

PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

1. What Are Professional Associations?

Professional Associations are nonprofit, cooperative, voluntary organizations whose individuals share a common professional, technical, or management background.

2. What Are Other Organizations?

Other Organizations are civic groups, consumer groups, or other groups representing special, social, or public interests (e.g., veterans' affairs, child care, health, safety).

3. Why Must We Define Management's Relationship With Professional Associations And Other Organizations?

We must define management's relationship with professional associations and other organizations to:

- o draw distinctions between associations/management and unions/management
- o maintain consistent policy
- o comply with regulations

4. How Does A Professional Association Or Other Organization Obtain Recognition At The Workplace?

Management has flexibility to determine whether it will recognize a professional association or other organization. To obtain recognition at the workplace, a professional association or other organization must give management:

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- o A written request for recognition
- o The constitution or by-laws of its association or organization
- o A list of current officers with office telephone numbers and business addresses.

When it determines whether to grant recognition, management considers the above documents and the association's or organization's:

- o Ways to exchange information
- o Innovative ideas
- o Realistic concerns
- o Expressed views
- o Ability to improve operations and employee effectiveness

A written agreement or memorandum of understanding shows that management recognizes a professional association or other organization.

5. If An Association Or Organization Obtains Recognition, Can Employees Automatically Allot Dues To The Organization From Their Payroll Checks?

Although paying dues to a professional association or other organization is voluntary, managers may permit employees to allot dues automatically from their payroll checks. If management permits dues allotment, associations and organizations must coordinate allotment procedures with employee payroll offices.

Management may allow professional associations or other organizations to show dues allotment on the employee Leave and Earnings Statement in the block reserved for union dues if a union does not use that block.

August 1995

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6. Are There Limits On The Activities, Of A Professional Association Or Other Organization Where A Union Represents Employees?

At a workplace where a union represents employees, management must limit its involvement with professional associations or other organizations to avoid the appearance of formal consultations. Only unions represent covered employees on matters about employee-management policy.

Where a union is present, management's involvement with professional associations or other organizations must not lead to a change in employment conditions for employees that the union represents. Working for changes in employment conditions is a right reserved exclusively to the union.

Management will not give a professional association or other organization more support than it gives the union.

If management and union agree, professional associations and other organizations can participate on Labor-Management Partnership Councils or Committees.

7. Are there limitations on current Federal employees' activities for the association?

Current Federal employees may not act as agents at a discussion or meeting with Department officials to express or advance the views of the organizations on a particular matter involving legislation or policymaking that is narrowly focused on the interests of the particular identifiable class of persons in the organization. However, Government employees may send a letter that simply states the organization's views on a broad policy matter directed to the interests of a large and diverse group of persons, without asking for a specific Government response.

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8. Where can you find additional guidance and statutory and regulatory references on professional and other associations?

No other sources.