

Collective Bargaining: Tips for Managers and Supervisors

Supervisory employees play an important part in the effective implementation of the collective bargaining law and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between the State and each exclusive bargaining representative. The following suggestions may assist supervisors in this regard:

- Supervisors should be aware of the bargaining unit status of their employees;
- Read and be cognizant of the terms of the MOU(s) applicable to direct reports;
- Understanding that collective bargaining in Maryland State Government still is in its infancy, supervisors should avail themselves of training opportunities to learn more about the MOU(s) and the collective bargaining process;
- Be aware that an employee who is a member of a bargaining unit may, without the intervention of an employee organization, discuss any matter with the employee's employer;
- Adhere to the laws, regulations, policies, procedures and terms of the MOU as the supervisor performs his or her duties.

Management and supervisory employees should avoid:

- Acting in a manner that interferes with an employee's ability to take part in forming, joining, supporting, or participating in any employee organization or its lawful activities;
- Questioning employees about their participation in union activities;
- Rewarding employees for refraining from union activities, or promising to do so.

If, as a supervisor, you have any questions concerning your role, you should consult with your personnel office before you act.

The Role of Union Stewards in the Workplace Includes:

- Being aware of the terms of the MOU and educating the bargaining unit members about it;
- The Union Steward thoroughly investigates matters brought to the Steward's attention by a bargaining unit member in order to resolve any issues as quickly as possible by working with management;
- Partnering with management to improve workplace harmony;
- Acting as a problem-solver;
- Understanding the duty of fair representation, the Steward fairly represents all employees in the bargaining unit.