GUIDELINES TO THE AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAM.

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GUIDELINES

To The

AFL-CIO

COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAM

AFL-CIO

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March 24, 1966

Dear Sir and Brother:

These guidelines are designed as background material largely for the information of those who, over the years, have asked for it, namely the following:

1. New AFL-CIO Community Services Representatives on the staffs of such community agencies as united funds, welfare planning councils, Red Cross, etc.

2. New chairmen of community services committees of local and state AFL-CIO central labor bodies.

3. New AFL-CIO representatives on the boards and committees of national, state, and local health and welfare agencies.

We take it that these guidelines will help interested newcomers by providing them with a brief history of the development of AFL-CIO-CSA.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Leo Perlis, Director
Department of Community Services

LP:dlw
Introduction

At the heart of the trade union movement is the individual worker and his needs. Early in labor history these needs were direct, uncomplicated, and urgent. The major concern was improved economic security. Translated into specifics, it was a drive for higher wages, shorter working hours, improved job conditions - all obtained through collective bargaining.

Of necessity labor's first goal was to challenge gross economic exploitation. Discussion of rights and dignity remain abstract unless men control their economic environment. The right to be free of hunger and other material needs is fundamental to all other rights.

Through the years there has been a steady enlargement of union interests and concerns. Economic security is still of prime importance but no longer the only concern of labor. In fact, in very few areas is labor's basic struggle exclusively economic. This expansion of interests has broadened an earlier focus on job-related issues to take in the larger setting of the total community, especially the personal and family needs of union members.

Flower funds, passing the hat, the Sick and Visiting Committee were early efforts to express sympathy and extend fraternal support and assistance to an unfortunate member. For years such expressions of help were given on a personal basis, but with the growth in union membership more formal and adequate channels of assistance were required.

World War II, probably more than any other single factor, brought into existence what is now the AFL-CIO community services program. The program grew out of a specific need. During the war housing was at a premium, transportation was difficult, women without prior employment experience were entering the work force by the hundreds of thousands,
many families were uprooted and on the move. Personal and family problems stemming from such dislocations frequently interfered with job efficiency and war production. Recognizing the vital relationship between family problems and work, unions sought new ways to help members resolve off-the-job personal and domestic hardships in addition to its primary function of raising funds to alienate the suffering of victims of Nazism and Fascism overseas. It was at this point, having neither staff nor facilities to handle such problems as day care centers for children of working mothers, emergency housing, and health services, that labor looked to the community's network of health and welfare agencies to provide many of the required basic services.

This cooperation between organized labor and social agencies was not limited, however, to referrals and the use of welfare services. During the war years labor helped to bring into successful reality the idea of federated fund raising. It also proposed at the same time the establishment of a National Health Fund. Basically, federation is a voluntary banding together of various private welfare agencies for the purpose of a once-a-year, community-wide fund drive. Through its pioneering of the pay-roll deduction plan of giving, labor helped to strengthen the federated approach to fund raising, substantially increased funds for voluntary agencies, and encouraged greater inter-agency cooperation and budgeting.

In this brief introduction one fact needs to be emphasized. From the outset the relationship between organized labor and the community's social services was one of working partners. Rather than duplicating available welfare services, labor merged its interests with agencies already in existence, asking only in return that their services be administered democratically through active labor participation and representation, in behalf of the total community. In brief, labor
asked that the community and its agencies become more representative of the people and more responsive to the people's needs.

The following brief outline describes the growth of development of the AFL-CIO community services program, especially labor's cooperation with the field of social welfare in building better communities for all citizens. In addition to a listing of key policy and position statements that spell out the competence, and organizational structure of the community services program, the outline also includes a brief description of major CSA projects and activities.
December 5, 1955, is an eventful date in American labor history. It was on this day in New York City that the AFL-CIO was formally organized.

Section 1 of Article 13 of the AFL-CIO Constitution authorizes and defines Community Services Committee in the following words:

The committee on Community Services shall stimulate the active participation by members and affiliated unions in the affairs of their communities and the development of sound relationships with social agencies in such communities.

The first AFL-CIO Convention further defined the work of the Committee by unanimously adopting a resolution that specifically called for the following actions:

- Encourage equitable labor representation on the boards and committees of community social agencies.
- Stimulate labor participation in formulating agency policies and programs.
- Undertake educational activities to acquaint union members with the objectives and functions of community social agencies.
- Plan for union participation in such activities as disaster services and civil defense.
- Work with other community groups in developing health programs such as blood banks and multiple screening.
- Coordinate fund drives through federation.
- Cooperate with social agencies in resolving welfare problems.
- To become a part of genuine efforts designed to improve the standards and practices of social work agencies and services.

This first CSC resolution also urged all AFL-CIO affiliated international and national unions to establish community services departments with full-time staff wherever possible.
Further, it urged all state and local central labor bodies to organize CSA departments and, wherever possible, to man such departments with full-time staff.

Still a third recommendation requested all local unions to establish standing Community Services Committees.

Later, at conventions held in 1957 and 1959, the following specific programs, in addition to those listed above, were incorporated in convention resolutions:

- Development of programs in time of strike and during periods of layoffs and unemployment.
- Stimulate planning and the development of services to meet welfare needs in the areas of mental health, alcoholism, aging and the aged, youth, recreation, blood banks, rehabilitation, fluoridation and health education.
- Develop methods to interpret for union members programs of community social agencies such as union counselling.
- Coordinate fund-raising of voluntary health drives through federation wherever possible including the promotion of a National Health Fund.
- Participate in international social welfare programs.

Occasionally the question is asked: "Why a community services program? Why this concern with problems other than those that arise on the job? It is understandable that a militant union must be concerned with job conditions and grievances, but isn't it the function of other community groups to be concerned with neighborhood and community grievances?"

There are a number of reasons why the modern labor movement instituted a community services program.

First, the union member at home and the union member at work is the same person. No worker can shrug off his family and personal concerns as he leaves for work. His family life affects his work and the opposite is true, and both job and home life are influenced by larger community conditions.
There are some family and personal difficulties that are not covered in any work contract, even the best. For instance, is there a work contract provision to assist a family with a retarded child, or a serious mental illness, or severe conflict between husband and wife? Does any work contract explain how you go about adopting a child, or the causes of juvenile delinquency, or alcoholism, or how to break-up the loneliness of old age?

Second, the union sees the member as more than just a cog in an industrial machine, or a function in some industrial process. Instead, it sees the union member as a person who has a whole range of aspiration, hopes, and needs. The union member is citizen, worker, family member, consumer, and community volunteer.

Shortly after the 1955 Convention, AFL-CIO President George Meany appointed a Community Services Committee of AFL-CIO members who agreed to serve in a voluntary capacity as Committee members. The Committee currently numbers fifteen, and is headed by Joseph A. Beirne, president of the Communications Workers of America.

The national Community Services Committee is Advisory to President Meany.

The full-time, day-to-day working arm of the CSA program at the national level is the Department of Community Services. This department is directly responsible to President Meany. It is headed by Director Leo Perlis.

Here in capsule form are some of its major activities:

- Implement decisions of AFL-CIO Convention, the Executive Council, and President
- Cooperate with other AFL-CIO Departments
- Recommend to AFL-CIO President names of union members to serve on national agency boards
- Provide field service to state and local central bodies and international unions
...Design projects to improve health and welfare of union members

...Develop full-time CSA staff with Chests, Funds and other agencies, such as Red Cross chapters.

...Sponsor conferences and institutes on relevant health and welfare issues and problems.

...Provide technical assistance in time of disaster, strikes, and unemployment.

...Cooperate with voluntary and public welfare organizations on programs of mutual interest

...Develop information program interpreting role of social welfare agencies and services.

The next level of the program is that within the state central labor body.

Functions of the state Community Services Committee include the following:

Cooperate with national AFL-CIO-CSA and implement its programs

Implement decisions of state convention and officers

Coordinate work of local central body CSC's

Establish relations with state health and welfare organizations

Advise state officers on state welfare legislation

Carry on a formal educational program: summer schools, conferences, pamphlets, etc.

Provide guidance to local communities in times of strikes, disaster, and unemployment

Assist national AFL-CIO-CSA develop full-time CSA staff

In many ways the functions of the local central labor body and the local union Community Services Committee are similar. Perhaps the major distinction between the two is that the central body CSC is basically concerned with community-wide welfare issues, while the primary concern of the local union CSC is direct face-to-face assistance of its members on
personal and family problems.

The local central labor body CSC is concerned with the following specific activities:

--To organize union counselling classes.

--To see that labor is fairly represented on the boards and committees of the community's social agencies.

--To design and undertake specific projects that strengthen and enrich the lives of union members. Under this broad heading fall such projects as pre-retirement counselling, drop-in-centers for the retired, blood banking, eye care clinics, consumer counselling, etc.

--To pursue a year-round educational program that acquaints union members with available welfare services and benefits and at the same time keeps community agencies informed on union welfare interests.

--To encourage union members to serve as community volunteers.

--To cooperate with other community groups and interests in improving and extending available social services, and the elimination of those community conditions that lead to family break-down and other undesirable forms of community disorganization.

At the national and state level the basic concern is with program promotion, that is, with policy determination, issuing publications and training manuals, the development of new projects, labor representation on community boards, and the important function of coordinating the entire CSC program.

It is the level of the local union, however, that paper programs must become real. It is here, in the local union, that the day-to-day problems and needs of people must be met. The local union is the level of service to the individual worker and his family. The local union Community Services Committee is the building block of the entire CSC program.

What is the objective of the local union CSC? Basically, it has a seven fold purpose:
(1) To provide general information to union membership about local health and welfare facilities. The Committee can do this through talks at local union meetings, distribution of literature, occasional mailings, the use of the union newspaper, etc.

(2) To provide union counselling service to those members who need help in resolving personal and family problems. The union member with a specific problem will want to know the exact and best place to go for help. It is here that union counselling comes in. The counsellor is the connection between the member who has a problem and the best source of help in the community. In addition to acting as a referral agent---as a source of information---the counsellor can also serve as a sympathetic friend who encourages his fellow union member to use available agency services.

(3) To provide emergency services in times of unemployment, strikes, disasters. The local union with a functioning Community Services Committee and trained union counsellors can, through cooperation with CSC of the central labor body and community agencies, swing into action in the event of an emergency.

(4) To put into operation special programs that benefit the membership such as pre-retirement counselling, blood banks, visits to sick members, expediting the use of social services, consumer counselling, etc.

(5) To cooperate with the Community Services Committee of the central labor body.

(6) To coordinate the local union's participation in community fund drives.

(7) To develop a pool of AFL-CIO leadership in the area of health and welfare, and to encourage individual acceptance of community responsibilities.

An earlier part of this outline discussed the partnership between federation and organized labor that emerged out of World War II.

In this relationship labor agreed to pioneer and give strong support to the payroll deduction plan, to make its organized channels of communication available to social welfare agencies, and to recruit union members as community volunteers.

In turn, the vast majority of Chests, Funds, and Community Welfare Councils increased labor representation on policy making boards and
and committees; gave increased recognition to labor's contribution, and involved labor in all levels of the Chest and Council operation.

In cities where labor membership was sizeable and its contributions substantial a further step was taken namely, the creation of a new position in the welfare field, that of full-time AFL-CIO Community Services representative on the staffs of united funds, community chests, welfare planning councils, Red Cross and other agencies.

In every sense of the word this emerging relationship between federation and organized labor is a partnership. It has experienced growing pains; occasionally there have been disagreements but certainly the gains for federation and social welfare have far outweighed the difficulties.

While the national AFL-CIO-CSA and United Community Funds and Councils of America are instrumental in negotiating openings for local AFL-CIO-CSA staff, it is basically an agreement between the local central labor body and the local United Fund subject to national AFL-CIO approval.

In terms of program the local AFL-CIO-CSA representative has a dual responsibility to both the central labor body and to the Fund, but his major program activities should be determined by the central labor body. If the labor staff person is to speak as an agent for the AFL-CIO-CSA program, if he is to use labor channels and gain the support of union officers he must carry out the AFL-CIO-CSA program. Otherwise, his value to both labor and the Fund is greatly reduced if not cancelled altogether.

The day-to-day responsibilities of the local staff representative attached to a Community Chest or United Fund includes:

(1) Develop programs through the channels of both labor and social work designed to meet health, welfare and recreational needs of the community.

(2) Develop union counsellor training programs, health and welfare institutes, special educational programs and tours of social agencies—all designed to meet the special needs of union members.
(3) Develop a systematic approach to informing union members, the social agencies, and the community at large of the AFL-CIO community services program. This should include the issuance of a newsletter, press release to all available media and speaking before union, agency, and community groups.

(4) Develop plans for selection of potential board and committee members and preliminary training and subsequent follow-up of such members.

(5) Develop a flexible community services program geared to the needs of the particular community.

(6) Secure opportunities for health and welfare agency representatives to speak before union groups on welfare services.

(7) Secure opportunities for union members to speak before health, welfare, and other community groups.

(8) Cooperate actively with the campaign divisions during the annual fund-raising campaign to encourage labor participation.

(9) Work with the agencies and central labor body on new programs to meet unmet needs and to improve and strengthen existing services.

This same kind of relationship exists at the national level between the AFL-CIO Community Services Department and United Community Funds and Councils of America. This latter organization—UCFCA—is a loose federation of some 2100 local Community Chests and United Funds throughout the country. As already mentioned, UCFCA maintains a Labor Participation Department with a staff of seven members—all of whom act in a liaison capacity between UCFCA and AFL-CIO-CSA and whose activities are coordinated by the AFL-CIO Community Services Department.

Some Specific CSA Activities

Board Membership Organized labor believes that the boards and committees of all social agencies receiving support from the public should be representative of the total community, including labor.

The AFL-CIO-CSA position on board membership can be summarized in the following four principles:
(1) Labor wants adequate representation on the boards and committees of social agencies. Representation at the policy-making level enables labor to fulfill its obligation to the community. It is another channel of service and education.

(2) Labor does not want "letter-head" or "token" representation for window-dressing purposes. It wants to take an active, constructive part in improving agency standards, practices and services.

(3) Bonafide labor representation can only be obtained through the central labor body. The central labor body makes recommendations for such representation.

(4) The local AFL-CIO Community Services Committee has the responsibility to stimulate, recruit, and train for responsible board membership.

Union Counselling Union Counselling is a tool of the community services program designed to help union members use community health and welfare services and facilities.

Through a union counsellor training course a representative group of union members are trained in the location, specific services, and eligibility requirements of local health and welfare agencies. Thus, at the completion of the training, counsellors are equipped to act as referral agents. The trained union counsellor is a point of contact...or rather a bridge...between a union member with a problem and the best source of help in the community.

Counsellor training courses are usually under the sponsorship of the CSC of the central labor body. As a rule the average course runs about eight sessions with one two-hour session per week.

Most of the weekly meetings include two speakers, one for each hour, who discuss some particular field of service such as health services and facilities...family and child services...recreation...financial assistance...Social Security...workmen's and unemployment compensation...legal aid...special services.
Health And Welfare Institutes and Conferences

An AFL-CIO-CSA Health and Welfare Institute
(or conference) in a day-long meeting usually consisting of morning, luncheon, and afternoon sessions which has as its purpose the increase of knowledge about community health and welfare needs and services. Health and welfare institutes provide representatives of labor and social work the opportunity to get together to discuss common goals, as well as community problems and needs.

An institute may be designed to give information about a community's health and welfare agencies, their programs and services. If this is the case, such a conference would feature spokesmen from the labor agencies.

A second type of health and welfare institute is one that pinpoints a particular health and welfare field or a special set of problems or needs. This second type of conference is more specialized and intense; it may concentrate on such needs as "programs for retired workers," or "new trends in mental health," or "problems of the unemployed."

Institutes utilize speakers and panels, films, roundtable discussion groups, skits and other methods of highlighting welfare facilities, problems and needs.

Pre-Retirement Planning
Pre-retirement education. . .some prefer to call it pre-retirement planning. . .is a series of discussion meetings to help union members think about their retirement before it happens. The program is based on the premise that if people know what to expect, if they understand changes that are likely to confront them, they can plan more intelligently for the future.

Pre-retirement education consist of seven or eight two hour sessions, usually with one session per week, built around such subjects as how retirement affects income, housing, health needs, social relationships, and other important areas of life. To date most pre-retirement courses have tried to interest workers about 60 years of age, but this program should reach
workers at an earlier age if it is to be effective.

In some cases a pre-retirement program is sponsored by the local union, in others it is under the guidance of the local central labor body.

Standard format for most sessions is to have a speaker present basic material on the subject under discussion. Pensions and Social Security, and physical and emotional changes and needs after forty, housing needs in retirement, community facilities for recreation, etc. to be followed by general group discussion.

**Consumer Programs** The objective of the consumer program is to help union members protect and maximize the purchasing power of their income.

The consumer program consists of three parts:

First, **consumer information course** consists of a series of weekly meetings, usually six to eight, that bring union members together with community specialists who can discuss the following fields: food and meal planning; credit and installment buying; legal assistance and consumer protection; health care including medical, drug and hospital costs; insurance and topics of similar interest.

Sessions usually run from two to three hours. Emphasis is on twenty or twenty-five minute speeches with group discussion following.

The consumer information course is under the sponsorship of the Community Services Committee of the central labor body. Recruitment is from affiliated local unions with the wives of participating members encouraged to attend. Certificates for course graduates are available from the national AFL-CIO-CSA office.

The second part of a good consumer program is a one-day **consumer conference**. Such conferences highlight key problems such as consumer credit, wage assignments and garnishments, and the work of local consumer agencies.
Consumer conferences include morning, luncheon and afternoon sessions.

A third activity making up a well-rounded consumer program is a consumer clinic.

The consumer clinic provides a place...usually at the local union hall or central labor council office...where union members can go for advice and information on specific individual problems and complaints. The clinic is sponsored by the local AFL-CIO-CSA unit in consultation with appropriate legal agencies. The clinic can be open one or two nights a week and is staffed by a union lawyer or a representative from the Legal Aid Society on a strictly voluntary basis.

Fund Raising: In specific terms there are five factors that determine labor's endorsement and active participation in a Community Chest or United Fund campaign. They are:

1. Fair-share giving worked out on a local basis, with labor's concept of fair-share decided by labor.

2. Payroll deduction on a year-to-year voluntary basis and never as a condition of employment.

3. The involvement of labor in both the campaign organizations and the top policy body of the Chest or Fund.

4. Joint labor-management solicitation.

5. Recognition of labor's role in the campaign.

What are the campaign responsibilities of the full-time AFL-CIO-CSA staff representative with a Chest or Fund, or, in his absence, the responsibilities of the local Community Services Committee?

1. Plan for labor's participation. This means getting commitments from union officers to serve on campaign committees; follow-through to see that union members working as volunteers attend meetings, are informed of their duties, etc.

2. Promote and publicize the drive among union members. This step involves general publicity such as notices to the press, posters in the union hall, announcements at local union meetings, plant rallies and "kick-offs," come-see tours, hand bills, etc.

3. Supervise solicitation. Develop payroll deduction plans, briefing of union officers on solicitation methods, etc.
(4) Report results of labor's role in the campaign. Organized labor should be represented at report meetings. (A major responsibility of the full-time staff representative is to compile a detailed report of labor giving for local and national use.)

Meeting The Needs Of Local union and central labor body Community The Unemployed Services Committees should undertake the following steps in times of unemployment or mass lay-offs:

--Obtain information on who is unemployed; where the unemployed live; what are their most immediate problems (food and clothing, rent and home payments, loan and installment payments, medical care, drugs, car payments, utilities, etc.) Get the facts.

--Assist members in getting unemployment compensation.

--Check availability of surplus foods and the food stamp program.

--Meet with local social agencies to discuss possible courses of action to assist unemployed families.

--Meet with officials of department of public assistance to discuss ways of expediting assistance.

--Contact utilities, loan companies, housing officials, banks, etc., for extension of credit.

--Arrange meetings with city officials, welfare agency representatives, and union leaders to discuss unemployment situation and city plans, if any, to meet emergency.

--Sponsor a community-wide conference on unemployment.

--Cooperate with state and national projects designed to focus public attention on the needs of the unemployed.

Needless to say, the success and effectiveness of any of the above actions would depend on dogged, intense, person-to-person contact. Another factor will be the extent of the union's community contacts; on its ability to communicate with both its members and the public at large.

Strike Assistance The best preparation for a strike assistance program is to have a year-round, functioning Community Services Committee. An established CSC can save both time and energy in undertaking the following steps when a strike occurs:
1. Meet with representatives of social agencies to (a) discuss various kinds of assistance available; (b) agree with agencies on a uniform referral system; (c) inform agencies on the number and residency of strikers and kinds of problems most likely to be encountered; (d) seek to have eligibility requirements, especially those of public welfare department, liberalized for duration of strike.

2. Select trained union counsellors to man the strike assistance headquarters where union members will be interviewed and referred to proper community agency.

3. Under the direction of local union officers assume responsibility for allocating union relief funds.

Blood Banks

There are various types of blood banks that a community services program may want to consider. The following types are listed in order of preference:

Community-Wide Blood Bank--This type is open to all members of the community and all organizations. Its board of directors should be representative of all segments of the community, including organized labor.

Any established rules of operation for a community-wide blood bank should stress the following points:

(a) Blood will be available free to all members of participating organizations and individuals and their dependents.
(b) Blood replacement will be on a one-to-one basis.
(c) Local hospitals should enter into an agreement with the blood center establishing a standard rate for the administration of blood.
(d) The bank will plan to hold a reserve for the community's quota for the Armed Services and disaster needs.
(e) The bank will negotiate with other banks across the country so that blood is available on a replacement basis anywhere in the country.
(f) In consultation with the Red Cross, the bank will be so organized that it becomes part of a national blood program when such a program becomes a reality.
(g) In the case of local unions every effort should be made to see that retired members and their families are covered.

Red Cross-Hospital-AFL-CIO Banks--Under this plan unions negotiate directly with Red Cross and local hospitals to set up a bank that is limited in its scope to the protection of union members and their families and/or other organizations that may wish to participate.

Hospital-Centered Labor Blood Banks--In some cases where local medical societies refuse to participate in a community blood bank it may be necessary for local labor to survey local hospitals and negotiate with them in setting up banks.
Blood Typing Program—Under this plan the local union maintains an up-to-date list of blood type of each of the participating members and when blood is needed the donors having the right type of blood are sent to the hospital.

Representation on Hospital Boards

The Community Services Committee of the local central labor body should survey the number of labor representatives on the boards and committees of local hospitals. Hospitals, although key community institutions, do not as a rule represent or reflect the opinions of many segments of the community. This is especially true of representation from organized labor.

One Percent For Scholarships

This labor-initiated program seeks to encourage young men and women to enter the field of social work. Basically, the plan calls for Community Chests and United Funds to set aside one percent of their total campaign goals to provide scholarships for undergraduates and graduate students working toward a degree in social work.

Community Health Education

The objective of this program is to undertake activities that will reach and interest union members in their own health. Such important things as recourse to medical advice, taking advantage of preventative medicine, a balanced diet, proper rest, and the practice of personal hygiene are largely up to the individual. The Community Services Committee can work with other community groups, including local health departments, voluntary health agencies, and medical and dental societies, in organizing adult health education programs. These programs should focus attention on alcoholism, mental health, mass vaccination programs, fluoridation and other community activities for the prevention and treatment of disease.

Disaster Services

The local central labor body CSC should cooperate with the Red Cross, in line with the AFL-CIO Red Cross agreement, in developing services for victims of disasters such as floods, earthquakes, tornados, etc.
This program should embrace also cooperative relationships with government agencies, particularly with defense, and other voluntary agencies providing essential services such as the Salvation Army.