

Question:

I know that the University has to take a neutral position in regard to the unionization efforts by the ASEA, however it's very disconcerting to see the union make false promises to sway votes. Recently, fake parking tickets were placed on staff vehicles at UAF, advertising that the ASEA can "make parking permits go away," even though, for example, faculty members represented by the faculty union pay the same decal rates as everyone else. I'm not saying I'm opposed to reducing parking costs, but I am opposed to the ASEA advertising false promises in an attempt to sway votes for unionization. Are these types of false claims something that the University can address with the ASEA?

Answer:

Parking fees apply to all employees who use parking lots at UAF's main campus. A fee is charged for parking decals whether employees are represented by a union or not. The only union that has a negotiated reduced rate for parking decals is the adjunct unit. Adjunct faculty members, who may only teach part time, are only required to pay half of the regular rate for their parking permits. Non-union employees who work less than half-time receive the same deal. The University considers it fair to charge these employees less for parking, as their use of UAF parking lots during normal working hours is also proportionally less. No union has negotiated lower rates for parking permits for full-time employees with the University. The University is unlikely to be able to agree with any union proposals for reduced parking costs when the rates in existence are designed to cover parking-related costs that the University must fund.

In response to your other point, the University is careful not to interfere with employees' rights concerning union organizing activities. That is what we would describe as being "neutral." But the University **is** able to actively address misinformation and unrealistic promises, while still observing employees' rights. While the University could ask ASEA to stop making promises that can't realistically be fulfilled, the union doesn't have to listen to the University. The union could simply continue to make promises designed to gain employees' support. Therefore, the University has found it more helpful to communicate directly with employees. It is the employees in the proposed unit who ultimately will be able to evaluate the union's promises in the context of facts and explanations provided by the University.

Please continue to bring union statements and promises to our attention if you think the claims are not supported; the University appreciates the opportunity to convey its position!