

We're Voting Yes and Yes for One Union at Friends of Youth



Ballots will be mailed for our union election this Thursday, and we want to make sure we have all the information we need to vote. As employees in the positions identified as Professional, our ballot is going to have two questions. The first question below will be only on our ballots, and the second on everyone's voting in this union election:

- Do you wish to be included with nonprofessional employees in a unit for the purposes of collective bargaining?
- and
- Do you wish to be represented for purposes of collective bargaining by Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 8, AFL-CIO?
([click here for sample ballot](#))

Why do we have two questions and what happens when we vote yes on both?

Under labor law, for “professional employees” to be included in a bargaining unit (meaning in the same union contract) with “nonprofessional employees,” they need to vote to do so. Our goal is to have the strongest union possible, and all employees coming together accomplishes that. In some union environments (for example building trades) the different classifications prefer to have separate unions, but at non-profits like Friends of Youth, although some of us are therapists and some of us are case managers or youth specialists, we believe it benefits everyone more to join together in the same union.

This is also what our counterparts at union-represented non-profits like Crisis Connections, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Northwest Justice Project, Sea Mar Community Health Centers, Solid Ground, and Consejo Counseling and Referral Service chose to do. **In fact, no OPEIU 8 represented non-profit human service agencies have voted to form bargaining units with “professionals” separate from “nonprofessionals.”** We can still negotiate terms that apply differently to different classifications if needed. If “professional” employees vote “**Yes**” and “**Yes**”, we will all be covered under one union contract.



“As a Substance Use Counselor at Consejo Counseling and Referral Service, I can confidently say that the Union has helped my co-workers and myself in struggling times. OPEIU Local 8 has brought a sense of community to my workplace. With trying times since the COVID-19 impact, I feel assured that my work, my time and my efforts are valued and advocated with Local 8. In my career I've grown to understand the value of Union representation and encourage co-workers and peers to strengthen communities in solidarity.” – Brandy Listerman, SUDP and OPEIU Local 8 Member at Consejo

You can also see [this FAQ](#) and/or visit [this page](#) to find all previous updates and related documents.

If you have any questions, you can contact union organizer Corinne at corinne@opeiu8.org or 425-318-2650.