

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SIMULATION

Award-winning immersive Public Sector collective bargaining negotiations simulation training



May 4-6, 2026

All day



I Hotel and Illinois Conference Center, Champaign, IL



Robert J. Smith Jr.

Roxana M. Underwood

Clark Baird Smith LLP



**COMPREHENSIVE
LEARNING**

**EXPERT
INSTRUCTION**

**NETWORKING
OPPORTUNITIES**

NO PREVIOUS BARGAINING EXPERIENCE IS REQUIRED TO ATTEND!



PROGRAM DETAILS



IPELRA's program is designed and written by negotiators to simulate the mechanics of bargaining as well as the inter- and intra-team relationships that exist in the public sector. They say there's no teacher like experience, however, a lesson learned at the negotiating table can be a hard and costly lesson! Participate in this simulated collective bargaining training and gain valuable experience under the guidance of negotiators with extensive real-world experience.

- Each participant will be assigned a role on a bargaining team (either management or union) and provided background information regarding the parties involved in negotiations.
- Each bargaining group will be assigned a facilitator (an experienced negotiator) to help guide them through the bargaining sessions.
- Training workshops will also be presented throughout the exercise and the trainer, Attorney Robert J. Smith and Roxana M. Underwood, will be available to assist the teams as they progress through the various stages of negotiations.

You will learn how to:

- Prepare for bargaining; set goals and priorities; collect and review data
- Draft language; prepare counter proposals and tentative agreements
- Package proposals; use bargaining table techniques and strategies
- Finalize contracts; mediation; and much more!



This is an intensive training exercise designed to simulate actual collective bargaining situations over a three-day period. To ensure the greatest training benefit possible, each participant is required to attend all the sessions and workshops. Additionally, all participants must be available in the evenings to bargain with their group.



MEET THE TRAINERS



Robert J. Smith

Bob is the managing partner of Clark Baird Smith LLP and previous General Counsel of IPELRA. Bob has negotiated hundreds of collective bargaining agreements -- most of them in the public sector. In addition to his extensive negotiating experience, Bob also represents clients in grievance and interest arbitration, unfair labor practice charges and representation petitions before the State Labor Relations Boards, and constitutional and discrimination litigation, as well as all other facets of labor and employment law.



Roxana M. Underwood

Roxana is the General Counsel of IPELRA and a partner at Clark Baird Smith LLP. Roxana is an experienced collective bargaining negotiator, having successfully negotiated public sector bargaining agreements for states, counties, and local governments, in addition to contracts in the private sector. Roxana represents management in all facets of labor relations matters, including interest arbitration, grievance arbitration, and unfair labor practice charges before the State Labor Relations Boards. Roxana also provides day to day counseling and defends employers against various claims arising under Title VII, the ADEA, the ADA, the FMLA, the FLSA, among other local, state, and federal laws





REGISTRATION



Registration Deadline: April 10, 2026

Registration fees

\$460 for members and organizational associates of members

\$530 for non-members

The registration fee includes meals and training materials only. Please see below for accommodation details.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



ACCOMMODATIONS



IPELRA has reserved a block of rooms at the I Hotel and Illinois Conference Center in Champaign, IL. For more information regarding the hotel, please visit <https://stayatthei.com/>.

Room rates at \$179/night (plus taxes and fees). Reservation should be made directly with the I Hotel.

Online: <https://book.rguest.com/wbe/group/1907/stayatthei/auth> (Group/Block Code COLBARSIM526; Guest Password X#n3H)

Phone: 217-280-6514 (Must provide Group/Block Code COLBARSIM526).

Deadline for room block reservation is April 3, 2026

After the deadline, reservations may be accepted based on space and rate availability.



TENTATIVE AGENDA



Monday, May 4, 2026	
11:30 am-Noon	Registration and Lunch
12:00-1:00 pm	Orientation and Team Assignments
1:00-1:45 pm	TRAINING WORKSHOP I: Overview of Collective Bargaining Basics: Setting goals, priorities, and preparation for bargaining
2:00-3:00 pm	Team Preparation Meetings with Facilitators
3:00-4:00 pm	BARGAINING SESSION I
4:00-4:45 pm	TRAINING WORKSHOP II: Drafting language; preparing counterproposals, tentative agreements, etc.
5:30-6:45 pm	Dinner
6:45 pm	BARGAINING SESSION II
Tuesday, May 5, 2026	
7:30-8:30 am	Breakfast
8:30-10:30 am	BARGAINING SESSION III
10:30-11:30 am	TRAINING WORKSHOP III: Packaging proposals and other initial dispute resolution ideas
11:45-12:45 pm	Lunch
1:00-3:00 pm	BARGAINING SESSION IV
3:15-4:00 pm	TRAINING WORKSHOP IV: More bargaining techniques; finalizing your contracts
6:00-7:15 pm	Dinner
7:15 pm - ??	BARGAINING SESSION V
Wednesday, May 6, 2026	
7:00-8:00 am	Breakfast
8:00-10:00 am	BARGAINING SESSION VI
10:00 am	SETTLEMENT DEADLINE
10:00-11:30 am	Presentation and Critique of Agreements
11:30 am-Noon	Review/Closing Remarks