

The Steward Take Note

First of all, remember that as a steward of the union, you have the support of your Local, your main union office and the members who comprise the union. That means if you don't know the answer to questions or are not familiar with procedures, ask your Local leadership. With your position comes a huge responsibility and you need to be able to provide the right answers to members and follow the correct procedures in your dealings with management. Your members will respect you for following this simple advice.

Take your time. Listen carefully. Write things down. Buy yourself a spiral notebook and begin to document your activities. If you investigate a grievance, write down the 6 W's in your notebook or on the [grievance investigation](#) sheet that the Local provides with the [grievance form](#).

Be on your toes. Act professional and be aware of your rights. Your supervisor or manager will probably try to tell you what you can or cannot do as a steward. Remember, you are hearing this information from a self-serving and biased source.

Know your rights. **You are management's equal in all matters relating to the contract and the union-employer relationship.** If you are denied rights which make your defense of a member impossible, make sure your Local is aware of this situation immediately.

You are a representative of your union to your members. Introduce yourself and greet new hires. Be the strongest advocate for the union on the property. Pass along information from your Local. Squelch any rumour before it spreads. Work together with your Local's officers.

If a member comes to you with a complaint that could be grievable, investigate it quickly and professionally. Resolve the issue in the quickest and fairest way. Tell him/her that you will get back to them with an answer and then get back to them. If the issue is not grievable, see if there is a way to resolve it.

If there is no grievance, be honest with the member but explain why the issue is not a grievance under your agreement. Work with other stewards so that they are aware of the issues you have been presented with. You don't want a member going behind your back to another steward because he/she did not agree with your decision not to press a complaint.