

75-4327. Public employee organizations; recognition and certification; membership; meet and confer; determination and certification of appropriate unit; rules and regulations; assessment of election costs.

(a) Public employers shall recognize employee organizations for the purpose of representing their members in relations with public agencies as to grievances and conditions of employment. Employee organizations may establish reasonable provisions for an individual's admission to or dismissal from membership.

(b) Where an employee organization has been certified by the board as representing a majority of the employees in an appropriate unit, or recognized formally by the public employer pursuant to the provisions of this act, the appropriate employer shall meet and confer in good faith with such employee organization in the determination of conditions of employment of the public employees as provided in this act, and may enter into a memorandum of agreement with such recognized employee organization.

(c) A recognized employee organization shall represent not less than a majority of the employees of an appropriate unit. When a question concerning the designation of an appropriate unit is raised by a public agency, employee organization or by five or more employees, the public employee relations board, at the request of any of the parties, shall investigate such question and, after a hearing in accordance with the provisions of the Kansas administrative procedure act, rule on the definition of the appropriate unit in accordance with subsection (e).

(d) Following determination of the appropriate unit of employees, the public employee relations board, at the request of the public employer or on petition of employees, shall investigate questions and certify to the parties in writing, the names of the representatives that have been designated for an appropriate unit. The filing of a petition for the investigation or certification of a representative of employees shall show the names of not less than 30% of the employees within an appropriate unit. In any such investigation, the board may provide for an appropriate hearing, shall determine voting eligibility and shall take a secret ballot of employees in the appropriate unit involved to ascertain such representatives for the purpose of formal recognition. Recognition shall be granted only to an employee organization that has been selected as a representative of an appropriate unit, in a secret ballot election, by a majority of the employees in an appropriate unit who voted at such election. Each employee eligible to vote shall be provided the opportunity to choose the employee organization such employee wishes to represent such employee, from among those on the ballot, or to choose "no representation." When an election in which the ballot provided for three or more choices between representatives and no representation resulted in no choice receiving a majority of the valid votes cast, the board shall conduct a run-off election by secret ballot. The ballot in a run-off election shall only provide for a selection between the two choices receiving the largest and second largest number of votes in the original election. The board is authorized to hold elections to determine whether: (1) An employee organization should be recognized as the formal representative of employees in a unit; (2) an employee organization should replace another employee organization as the formal representative of employees in a unit; (3) a recognized employee organization should be decertified.

Any petition calling for an election in accordance with this section shall be dismissed by the board without determining the questions raised therein if such petition is filed more than 150 days or less than 90 days prior to the expiration date of an existing memorandum of agreement which governs the terms and conditions of employment of the employees within the appropriate unit.

If the board has certified a formally recognized representative in an appropriate unit, it shall not be required to consider the matter again for a period of one year, unless the board determines that sufficient reason exists. The board may promulgate such rules and regulations as may be appropriate to carry out the provisions of subsections (c) and (d).

(e) Any group of public employees considering the formation of an employee organization for formal recognition, any public employer considering the recognition of an employee organization on its own volition and the board, in investigating questions at the request of the parties as specified in this section, shall take into consideration, along with other relevant factors: (1) The principle of efficient administration of government; (2) the existence of a community of interest among employees; (3) the history and extent of employee organization; (4) geographical location; (5) the effects of overfragmentation and the splintering of a work organization; (6) the provisions of K.S.A. 75-4325, and amendments thereto; and (7) the recommendations of the parties involved.

(f) A recognized employee organization shall not include: (1) Both professional and other employees, unless a majority of the professional employees vote for inclusion in the organization; (2) uniform police employees and public property security guards with any other public employees, but such employees may form their own separate homogenous units; or (3) uniformed firemen with any other public employees, but such employees may form their own separate homogenous units. The employees of a public safety department of cities which has both police and fire protection duties shall be an appropriate unit.

(g) It is the intent of this act that employer-employee relations affecting the finances of a public employer shall be conducted at such times as will permit any resultant memorandum of agreement to be duly implemented in the budget preparation and adoption process. A public employer, during the 60 days immediately prior to its budget submission date, shall not be required to recognize an employee organization not previously recognized, nor shall it be obligated to initiate or begin meet and confer proceedings with any recognized employee organization for a period of 30 days before and 30 days after its budget submission date.

(h) No employee organization shall be recognized unless it establishes and maintains standards of conduct providing for: (1) The maintenance of democratic procedures and practices, including periodic elections by secret ballot and the fair and equal treatment of all members; and (2) the maintenance of fiscal integrity, including accurate accounting and periodic financial reports open to all members and the prohibition of business or financial interests by officers which conflict with their fiduciary responsibilities.

(i) The board shall assess the reasonable costs for conducting a secret ballot of the employees against the party seeking the election. For the purposes of this subsection, the term "costs" shall include amounts expended by the board for printing of ballots and necessary postage.

History: L. 1971, ch. 264, § 7; L. 1972, ch. 340, § 3; L. 1973, ch. 363, § 5; L. 1981, ch. 345, § 1; L. 1988, ch. 356, § 304; L. 2013, ch. 61, § 1; July 1.