



## *Implementing a FIREPAC Check-Off Program*

### *What is a FIREPAC Check-Off Program?*

FIREPAC Check-Off programs allow IAFF members to make personal contributions to FIREPAC, the IAFF's federal political action committee, via payroll deduction.

### *Getting Started – A Step by Step Guide for Locals*

#### **1. POINT PERSON**

Designate a local officer or another local member to manage this process. Though establishing a FIREPAC Check-Off program is not a difficult task, it does require attention to detail. It helps if there is one person coordinating this effort and if the IAFF has a single person to contact should questions or problems arise.

#### **2. PAYROLL DEDUCTION LINE**

Verify that your employer will provide an additional payroll deduction line for each member's paycheck.

- a. If this must be done via contract negotiations, sample contract language is provided at the end of this document.
- b. If the employer will not grant a separate deduction line, the local may incorporate FIREPAC contributions into an existing deduction line, such as the union dues line. If the local proceeds with this option, meticulous bookkeeping must be maintained in order to distinguish the difference between a member's union dues and FIREPAC contributions as required by federal election law.

#### **3. FIREPAC CHECK-OFF AUTHORIZATION CARDS**

Once a deduction line has been secured, distribute FIREPAC Check-Off authorization cards to the membership for them to complete.

- a. Each local member will determine the amount they wish to contribute via payroll deduction. Federal election law requires that the contribution be voluntary and that no one, including the local, determine what the amount should be. However, federal election law does permit the union to suggest an amount.
- b. Completed authorization cards are returned to the local coordinator. The local will retain a copy for the local's records.

- c. The local will inform the employer of participating members and the amounts that should be deducted from each paycheck. This is usually done by providing the employer with the original signed authorization cards.
- d. Authorization cards do not need to be renewed annually. Once the card is provided to the employer, it will remain in effect until the member chooses to adjust the deductions or revokes his or her participation in writing to the employer and local president.

#### **4. TRANSMITTING FUNDS TO FIREPAC**

Once the employer has deducted FIREPAC contributions from the paychecks of participating local members, the local or the employer must transmit those funds to FIREPAC. Federal election law has specific requirements regarding the transfer. If funds are not transferred properly with the proper supporting documentation and within the prescribed time limit, FIREPAC cannot accept the funds and will be forced to return the money to the local. To prevent this from happening, please follow all directions below.

##### ***a. HOW?***

Locals may submit FIREPAC funds to the IAFF in one of four ways:

1. Locals who receive payroll deductions from the employer via wire transfer may ask the employer to wire FIREPAC contributions directly to FIREPAC. If the employer is willing to do this, contact the IAFF Political Department at 202-824-1582 for wire transfer instructions.
2. Locals who receive payroll deductions from the employer via check may request the employer to write a separate check payable directly to FIREPAC for the amount deducted for FIREPAC Check-Off. Checks can be mailed directly to the IAFF.
3. If the employer is unwilling to submit a wire transfer or check directly to FIREPAC, the local can deposit the FIREPAC portion of the payroll deduction into its general treasury account. The local must then write a check from that account payable to FIREPAC for the amount of the FIREPAC Check-Off program. The check should be mailed directly to the IAFF.
4. The local can establish a transmittal account into which they deposit only payroll deductions from member paychecks received from the employer. From this transmittal account, the local can disburse funds to its other accounts, e.g general treasury account, building fund, health insurance, etc. A check to FIREPAC can be written and sent to the IAFF from this account.

**b. WHEN?**

The local has 30 calendar days to forward the FIREPAC Check-Off money to the IAFF once it receives the funds from the employer, provided no member has more than \$100 deducted per pay period. If members get paid twice per month, the local can wait until it receives its second payroll deductions before remitting it to FIREPAC. However, the local has 30 calendar days from the time it receives the *first* payment of the month to remit the funds. Otherwise, the money must be returned to the local.

**c. WHAT SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION?**

Every time a local (or employer) remits FIREPAC Check-Off money to IAFF FIREPAC, it must be accompanied by a detailed listing of local members who contributed and the amount each gave. The amount of the check/wire transfer should match the amount listed on the roster. This amount is generally the same each month or pay period, but can change from time to time due to staff changes, absences due to disability, or changes in contribution amounts. The roster must accompany every check remitted to FIREPAC, even if the list never changes. Rosters must include each member's membership number and the name and contact information of the local's check-off point person.

Rosters may be submitted in the following formats:

- d. A paper hard copy may accompany the check/wire transfer sent by the local or the employer.
- e. An electronic file may be e-mailed to [dcox@iaff.org](mailto:dcox@iaff.org) once the check/wire transfer has been sent by the local or the employer.
- f. An electronic file on CD may accompany the check sent by the local or the employer. In order to use this option, the file must follow the file format listed below.

**FIREPAC Check-Off Electronic Roster File Format**

Files should be tab-delimited ASCII with the following fields:

Field Name	Description	Example
Local	IAFF Local Number (5 characters)	L1234 or F0017
Member ID	IAFF Member ID #	1234567
SSN	Social Security Number	123456789
Last Name	Last Name	Doe
First Name	First Name	John
Middle Name	Middle Name	E.

Suffix	Name Suffix	Jr.
Date	Date of contribution mm/dd/yy	01/01/01
Amount	Amount of contribution nnnn.nn	10.00

## 5. DONOR CLUB PREMIUMS

If members of your local have contributed enough each pay period to join one of FIREPAC's five donor clubs, they will receive the gift(s) offered by that donor club. Members who contribute \$199 or less in a calendar year (President's Club (\$100), Capitol Club (\$50) and FIREPAC Supporter (\$25)) will receive a FIREPAC pin. Members who join the Founder's Circle (\$200) will receive a shirt and a FIREPAC pin. Members of the Leadership Trust (\$500) will receive a shirt, FIREPAC pin and one of three additional gift selections.

FIREPAC will automatically send pins for President's Club, Capitol Club and FIREPAC Supporter members to the local for distribution. Members in the Founder's Circle and Leadership trust must inform the local point person of their desired shirt size. Leadership Trust members must also inform the local point person of their additional gift selection. All of this information should be forwarded at the beginning of each year to the IAFF with your regular Check-Off roster. Locals with new Check-Off programs should submit donor club premium information as quickly as possible. Once this information has been received, all donor club gifts will be sent to the local for distribution to participating members.