



IBEW LOCAL UNION 30

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS AFL-CIO-CFL
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September 20, 2021

Good Afternoon Sisters and Brothers,

My last message to you was the notification of the ratification of the COLA Deferral/ Pension Security Plan. Since then there has been a lot going on, but also a tremendous amount of uncertainty on many fronts, and this is what has prevented me from getting a bulletin out to you sooner. I will lead off with one thing that is certain, however, and that is: commencing this pay period, the one that ends on 09-24-21, our 2% COLA has arrived. I know there were some questions this past payday, but remember, the first full payday of September is the one that has no August days in it, and thus the payroll ending 09-24-21 is the one. I also understand that centralized payroll will make sure Pension Deductions are correct since we have been paying a higher rate like we had received the COLA. As for the Pension Security Plan we ratified, there has been a great deal of confusion on how it will be enacted. Through the herculean efforts of President Biff Lowry, the Governor's Office of Employee Relations has recognized the problem and finally put out a guide sheet to all the departments and to Division of Pensions on the subject. As the exodus of retirements begins, I expect that this matter will be put to rest in fairly short order. Again, and as always, if you have a problem and need our help, let us know.

By now, many of you have likely already received a postcard from the "Freedom Foundation" with some general information on the 2018 US Supreme Court Decision of Janus v. AFSCME and instructions about opting out of being in a Public Employee Labor Union. Prior to the Janus Decision, every Public Employee Union was represented, both the Dues Payer (Full Member) and Agency Shop Fee Payer (A Person who paid 85% of the Dues or 85%'er). With the Janus Decision the people we represent are either Full Members, such as yourselves, or non-member, those who contribute nothing to the Union. The ultimate goal of the Anti-Unionists is to do away with Public Worker Unions, and while we cannot be defeated in Court or by Legislative fiat, the only way left is to deprive the union of operating capital. While it has been a challenge, through

the persistence of our Financial Secretary, Tom MacDonald, as well as that of our members who see the value in this Union, the world Post-Janus did not hasten our demise. We continue to grow as we continue to fight for the rights of our members, even against tremendous political pressure to roll over and do otherwise. Many of us remember the bad old days prior to Unionization, and we are not going back, at least not on our watch.

As far as the Return to the Worksite that has been under way and I continue to use the term Return to the Worksite as no one in our rank ever stopped working. Moreover, and just by sheer numbers, nearly half of all managers we represent never stopped going to the worksite. I know the return of September 7th was largely delayed to October 18th, and in just this short period of time things have continued to morph as the impact of the variants of COVID are still being understood. CWA has been in negotiations with the Administration as to what the return will mean to their members, and ultimately, as their managers, to us as well. I know departments are issuing return to work exemptions in accordance with their return to the worksite plans. If you have a need for medical purposes or reasons relating to childcare, follow the instructions and make your submissions to your people in Human Resources or as directed. If there are any issues, such as a request denial, or unreasonable modification after you have followed the procedures, please reach out to us. As for the collection of data, this has been a hot topic as well, and both counsel and I have looked over the type of information we are being requested to gather and we can see no reason to prevent such data collection as it is within their authority to gather such information. Given the nature of our jobs and the public / employee health needs for the information as requested it does not fall under HIPPA, per se, but should be treated as confidential.

While I printed this in the last bulletin, I am reprinting this here and those are my thoughts on the topic of the Return to the Worksite and the issue of Mental Health. Recently I have read several articles likening what essential staff has gone through over the course of the pandemic as being very similar to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Indeed, none of us took our jobs with the expectation of working 12 hour days for weeks or months on end. While I am glad that there is an emphasis on the mental health I am concerned about the reliance on the Employee Advisory Service Program for this service. For many years, EAS has been the boogeyman of upper management and often a place that people land with issues tied to discipline. Moreover, I, like many of you, have concerns about their confidentiality. What I do not want to see is a manager, who may need some help coping, ending up being ostracized for the feelings that they have, which are completely natural. If it really is OK to not be OK, anyone who is not OK shouldn't have to fear being drummed out of the Corps as a result of it. If you haven't figured it out yet, our jobs are the loneliest jobs in all of government service. More often than not, neither the staff below us nor executives above us understand what we go through on a regular day much less what we've gone through during the pandemic. If you need help, I encourage you to get it, and if you just need someone to listen reach out to us, we're here to help!

We are edging ever close to help for our &98 Managers! Right after the last bulletin, the Office of Legislative Services produced a draft bill that will, if enacted, create a system where all &98s

will receive an annual raise based on their PAR score as well as a raise if the PAR is not completed. This matter will be heard in committee upon the return of the legislature in November. When these hearings begin, I will need your help. If there are any &98s who would like to testify about what it has been like having to make ends meet under Public Law 78 without any annual increases in pay, this is your chance to tell your story! This local union has continued to push this issue and it looks like we'll at least have a chance to make our vision a reality. As I have long said, we cannot have fairness, equity and respect while at least some of us remain the same kind of second class citizens we all were in the days before Unionization. To any and all &98s who represented by IBEW Local Union 30, please reach out to me as it is finally your turn to be heard!

Onto general news, the Fourth Annual IBEW Local Union 30 Scholarship Program is nearing its close as applications are due no later than 09-30-21. So, if you're a college student or the proud parent of a college student or a recently graduated high school senior, your chance to participate in this worthy and worthwhile program is drawing to a close. If you're going to get an application in, please be quick about it as the deadline is fast approaching.

As I conclude this message, I want to share a few thoughts with all of you. I have a few health concerns that I had long before the pandemic. I also have two children ages 16 and 18, and while I turned 51 this year, my wife and I have been together 35 years as of August 2nd. My father was 53, and an executive in the Division of Taxation when he died suddenly of a heart attack. I was 24 when he died. I think of all of the living that I have done since then and how much he missed not being here. One of the reasons I got vaccinated is that I want to be here for my family for years to come. In my 30 years of State Service in Unemployment Insurance, my entire career has been about limiting liability. I'm not saying that I expected to be taken out by COVID, nor do I think the vaccine will make me COVID-proof. What I am saying is that COVID is a real thing and should be taken seriously. I have spoken to a great number of our members, and while I understand their thoughts and rationale for not wanting to be vaccinated, there is more to this world than just you, and you impact more lives than you can imagine. All I'm asking you to do is think about it. In closing, I hope this message finds you well, and we all appreciate your continued support! I look forward to seeing you at our meeting this coming Wednesday and hearing from you all soon!

In Solidarity, Forever!



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