

# OPEIU Local 8 Hardship Fund

## **Mission Statement for the Fund:**

The OPEIU Local 8 Hardship Fund provides assistance for Local 8 Members who are experiencing an immediate, severe and temporary financial situation due to an emergency.

## **The Hardship Review Committee of the Fund:**

- Fifteen (15) Members shall serve on the Hardship Review Committee, two (2) from each Region, four (4) at-large and three (3) at-large Alternates. Committee Members must have daily access to a personal email address.)
- A quorum of six (6) Members is required to conduct business.
- If a Review Committee Member fails to respond to five (5) consecutive Hardship Fund applications without notice to the Local 8 administrator, said Committee Member will be replaced by an Alternate determined by Union seniority.
- The Review Committee will meet every August and December to review the administration of the Hardship Fund.
- All vacant Committee positions will be elected to serve two (2) year terms at the September Assembly. If there is an unfilled Review Committee Member's position, an election will be held at the January Assembly to fill out the remainder of that term.

## **Eligibility guidelines for funds:**

- Must be a Member in good standing, including Members whose termination is being grieved by the Union.
- Have suffered an emergency or catastrophic situation that has caused temporary, sudden and non-recurring financial shortfall (e.g., natural disaster, immediate family crisis, acute illness or injury).
- Are unable to meet immediate, essential expenses.

## **Amount(s) of available assistance to individuals:**

- A maximum of \$250, with required documentation of need.
- A Member may receive one (1) hardship award within a rolling twelve (12) month period, up to a maximum of three (3) hardship awards in a lifetime.

## **The process to apply for assistance:**

- A Member completes a Hardship Fund application – available to download from our website or be sent from the Local 8 office.
- An application must include copies of any and all supporting documentation of need (e.g., invoice, receipt, bill, rental agreement, mortgage payment book...).

## **Eligibility review/distribution of assistance:**

- A completed application is reviewed by the Hardship Review Committee.
- The Review Committee will determine whether a hardship award will be paid directly to a particular vender or creditor (utility, landlord...) to which the Member has a financial obligation.
- The application for assistance, with accompanying documentation, shall be responded to within three (3) business days of receipt and the release of funds as soon as possible.
- Referrals to other assistance will be provided as needed.
- Any exceptions to this Policy will be taken into consideration by this Review Committee on a case by case basis.

## **Funding sources for the Fund:**

- Local 8 annual budget item
- Member donations – payroll deduction, bank deduction, self-mailers, on-line donations by check or credit card and donation of Shop Steward Incentive awards
- Union/Chapter/Assembly fundraisers
- Annual fundraising drive
- Match from the OPEIU International
- Member bequests

M/S/C Executive Board on September 8, 2010

M/S/C General Membership on September 25, 2010

M/S/C General Membership on September 24, 2011

M/S/C General Membership on January 28, 2012

M/S/C General Membership on September 21, 2012

M/S/C Executive Board on March 12, 2014

M/S/C General Membership on January 24, 2015