



## **SOME BASICS ABOUT UNIONS**

Upon completion of the probationary period, all Montgomery County Government employees (except police officers) in union-covered positions are eligible to join the labor organization that represents them. Police officers are members of the bargaining unit as of their hire date.

Here are answers to questions commonly asked by new employees about the County's unions:

### ***Which union represents me?***

The answer to this question depends upon your new job.

- Office, professional, technical, and paraprofessional (support personnel) employees are represented by the Municipal and County Government Employee Organization (MCGEO), United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 1994.
- Ride-on bus drivers, facilities and maintenance workers, those who possess specialized manual skills, and other who perform duties that result in or contribute to the comfort and convenience of the general public are also represented, but by the Service, Labor and Trade Unit of MCGEO, Local 1994.
- Firefighters and emergency medical personnel are represented by the Montgomery County Career Firefighters Association, International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), Local 1664.
- Police officers are represented by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), Montgomery County Lodge, #35.

***What is a bargaining unit? Am I in a bargaining unit?***

A bargaining unit is a group of employees who do similar work, and who by law have the right to choose a certified representative (labor organization) to bargain for them collectively. You are a member of a bargaining unit if you are employed in a non-supervisory, non-managerial or non-confidential job and are represented by one of the unions listed above.

***Am I required to join the union?***

The union that represents you will contact you at the end of your probationary period and advise you of your legal options. However, your decision concerning union membership does not change your bargaining unit status.

***Who does the union represent?***

The union represents all bargaining unit employees in matters pertaining to wages, hours, or working conditions.

***Must I pay dues?***

The County and the unions have entered into agency shop agreements. Agency shop means that all employees in a given bargaining unit must, as a condition of employment, either become a member of the union and pay union dues (for those who choose to join) or pay the cost of representation through a service fee (for those who choose *not* to join). The service fee can be equal to the amount of union dues. Employees who have a bona fide religious objection to making payments to a labor organization may make a charitable contribution in lieu of dues or service fee. Dues and service fees amounts are set by the unions. The union will contact you at the end of your probationary period with more information about your options.