

# PART XVI: RETIREES

## 1. Retiree Recognition

As members consider retirement, Locals can contact its local retiree council chapter for introduction into the CWA's Retiree Membership Council (RMC). Once CWA is notified that a member in good standing is retired, a letter of appreciation from the President, with a retirement card certifying that the person retired as a member in good standing with CWA will be automatically sent to the retiree's home.



Locals may wish to present an engraved brass Retired Membership Card (Gold Card) to the retiring member.

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## 2. Retiree Activism

Locals can be made stronger by tapping the power of their retired members and sponsoring a Local Chapter of the CWA Retired Members' Council (RMC).

The CWA Retired Members' Council, RMC, plays an important role in the Union, by maintaining contact with retired members and giving them a voice in their Union. Having the support of retirees is important for achieving the Union's goals, whether strategizing around action, developing relationships to move our collective agenda forward, bargaining a contract, supporting a strike or building a strong and effective community, organizing and political action program.

RMC Chapter members are part of a force that are motivated, want to stay active and connected with CWA. They bring the resources of a lifetime of work and membership experience. Retirees already know what it takes to mobilize, negotiate a good contract, preserve hard fought rights, mentor less-experienced workers, bring workplace justice or win passage of important legislation. Together, a strong diverse and active RMC enables us to increase our power and clout as workers to safeguard not only pension and health care, but also vital programs and issues important to our Union.

For more information, visit the Council's web site at [www.cwaretirees.org](http://www.cwaretirees.org).

### Retiree Activism Goals

- ) Join likeminded retired CWA members in the ever-present ongoing fight for retirement security, economic justice and democracy
- ) Grow and support the number of Council lifetime members and retiree chapters
- ) Engage more retirees in strategic actions/ mobilization
- ) Grow retirees' participation in the CWA PAF/Political Action Fund
- ) Raise awareness of the Council among pre-retirees

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## 3. Retired Members Council

The CWA Retired Members' Council is made up of lifetime members who pay a one-time \$25 fee to join. Those who retired as members in good standing of the union are eligible to enroll. Locals are encouraged to give the gift of membership to their retirees.

Each District and Sector has elected representatives on the Council Executive Board. These representatives serve as delegates to the CWA Convention/CWA Presidents' Meeting.

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## 4. Starting A Retiree Chapter

CWA local unions can build the union by tapping the activism of retired members by sponsoring a chapter of the CWA Retired Members' Council. More than 250 local unions representing over 55,000 active retirees in every district and sector have retiree chapters and they are stronger for it.

Retiree chapters provide a tremendous level of support to locals because they are made up of retirees who are motivated to stay connected with the union. They are committed because they know what it takes to negotiate a good contract or win passage of important legislation. They are invaluable in helping build public support for our union's goals because they are active and visible in their community, belonging to a wide range of locally- based organizations. Go to the RMC website at [www.cwaretirees.org](http://www.cwaretirees.org).

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## SPONSOR

The Local executive board first votes to sponsor a CWA Retiree Chapter. Next, a committee is formed to coordinate and lay the groundwork for creating a chapter. The committee should be made up of several local retirees and a local officer or union member. The committee then plans an event such as a formal meeting at a lunch or dinner for the retired members of the local.

Invite a member of the board on the CWA Retired Members' Council to be the featured speaker at the event. The board member can talk about the importance of establishing a chapter and the important role that retirees play in supporting CWA locals.

Once the decision is made to have a chapter, the local applies for a charter from the International, and temporary chapter president is appointed. Forms are available from the CWA RMC coordinator in Washington, DC or on the RMC website [www.cwaretirees.org](http://www.cwaretirees.org).

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## LAUNCH

The CWA RMC coordinator will send out to the newly formed chapter the RMC administrative guidelines and other helpful information to launch the local Chapter. Once the charter is received the committee should appoint a temporary chapter president and hold an inaugural meeting to take the following actions:

- ) Establish an election committee to conduct officer elections.
- ) Chart the course of the chapter.
- ) Establish a by-laws committee.
- ) Apply for an EIN Employer Identification Number for the chapter by going to <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fss4.pdf>. This establishes the chapter as an official entity.
- ) Establish a bank account and request bond coverage.
- ) Distribute and collect membership cards.
- ) Set the next meeting date to write by-laws, establish annual dues, and coordinate activities with the local union

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## RECRUIT

After the chapter's formal launch and election of officers, the chapter should begin the process of building the chapter's membership. Chapter membership is open to Lifetime members of the Retired Members' Council. The Council will provide guidance on proven methods of recruiting new members. You can order list of Council members and other retirees of the local by contacting the CWA RMC Coordinator. Updates to the Chapters existing membership can be made by completing and sending the Update RMC form.

While the chapter is sponsored by the local, it is autonomous and operates separately from your local. Each local CWA Retiree Chapter elects its own officers, sets its own by-laws, dues, and conducts its own membership meetings.

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## ENGAGE

The Local should coordinate with the chapter's officers so the chapter can be included in strategizing around action, developing relationships to move our programs and collective agenda.

For more information, contact your RMC District/Sector President or visit the Council's web site: [www.cwaretirees.org](http://www.cwaretirees.org).

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## 5. Retiree Forms

CWA Retired Membership Card Program  
CWA Retired Members Council Lifetime Membership  
CWA Retiree Chapter Membership Application  
CWA Retired Members Council  
Application for Employer Identification Number  
Labor Organization Bond Coverage Request  
Request for Information  
Chapter Officer/Membership Updates

For these, and all other forms, visit the CWA website, [www.cwa-union.org](http://www.cwa-union.org) under "For Locals" and click on "Forms".