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## February 2022 paid union meetings

## A guide for branch chairs \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Read this through well before the meeting. It explains how to prepare for the meeting, and what you will be doing in the meeting.***

***If you have questions or need assistance to prepare for your paid union meeting, please contact your field officer. You can find their details here:*** [***field officer contacts***](https://www.ppta.org.nz/contact-us/#FOcontacts)

This meeting is to give members the opportunity to suggest claims to be made in the Collective Agreement bargaining round. It will also give members the opportunity to vote in the Teaching Council Board elections.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS – OMICRON

It is highly likely that these paid union meetings will be taking place while the country is in the red traffic light setting. The Ministry of Education, based on public health advice, recommends avoiding gatherings of over 30 people. If your staff is larger than this, please consider holding your paid union meeting via Zoom or another online platform. We understand that this is less than ideal but ultimately your safety is the most important thing.

Please also consider carefully before combining with other branches to have your meeting, especially if this will put your numbers above 30.

## A. Before the meeting

**Roles**

Sharing responsibilities is vital for a smoothly run meeting. Key people you talk to before the meeting day should be clear about how the processes will be managed. Each of you may have a different role. The roles that are needed are:

* **Branch chair**: to run the meeting effectively, fairly, and according to standing orders. To ensure branch feedback is communicated accurately to national office.
* **Branch secretary**: to take minutes.
* **Other roles**: to assist at the meeting as required (e.g. running the slideshow, setting up and putting away chairs and equipment at the venue, running a speaking list etc.).

**Branch lists and roll-taking**

Ensure that you have a complete list of the branch members that should be attending the meeting. Your branch list can be downloaded from the members-only area of the website.

 To log in to the PPTA website, use your MoE number (without any leading zeros) as your username and as your password (unless you have previously changed your password).

Members must sign in on branch lists when they arrive at the venue, to indicate attendance. Branch chairs are asked to verify the sign-in. The original is then to be given to the principal and a copy kept for the branch records.

All members of the PPTA including RTLBs and relievers may attend the meeting and contribute to the suggestions put forward by the branch.

It is a legal requirement to provide a list of attendees at a union meeting to the school, and the board are within their rights to dock the pay of members not attending without an exemption.

**Membership queries and recruitment**

If someone believes they are a member, but they do not appear on your branch list, let them stay and take part in the meeting. You can check their membership status by calling the PPTA on 0800 778 243 or emailing membership@ppta.org.nz.

At this time of year, you may well have teachers who are not yet PPTA members and wish to join. A person is officially a member from the time they sign a membership form so they can sign up on paper or online at the start of the meeting, attend and take part in discussion.

Have copies of the recruitment letter and a laptop at the meeting for on-the-spot recruitment. The online membership forms can be completed here: <https://www.ppta.org.nz/membership/join-ppta-online-membership-form/>

**Exemptions**

Sometimes there will be members who will not be able to attend a paid union meeting. They should apply for an exemption from the meeting. Regional chairs grant the exemptions but should accept the recommendation of the branch chair in this instance.

The correct process for this is, that the member who cannot attend should email the branch chairperson with a request and a brief explanation. The branch chair submits this to the regional chair for approval. If you are not sure who your regional chair is, [contact your local field officer](https://www.ppta.org.nz/contact-us/).

Regional committees should consider exemptions on a case-by-case basis and inform the member who has applied in writing. Some regions have a sub-committee of two or three members to consider exemption requests. This may be done by email.

Please remember when considering exemption requests that some members may simply choose not to show up to a paid union meeting, and generally someone applying for an exemption is trying to do the right thing. There would need to be a good reason for denying an exemption to a member who has applied. Members granted an exemption should be noted on the attendance register provided to the principal.

**Materials for the meeting**

All the materials you require for the meeting are available digitally on the PPTA website.

There will be a slideshow for use at the meeting provided beforehand by national office.

You will give feedback via a digital form available on the PPTA website.

We understand that voting for the Teaching Council board members will be emailed to you by the Teaching Council.

**Expenses and reimbursement**

Branch-based paid union meetings do not usually incur large expenses, however as this is a nationally mandated meeting, you are entitled to request any costs be covered by national office. If you would like to discuss reimbursement, please call or email us on 04 913 4231 or shaugh@ppta.org.nz.

## B. At the meeting (refer to the provided checklist when at the meeting)

During the meeting use the checklist and script rather than this document.

**Beginning the meeting**

The chair calls the meeting to order and outlines the rest of the meeting:

* There will be a presentation about the claims process.
* There will be a discussion about the presentation and chance to ask questions.
* There will be time to give feedback via the digital form.
* There will be time given to vote in the Teaching Council governance board elections.
* Any other items or motions from members will be dealt with after that.

**Discussion and debate**

At the end of the presentation there is a chance for discussion about suggestions for claims for the Collective Agreement.

The chair’s role, at this point, is to try to manage the meeting so that there is a chance for everyone who wishes to contribute to the discussion to have a chance to speak. It can be helpful to ask someone to run a speaking list to ensure that everyone gets a chance to speak.

**Submitting claims suggestions**

Claims suggestions are structured into six areas. In each area there will be two or more possible claims suggestions for the branch to rank as to priority (1 = high priority) and then the chance to give further suggestions for claims.

We recommend using a whiteboard or data projector to display suggestions for claims. If there is disagreement in the branch about a suggestion, you can include all points of view in your branch feedback form.

**Voting for the Teaching Council governance board members**

Show your branch where they can find information about the PPTA members who are standing to be Teaching Council governance board members on the PPTA website.

There is no obligation for your branch members to vote for a candidate who is also a member, or indeed to vote at all. However, do take them through the reasons why we are encouraging them to vote, and to vote for a PPTA activist.

**General business / recommendations from the branch**

Ideally, other recommendations should have been signaled earlier in the meeting, so that people will have had time to consider them. If members want to move other motions, get them in writing and display them on the screen.

These motions cannot, of course, be contrary to decisions taken earlier in the meeting, and the chair can rule any that fall into this category as being ‘out of order’.

The chair keeps people focused on speaking to the motion under discussion and rules out of order any irrelevant material.

Note that there is no need for the chair to accept or to put any extra motions from the floor if it is plain from the tenor of the meeting that there is no likelihood of support for it, or if the meeting has run out of time.

**Concluding the meeting**

The chair closes the meeting at the conclusion of other business.

## C. After the meeting

**Completing the claims suggestions form**

After the meeting, the branch chair is responsible for filling in and submitting the survey form on behalf of the branch. The form includes information about your branch, your preferences for each claims area, and space to include any other suggestions.