NTEU Virtual Union Office

Laptop Computer

Most chapters will use their laptops for browsing the internet, checking email, video chatting, preparing tax-filing requirements, and working grievances.

Here are recommended specs to consider when shopping around for a laptop:

- **Resolution:** 1920 x 1080
- **Memory:** 32 GB RAM
- **Storage:** 516 GB SSD or 1 TB SSD
- **Touchscreen:** Some are fragile and break easily
- **Battery Life:** Up to 10 hours is ideal
- **Screen Size**: 14 to 15 inches is ideal

- **Processor**: The processor is like your computer's brain. The speed and power of a processor determines how well and how fast your computer can do things like browsing the internet and running software. Every chapter will have different processor needs and requirements.

You can find a variety of laptops and desktop computers on sale at the NTEU Discount Marketplace at NTEU.org/Benefits.

External Monitors

While laptops have built-in screens, you may consider an external monitor for more screen space and less switching between windows. Most monitors in the market are based on LCD technology, and the only significant difference between them is size and cost. The most common and affordable are 24-inch LCD monitors.

Computer Software

Microsoft Office 365 (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, OneDrive) is widely used and offers a range of features and tools for a virtual union office. For additional information regarding Microsoft 365, click here.

	Microsoft 365 Business Product Level		
Cost	**Basic**	**Standard**	**Premium**
Month-to-Month, cancel anytime	–	$15.00	$26.40
Annual subscription–auto renews (per user/month, paid yearly)	$6.00	$12.50	$22.00
Features			
Email and calendar	Included	Included	Included
File storage and sharing	Included	Included	Included
Teamwork and communication	Included	Included	Included
Standard security and compliance	Included	Included	Included
Support and deployment	Included	Included	Included
Web and mobile apps	Included	Included	Included
AI powered assistance	Limited capabilities	Limited capabilities	Limited capabilities
Project and customer relationship management	Limited capabilities	Included	Included
Installable desktop apps		Included	Included
Video editing		Included	Included
Webinars and live events		Included	Included
Personalized Email Domain		Included	Included
Advanced cyberattack protection			Included
Device management			Included

Microsoft Teams is used by many chapters for chat messaging, as well as video and audio conferencing, for communicating with other leaders and members. *Note that it is easy to mix your agency and personal Teams accounts so be sure that you are conducting union business using your chapter Teams account on your non-government devices. Also, remind your members to be cognizant of not connecting with their chapter on Teams from their agency profile and/or devices.*

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Anti-Spyware Software

Spyware is malicious software designed to secretly monitor and collect information from a user's device without their knowledge or consent, often to steal data or compromise privacy.

It's important to scan your hard drive, flash drive, external hard drive, etc., to remove spyware. Some anti-spyware software only works when you manually start the scan, while others will automatically monitor your computer.

Here are two widely used and effective anti-spyware, anti-virus products:

- **Norton AntiVirus Plus:** A huge name in anti-virus software. The other non-basic editions have more features but are also more expensive.
- **McAfee Total Protection:** Includes a password manager to prevent spyware from collecting your credentials.

Note: Selecting a plan that has multiple-device coverage is recommended if your chapter plans on purchasing multiple laptops.

Printer or Multipurpose Printer/Scanner/Copier

Purchasing a multipurpose printer/scanner/copier may be the most cost-effective option for your chapter and help ensure your needs are met.

Dedicated Chapter Cell Phone

Having a dedicated chapter cell phone allows your members to directly reach your chapter and get the assistance they need. It's also the easiest way for members to inform the chapter of any situation that requires immediate attention.

Each Chapter President will need to decide whether they want to always have the cell phone or establish a schedule that will rotate coverage among a team of chapter leaders to answer and respond to members' calls and texts.

Wi-Fi Access or Wi-Fi Hotspot

Mobile Wi-Fi hotspots have become a staple for chapters on the go. Several carriers offer this service, starting as low as $50 a month with additional discounts if you bundle a cell phone plan.

Dedicated Chapter Email Account

Every chapter should have its own personal, non-government email account to communicate with members and conduct union business. You will need this email address to register for your laptop software, email marketing platforms and other products.

We recommend establishing a personal Outlook or Gmail account that leaders can share access to and take turns replying to employee emails. There are free versions of these individual accounts that work well for most chapters.

If you prefer a custom domain (e.g., President@NTEUChapter400.com) and other collaboration tools, consider a paid Google Workspace Account. This plan is managed by an administrator and has features like centralized management, enhanced security, and access to Google Workspace apps (Gmail, Calendar, Docs, Sheets, etc.).

Alternatively, a Microsoft 365 Family Plan offers Outlook accounts, additional storage, security, as well as Word, Excel and Teams for up to six users.

Chapter Member Email Lists

NTEU is urging chapters to communicate with employees exclusively at their personal, non-government email addresses. Chapter leaders can download lists of member home email addresses on NTEU.org. Log into the website and click on the Chapter President or Chapter Leader dashboard and then click on Chapter Manager. Under Reports, click on "All Member Email Excel Report" to download your list.

Note that we only have personal email addresses for members who have provided them to NTEU. We encourage you to correct bad email addresses and add any new contact information you receive from members under the Chapter Administration on this page. This will ensure your chapter and NTEU National are reaching as many members as possible.

Chapter's Email Marketing Platform

NTEU recommends that chapters invest in an email marketing platform for sending regular email communications to members outside of agency systems. Subscription-based email platforms, such as MailChimp and Constant Contact, offer several features that make it easier to send and manage bulk emails as compared with using a Gmail or Outlook account. And because these platforms are online and cloud-based, chapter leaders can easily collaborate, take turns drafting messages and sending emails from different locations.

One of the biggest advantages to using an email marketing platform is that everything is in one place—your member email lists, your templates, an email archive and analytics for each mailing. List management features allow leaders to segment lists and see exactly who is opening your messages and clicking on which links. Unsubscribe requests are automatically managed through the platform so you don't have to worry about managing them each time you send a message.

One important note about list management—you will need to periodically upload a new member list from the Chapter Manager on NTEU.org to ensure that you pick up new and corrected email addresses. (See the section on **Chapter Member Email Lists**)

Before signing up for an email service, you will need a dedicated chapter email address to register for an email marketing account platform. (See the section on **Dedicated Chapter Email Account**)

For assistance getting started on an email marketing platform, email NTEU-PR@nteu.org.

A step-by-step guide to getting started on MailChimp is available here.

Shared Workspaces

Chapters needing a space to gather in-person have options for conference room space. You can do an internet search for "shared office space" for office space you can pay for by-the-hour or by the day. These spaces generally offer amenities like printers, scanners, high-speed Wi-Fi, cabinet space and more.

A more cost-efficient option may be your local public library. Many public libraries allow you to use your library card to reserve private conference rooms of varying sizes. Some libraries also offer limited copying at no charge.