

Questions and Answers

- Q1:** The Teamsters have shown us their CBA, why doesn't SEIU show us something in writing?
- Q2:** More than 80% of non-union workers voted to join SEIU in the fall. Why do we have to vote again?
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Specific Q&As for Current Teamster Members:

- Q12:** I'm a member of the Teamsters. Why do I get to vote?
- Q13:** Won't we risk losing everything we have if we leave the Teamsters?
- Q14:** Can the Teamsters renegotiate?
- Q15:** How does SEIU negotiate contracts?
- Q16:** I earn above the grid. What will happen to me if I choose SEIU?

Q1: The Teamsters have shown us their CBA, why doesn't SEIU show us something in writing?

A1: The Teamsters have a CBA with OMNI at some sites—but it's not a good agreement for workers and workers had no say in it. It is in place for almost another five years.

SEIU doesn't work that way. We the members will participate in meetings and fill out surveys to figure out what our bargaining priorities are. We will form worker bargaining committees to negotiate at the table alongside SEIU representatives. And finally, we the members vote to ratify agreements which can only take effect, if a majority of us agree to it.

Q2: More than 80% of non-union workers voted to join SEIU in the fall. Why do we have to vote again?

A2: The Teamsters and OMNI blocked the result of the vote we had in September 2012 and had the Labour Board seal ballot box (this means the votes weren't counted at the time). The Teamsters claimed they represented us, even though they had never spoken to us, and we didn't have a collective agreement.

SEIU has maintained that the ballots from the previous vote should be counted and the workers' wishes respected. The Teamsters and OMNI have not agreed.

The votes were counted on February 6, 2013. More than 80% of the ballots cast wanted SEIU to be our Union. The Labour Board has now ordered a 'run-off' vote where all OMNI/ Empire/ Novacos/ GDI workers will decide between SEIU and the Teamsters. This includes the non-union workers who voted in the fall and the roughly 90 Teamsters members.

We know who our union is – it's SEIU. We just have to vote one more time to make it perfectly clear, and get on with negotiating a collective agreement with improvements. It's also an incredible opportunity for the current Teamster members to get rid of the current contract and join the movement for real change.

Q3: What is a 'run-off' vote?

A3: This is a vote where workers will decide which union will represent them. In case, workers choose between SEIU Local 2 and the Teamsters.

Q4: Why should we bother voting?

A4: If you don't vote, you're letting someone else make the decision for you. **Less than a dozen workers voted in favour of the Teamster contract that currently covers 90 employees.** Now OMNI & the Teamsters want to force all workers into this subpar contract.

Do you want to be stuck with a Teamsters contract? Or should we form a real Union with SEIU and begin to negotiate real improvements like other Justice for

Janitors members across Canada? Everyone should come out to vote for SEIU.

Q5: Why should I vote for SEIU?

A5: With SEIU we can make real improvements:

- A. There's strength in numbers and it shows. SEIU represents nearly 12,000 Omni/Empire/Novacos/GDI workers across Canada.
- B. SEIU has a proven track-record through the Justice for Janitors campaign. See the kinds of improvements workers have won with SEIU on the website.
- C. It's clear from that the Teamsters have no interest in improving our working conditions:
 - They completely ignored us for years. We never saw ANY of them around until we started organizing with SEIU. Now they say they represent us?
 - The Teamsters collective agreement is bad for workers.
 - 5 years of no benefits;
 - 5 years of wages that are barely above the minimum wage and don't keep up with the cost of living increases;
 - 5 years of management being able to easily suspend workers without pay (2 weeks unpaid after a 2nd infraction);
 - OMNI doesn't mind if the Teamsters are our Union. Initially **OMNI said it would only agree to a run-off vote if SEIU agreed it would be bound by the Teamsters contract. SEIU refused!** We believe workers deserve better! Workers need to be active participants in negotiating a contract that meets workers' needs. That's why OMNI has fought our democratic decision to join SEIU (over 80% in favour) tooth and nail. That should tell you something.

Q6: Omni, Empire, Novacos, GDI ... what's the relationship between all of those?

A6: Omni Facility Services Canada is part of Distinction Group/Groupe Distinction Inc. (GDI). There are other cleaning companies that are also part of GDI, including Empire Maintenance and Novacos. At the end of the day, all of us work for the same employer.

SEIU represent nearly 12,000 workers employed by these companies in Canada.

Q7: Management has told me that we will lose the contract at our building if we vote for SEU. Is that true?

A7: Unfortunately scare tactics are common in organizing campaigns (and often illegal) – so you may hear things like this. It's not true. When you have a real Union, you can fight to keep your job if the contract changes and the new company does not retain current staff. If you are told this by management or the Teamsters, please contact us right away.

Q8: Can I be fired for supporting SEIU?

A8: No. Under the law you are protected to make a free choice. If you feel you've been harassed, intimidated, unfairly reprimanded, disciplined or terminated, please contact us right away.

Q9: What about union dues?

A9: Union dues are our membership fees. They are the way we pool our money to ensure that there are financial resources for:

- Bargaining better collective agreements;
- Filing grievances and presenting arbitration cases;
- Organizing new members to improve industry standards;
- Training and education;
- Campaigning for better labour laws.

SEIU Local 2's dues are 1.8% of gross income. (\$1.80 for every \$100 you earn).

Remember:

- Union dues are tax deductible;
- You do not pay union dues until you have a collective agreement;

Q10: Okay, I'm ready to vote! When is it?

A10: At this point, the only thing the Labour Board has said is that the vote will be held on February 27th & 28th. We do not know a place of time yet, but we will let you know as soon as we hear. In the meantime, it would be a good idea to make sure SEIU has your contact information. Contact Jason at jedwards@seiulocal2.ca or on his cell at 877-3141.

Q11: What can I do to help?

A11: Talk to your coworkers about why it's important to vote for SEIU. Tell them why it can make a difference in your life. You can also contact the SEIU office if you're available to help. It's our future! Our choice!

Specific Q&As for Current Teamster Members:

Q12: I'm a member of the Teamsters. Why do I get to vote?

A12: OMNI and the Teamsters refused to recognize the will of the majority of non-union OMNI workers who voted by more than 80% to join SEIU in the fall of 2012. The ballot box was sealed until February 6, 2013.

Now the Labour Board has ordered a 'run-off' vote which will include both the workers who voted to join SEIU in the fall and the current Teamsters because we must all be in one bargaining unit.

It's an incredible opportunity for the current Teamster members to get rid of the current contract and join the movement for real change.

Q13: Won't we risk losing everything we have if we leave the Teamsters?

A13: No. We will still have a union and we will negotiate a new and improved contract.

Q14: Can the Teamsters renegotiate?

A14: There's a legally binding agreement in place between OMNI and the Teamsters. The contract goes for almost another five years.

Q15: How does SEIU negotiate contracts?

A15: We, the members, will participate in meetings and fill out surveys to figure out what our bargaining priorities are. We will form worker bargaining committees to negotiate at the table alongside SEIU representatives. And finally, we the members vote to ratify agreements which can only take effect, if a majority of us agree to it.

Q16: I earn above the grid. What will happen to me if I choose SEIU?

A16: Typically when workers form a Union with SEIU our wages don't go down. We would demand that you be 'red-circled' (ie. maintain your higher wage) and still receive the same annual wage increases as everyone else.

SEIU