



**A Step by Step Guide
to Establishing a
FIREPAC
Check-Off Program**



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 available by contacting the Political Affairs Department at 202-824-1582.
- 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. Members will also still be required to sign a voluntary authorization card.

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 must retain a copy for the local's records for a minimum of 3 years after the member stops contributing. You will also need to send a copy of the authorization card to the IAFF Political Department.
- 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 or a print out listing each individual and the amount designated.

- 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 local.

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.

Our legal counsel highly recommends that FIREPAC money never be deposited into your local's general fund or PAC prior to being sent to the IAFF-FIREPAC.

a. HOW?

Locals may submit FIREPAC funds to the IAFF in one of three 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 FIREPAC at the IAFF Headquarters.
3. If the employer is unwilling to submit a wire transfer or check directly to FIREPAC, it is recommended that the local establish a transmittal account (a non-interest bearing checking 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 should then 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 IAFF membership number and the name and contact information of the local's check-off point person.

Rosters may be submitted in the following formats:

1. A hard copy may accompany the check/wire transfer sent by the local or the employer.
2. An electronic file may be e-mailed to dcox@iaff.org, kbenenson@iaff.org, and dwilliams@iaff.org once the check/wire transfer has been sent by the local or the employer.
3. 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 in Excel or 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
Last Name	Last Name	Doe
First Name	First Name	John
Date	Date of contribution mm/dd/yy	01/01/01
Amount	Amount of contribution nnnn.nn	10.00

Sample Roster

Local#	IAFF Member ID#	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Date of Contribution	Amount of Contribution
L0006	7-digits	John	X.	Doe	1/1/2009	\$19.24
L0006	0123456	Joe	A.	Smith	1/1/2009	\$7.70
L0006	1234567	Robert	B.	Johnson	1/1/2009	\$3.85
L0006	0654321	Jane	G.	Jones	1/1/2009	\$1.93
L0006	0543216	Adam	S.	Adams	1/1/2009	\$0.97
L0006	6543210	Tom	M.	Moore	1/1/2008	\$19.24
					Total:	\$52.93