding that our union values inclusivity, equity, and equality, it is inconsistent with these values that some communications from SEIU Local 503 are inaccessible to members who are blind. Currently, there are several key sections of the SEIU 503 website - including the contract - which are inaccessible to screen readers. Updates from SEIU 503 must be accessible and available electronically. Paper handouts are not accessible to people who are blind. This must change.

Additionally, this resolution calls for electronic ballots (in addition to paper ballots) be available for all local and sub-local elections. Paper ballots are not accessible to people who are blind. Under the current paper ballot system, our union family members who are blind must have a sighted person read and fill out the ballot for them. That isn't equitable or fair. It certainly isn't accessible.

Let's give everyone equal access to our union democracy and vote "yes" on this resolution.

Thank you.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Elizabeth (Betty) Holladay

Sub-local: #218

Pro

. This one tugs at my heart. I am saddened that we have not addressed these issues earlier. But I am very happy to support anything that provides accommodations and adds more inclusivity for our members. Fully support without hesitation.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Carla Hodges

Sub-local: Homecare Sub-Local 99

Pro

Any access that the union to give to help our blind or visually impaired members should be made possible for all members.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Louie Vidmar

Sub-local: 085

Pro

YES YES YES

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Donna Weatherly

Sub-local: 99

Pro

Also, Another good rule of thumb to keep as our families jewels.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Alice Redding

Sub-local: sub-local 99

Pro

... It's so important that they have accessible communication . With there handicap;
it's so difficult to communicate

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Melissa Unger

Sub-local: SEIU 503

Pro

This resolution is critical to make sure that all of our members can fully participate in our union. By passing this resolution and the resolution that will allow for electronic voting (R2-01), blind or visually impaired members will be able to fully participate in our union. Thank you.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Brendolyn Hendrix

Sub-local: Sub-Local 99

Pro

We need to make sure all are included

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Steve Demarest

Sub-local: Employment Department Local 471

Pro

Isn't it great to get the chance to expand accessibility and dignity for our Union members? Let's do it!

Steve Demarest

President, SEIU Local 503, OPEU

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Becky Wright

Sub-local: sub-local 503

Pro

Pro. I agree with this resolution to make it possible for the blind and the visually impaired to be able to participate and be a part of all meetings of SEIU

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Jessica King

Sub-local: Oregon State University

Pro

I urge delegates to vote YES on this resolution. This resolution not only benefits members who are blind or visually impaired, but it can also benefit other members who also use screen readers to take in and understand information, such as people with learning disabilities and people whose first language is not English. Electronic accessibility of our union communications promotes the independence and dignity of our members and this resolution makes participation in our union more accessible for members, resulting in a more inclusive union.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: patty falkenstein

Sub-local: r

Pro

makes the union more accessible.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Luella Larsen

Sub-local: Homecare Local 99 District 7

Pro

We all need to have the ability to communicate and this will give those with special needs that help.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Denare Archer

Sub-local: Homecare sub-local central oregon

Pro

Again, I am all for accessibility for people with disabilities, people that are isolated and have no transportation, and the visually impaired to be able to remain autonomous while they experience the voting process. Electronic voting will enable people who might not have been able to vote previously, to participate fully and autonomously without reservation or fear.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Barbara Evans

Sub-local: Local 99

Pro

If it can be done then lets do it and in all languages-yes!

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Christina Feigner

Sub-local: homecare

Pro

neutral

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Joye Willman

Sub-local: homecare

Pro

I agree with this resoution. All ballots should be accessible

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Rebecca sandoval

Sub-local: Local 99

Pro

Beyond just being the morally right thing to do, being able to access our union information, will very likely lead to greater member involvement in union activism. We need to let all members know that they are important to all of us.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Ivonne Rivero
Sub-local: Sub-local 99

Pro

I was impressed by all the advocacy and support fully the engagement of all of our members.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Temari Asazuki

Sub-local: Homecare

Pro

No statement provided.

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Anna Young

Sub-local: Homecare Local 99

Pro

No statement provided

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: Daniel (Dan) Smith

Sub-local: OSH #392

Pro

No statement provided

R2 - 15: Union Communications Accessible for Blind or Visually Impaired Members

Name: jan montes

Sub-local: Homecare

Pro

No statement provided