Bargaining Ground Rules
- Guidelines -

1. The purpose of having ground rules is to expedite and facilitate the process.
   They should never become a hindrance or cause for a delay to the process.
   They can (and perhaps should) be agreed upon in short order, at the first session.

2. Written vs. Verbal Ground Rules
   Either written or verbal ground rules may be appropriate depending on the history
   and culture of the bargaining unit and relationship of the parties involved.

3. Typical or standard items (not exhaustive):
   ✓ Date, Time and Place of Sessions
   ✓ Tentative Agreements will be initialed or signed upon agreement
   ✓ Language (non-economic) proposals to be negotiated before Economics (although
     this should not be a hard and fast rule, but rather a preferred guideline on how to
     proceed, i.e. the parties may have outstanding language items still on the table as
     they proceed to discuss economics.)
   ✓ All initial proposals shall be on the table by the 2nd/3rd session (to avoid any late
     surprises once bargaining begins is underway).

4. Items that the Union often proposes:
   ✓ Paid release time for Union negotiators
   ✓ Frequent sessions
   ✓ Setting an agenda in advance for each session

5. Items that management might propose:
   ☑ No communication with the membership during bargaining
   ☑ News/media black-out
   ☑ Only one designated person to speak at negotiations
   ☑ No observers/Limits on Union Negotiating Team
   ☑ Limit on length of bargaining sessions
   ☑ No food or drinks in the room
   ☑ Anything that restricts, controls or frustrates the process

6. Permissive issue
   The subject of ground rules is a permissive issue at the bargaining table. The
   parties do not have to reach agreement in order to begin the process. While reaching an
   agreement on ground rules is usually preferred, the bargaining process can begin without
   a final agreement being reached. Some public sector laws, rules or regulations may differ
   however, which consider ground rules (or some specific items) to be mandatory subjects.