



# Seattle Police Department Policy Manual



## 16.190 – Labor Management Disputes

Original Effective Date: 05/07/2019

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### 16.190-POL

This policy applies to the department's response to strike scenes and handbilling scenes.

#### 1. Definitions

**Handbilling** – Handbilling is the practice of handing out flyers or pamphlets which encourage employees to unionize.

**Injunction** – An injunction is a legal and equitable remedy in the form of a special court order that compels a party to do or refrain from specific acts.

**Parties** – The opposing sides in a labor dispute, typically including an employer and its employees, but this may extend to any individuals affiliated with either side.

#### 2. When Responding to Labor Management Disputes Remaining Neutral is a Priority

Sworn employees will not:

- Fraternize with involved parties.
- Park police vehicles on company property, if feasible.
- Use company resources.
- Accept food from involved parties.

#### 3. Sworn Employees Should Attempt to Prevent the Blocking of Access Points

If the picket line is closed to restrict movement, the incident commander may request the picketers to open the line.

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Officers will use force only if it is necessary to protect public safety or property, and only at the direction of the incident commander or watch lieutenant (see also manual section [14.090 – Demonstration Management](#)).

## **4. Officers Will Make Arrests Only as a Last Resort**

When disturbances occur, those involved will be separated and asked to leave the area. If more serious crimes occur, arrests at the scene may be appropriate.

- When an arrest is deemed appropriate, officers will carefully articulate in the report why an arrest was necessary to resolve the situation.

## **5. Sworn Employees May Enforce Injunctions with Supervisor Approval**

If a party to the labor management dispute has an injunction (as evidenced by a court order signed by a judge), sworn employees may enforce any condition contained in the injunction, after obtaining supervisor approval. If time allows, the incident commander may consult the department legal advisors.

- Sworn employees must verify that they are addressing subjects that are identified in the injunction.
- Sworn employees will use force to enforce an injunction only if it is necessary to protect public safety or property, and only at the direction of the incident commander or watch lieutenant.

## **6. Sworn Employees Will Only Take Enforcement Action About Handbilling That is Specified by an Injunction**

## **7. Whether Union Organizers Are Permitted to Recruit on the Employer's Property is a Case-by-Case Determination**

Sworn employees should be aware that whether union organizers are permitted to recruit on the employer's property is a case-by-case determination made by either the National Labor Relations Board or a court.

- Sworn employees will take a report and inform both parties that it will be available if either side seeks to utilize the legal remedies available.

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## **8. Labor Management Disputes Will be Handled in Accordance with 14.090 – Crowd Management, Intervention, and Control, and 14.100 – Special Event Planning, When Appropriate**

While not all labor management disputes will require a crowd management response, when the number of parties involved grows large enough, the incident commander will implement the Incident Command System (ICS), as necessary.