

## **Collective bargaining glossary**

**Agency shop** — A condition in which employees must join a union as a condition of employment. (See “forced unionism.”)

**Agency fees/fair-share fees:** mandatory paycheck deductions for union-represented employees who do not currently pay union membership dues. Each union determines the amount of the dues for members, as well as the amount of the agency fee for nonmembers in the bargaining unit.

**Bargaining unit** — Employees who are grouped together for the purpose of engaging in collective bargaining.

**Binding arbitration** — The final step in the interest dispute resolution process. A neutral arbitrator is selected to review the dispute and issue a final and binding decision.

**Collective bargaining** — The mutual obligation of an employer and the bargaining representative of its employees to meet and negotiate in good faith with respect to the terms and conditions of employment and to execute a written contract incorporating any agreement reached.

**Exclusive representation** — Once a union has won an election to provide employee representation, the employer is prohibited from bargaining with any other representatives or individual for as long as the period of certification.

**Fair share** — See “agency fees.”

**Forced (or compulsory) unionism** — Union membership is a condition of employment.

**Sanctions** — To enforce their demands, unions engage in work actions such as pickets, boycotts, sickouts and slowdowns. The most serious sanction is a strike, which in the public sector exerts political pressure on officials by depriving the public of an essential service.

**Shop steward** — An active employee in a particular unit who represents union members at local meetings, handles grievances at the first level and sometimes collects union dues.