

## **Public Events (Rallies, Pickets)**

### **WHAT TO DO**

#### **GOALS:**

- **EDUCATE THE PUBLIC**
- Maximum sites
- Support from Community
- Big signs
- Lots of media

#### **Tips when talking to Media:**

- Stick to the facts, do not adlib.
- Be candid, but not angry
- Be concerned, but do not whine or be threatening

- 1) **Local Leaders- Hold conference calls ASAP, with ALL reps to get support for events on their sites.**
- 2) **Reps - Contact your Local President, Executive Board members, and/or legislative coordinator to get approval to hold an event If you can only get the rep or the rep and one or two employees, go forward.**

**The goal is to educate the public. Reps and employees can hand out flyers and tell them that there may be news about events across the county, this flyer explains why and let's you know what you can do to help!**

- 2) **Set a date and time.**

Choose a time that will not conflict with Agency business. If you choose 9:00 am, the manager will not be so cooperative when there are 10 appointments scheduled. Noon is a good time, employees can do this on their lunch hour and it allows the press to meet deadlines for evening news coverage.

The Council will notify the agency of all sites participating. This should eliminate most problems.

3) **Select a site.**

If you decided not to hold an event at the Social Security office, try to hold the event to front of your Congressman's or Senator's office. If your Representative does not have a local office, hold the rally in front of your office. ***Make sure you invite your Representative to the event.***

4) **Determine if a permit is needed.**

Most rural areas do not require a permit. However, if you are not sure, contact your local police department to determine if a permit is necessary and apply for such a permit as soon as possible.

5) **Determine who will be the spokesperson.**

This should be an AFGE Rep or member. (If at all possible, try to get an executive board member of the Local.) ***Whatever is said to the media should be from the Union not as a representative of the agency!*** The latter may result in disciplinary action.

Please send the site and name and cell phone number of the AFGE spokesperson to me by COB October 24, 2011. The AFGE Communications Department will issue a National Press Release. They can also help in metropolitan areas, if you need help. Those requests should be made to Christina Erling at 202-639-6491 or [erlinc@afge.org](mailto:erlinc@afge.org).

6) **Request the Local President to notify the State AFL-CIO and Central Labor Council of the event.**

7) **Notify employees of the date and time.**

Encourage employees to invite family members and friends to attend.

8) **Call absent employees and retired employees.**

9) **Notify management.**

OLMER will be in touch with local management, However you should let the manager know ASAP. His/her support can make or break this event. Let them know that they are invited to participate. Tell them you will need as many employees as possible, preferably all of those who want to be there.

10) **Notify and invite local community and advocacy groups.**

11) **Invite your Congressman and/or Senator.**

If they don't show, let the media know the representatives were invited but did not show.

**12) Prepare posters/signs.**

This can be a fun activity to bring members together. It can be done after work (i.e. sign making party) or during lunch period in the break room. The more involved, the better. If children are expected to attend the event, have the kids make their signs. Signs that read "please pay my mom," or "let my grandmother work" were embraced by the media in 1995 and in this year's earlier actions.

- Keep Hands Off Social Security
- Keep Social Security Offices Open
- Keep Social Security workers working
- Leave Social Security benefits alone! (\$\$ and Services!)

**Three Days Before the Event (Next Monday):**

**13) Notify the local media beforehand, let them know it's happening.**

Provide the media with at least 3 days notice in advance and follow up the day before. (Usually done by fax.) If near larger city (i.e. Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, etc...) alert the media there as well.

Media Sources:

- TV Stations
- Radio News Stations (AM) and National Public Radio (NPR)
- Newspapers

Draft press releases are attached for your use. Contact AFGE Communications Department if you need assistance with press releases and contacts. (202) 638-6419

**Two Days Before the Event (Tuesday)**

14) Follow up with media by phone to confirm address of site and time the event will start.

**Day Before the Event (Wednesday):**

- 15) **Print flyers for media/public.**
- 16) **Remind employees of the event.** Encourage participation and wearing of proper attire. (i.e. rain wear, colors, etc..)
- 17) **Send a reminder to media sources.**

**Day of Event:**

- 18) **Arrive to work before the morning shift and leaflet the employees to remind them of the lunch event. Encourage all to be there.**
- 19) **Send and/or desk drop the employee letter. This needs to be done so that employees understand the “rules” of the event.**
- 20) **“Set-Up” 15 minutes early. DON’T BE LATE TO YOUR OWN PRESS CONFERENCE!**