

Standards of Conduct: *Keeping Federal Sector Union Members Informed*

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FACT SHEET

Summary

- On June 2, 2006, the Department of Labor published a final rule modifying the Standards of Conduct regulations under the Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA). The Standards of Conduct regulations provide members of federal sector labor organizations with a "bill of rights" and other protections. These rights and protections are similar to those applicable to members of private sector unions under the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA).
- This rule will change the regulations to require federal sector labor organizations to notify their members of the rights and protections guaranteed them. Under the rule, which becomes effective July 3, 2006, federal sector unions must notify their members of their rights by October 2, 2006, and at least every three years thereafter. In addition, new members must be informed of their rights within 90 days of joining the union.
- The CSRA gives the Department of Labor the authority to issue regulations implementing the Standards of Conduct.

Why Make Changes?

- The CSRA applies to labor organizations that represent employees in most agencies of the executive branch of the Federal Government. The regulations implementing the Standards of Conduct provisions of the CSRA incorporate many LMRDA provisions, including those related to union reporting, elections of officers, trusteeships, and safeguards for union funds.
- However, when first implemented, these regulations did not include the important protection found in Section 105 of the LMRDA, which requires a labor organization to inform its members about their rights under the Act.
- Remedying this omission will further the fundamental goals of the LMRDA and the CSRA. It will keep rank and file union members informed of their rights, enable them to monitor their labor organization, and empower them to act to remedy any breach in the integrity of their union. Union members who are not informed of their rights are not likely, and may not even be able, to take such action or hold their labor organization accountable.

What Would Change?

- This final rule will amend the Standards of Conduct Regulations to require labor organizations representing federal employees to inform their members of their rights under the Standards of Conduct. Unions are required to provide the

notice to members by October 2, 2006, and at least once every three years thereafter. In addition, new members must be informed of their rights within 90 days of joining the union.

- Unions may use the Department of Labor publication *Union Member Rights and Officer Responsibilities under the Civil Service Reform Act*, which is available on the Web site of the Department's Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS) at <http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/olms/complpubs.htm>. Unions may also devise their own language. If a labor organization has a Web site, the notice must appear there.
- Notice may be given by hand delivery, regular mail, or electronic mail.
- The rule will be enforced by OLMS.