



## **Unite London ITC LE/7098L Branch Accredited Support Companion Protocol**

### **Purpose**

This protocol sets out how lay representation of branch members will be managed and facilitated for the London ITC LE/7098L Branch in workplaces that do not currently have an accredited/trained workplace rep.

Any Accredited Support Companion provided directly by the region, the cost for which has been deducted directly from the branch administration allowance before it is paid into the branch account is out-of-scope from this protocol.

### **Eligibility**

Access to an Accredited Support Companion under this protocol for a disciplinary or grievance meeting is available to members of the LE/7098L branch who have been in membership of Unite the union for 3 months or more and where the members workplace matter for which assistance is sought does not pre-date their membership.

Access to an Accredited Support Companion for branch members with less than 3 months membership is at the discretion of the Branch Secretary and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Access to an Accredited Support Companion under this protocol for workplace meetings other than Disciplinary & Grievance Meetings (e.g. investigations, redundancy consultations) is at the discretion of the branch secretary.

In all cases, representation and support from an Accredited Support Companion is subject to availability.

### **Regional Accredited Support Companion's Pool**

When a representative from the Regional Accredited Support Companions pool is engaged under this protocol to accompany a branch member to a workplace hearing, the branch will cover the expenses incurred by that Lay Companion in providing representation.

Payments will be made in accordance with the Branch Expenses Policy or the current expenses rate paid by the region to accredited support companions, whichever is higher.

A London ITC Branch expenses form must be completed and submitted to the branch secretary for approval.

### **Retired Members**

This branch will support retired Unite workplace representatives to become Branch Accredited Support Companions.

Appointment as a Branch Accredited Support Companion will be subject to –

- Accreditation as a Unite an Accredited Support Companion by the Union
- Approval by the Branch Committee

Retired Members who become an Accredited Support Companions are subject to the branch expenses policy

On a case-by-case basis, honoraria payments will also be considered by the branch committee subject to the approval of members at a full meeting.

### **Branch Workplace Representatives**

Workplace Representatives from within the branch may be appointed as Branch an Accredited Support Companions to assist with representation of members from outside their own workplace/employer.

Appointment as a Branch Accredited Support Companion will be subject to –

- Accreditation as a Unite an Accredited Support Companion by the Union
- Approval by the Branch Committee

The branch will consider requests for assistance with financing facility time (there is no statutory right to paid leave when representing members from a different employer).

These options could include (but not restricted to)

- Purchasing additional holidays for a Workplace Representative when their own employer operates such a scheme. These additional holidays could then be used as facility time.
- Reimbursement for loss of pay where time-off is taken unpaid.

### **Engagement of Accredited Support Companions**

Casework for Accredited Support Companions will be allocated by the North London District Office.

Direct allocation of casework by branch officials is not currently practicable due to their limited facility time but may be considered in the future.

### **Review of this Protocol**

This Protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis each November by the Branch Committee.

A review may also be requested via a motion at a branch meeting.

Amendments to this Protocol will be subject to a majority vote in favour by members at a branch meeting in all cases.

### **Approval**

This policy was approved at the Branch Meeting held on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ by a majority of the Membership present.

Signature of Branch Secretary

Signature of Branch Chair

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Branch Stamp

Protocol Version	Date	Changes Made
1	06/11/2013	Initial draft
2	10/03/2015	Reflects existence of regional lay companion's facility, types of meeting covered, expense rate to match that of the region.
3	12/04/2018	1.) References to "Lay Companions" replaced with "Accredited Support Companions" 2.) General Review