



USW/ATI Bargaining Bulletin #7 – March 2, 2021

Information on Contract Expiration, Benefits and the Strike and Defense Fund

The current labor agreement between ATI and the USW expired on February 28, 2021. We have agreed to extend the agreement while negotiations continue. The union continues to be committed to reaching a fair agreement without a labor dispute, if possible.

We are going through a challenging period, and unfortunately, ATI has responded to these challenges by demanding its employees accept a sweeping series of concessions with substandard wage offers and demands for USW represented employees to pay health care premiums. Under these circumstances, a labor dispute is a very real possibility, so we must be prepared. Your bargaining committee will not do anything to jeopardize members' jobs, and we will do everything we can to avoid a dispute. We know that the best way to prevent a labor dispute is to prepare for one.

Strikes and Lockouts

Can I be fired during a strike or lockout?

The right to strike is protected by law, so it would be illegal for ATI to fire anyone simply for participating in a strike. You can, however, be disciplined or discharged for misconduct that occurs on a picket line such as violence, property destruction, threats of violence or threats of property damage. Misconduct on the picket line can also lead to an injunction against the union, limiting our right to picket.

There are two types of strikes under the law. If one reason why the members are on strike is to protest the company's serious unfair labor practice, it is an "unfair labor practice strike". In an "unfair labor practice strike" the company may only hire temporary replacements who must be discharged at the end of the strike in order to bring back the striking employees. The same is true for a lockout.

If one of the causes of the strike is not to protest a serious unfair labor practice, it is an "economic strike", and the company can hire permanent replacements who do not have to be discharged at the end of the strike. A company and union can legally agree to the discharge of permanent replacements as part of a strike settlement.

Can the company fire probationary employees for honoring the picket line?

No. The law does not recognize any difference between employees – you are either an employee or you are not. Probationary employees are only probationary under the contract, and have the same legal rights as every other employee. The union will not do anything to jeopardize anyone's job.

If the company locks us out of our jobs, can employees who do not support the union's bargaining position cross the picket line and go to work?

In the event of a lockout, it would be illegal for the employer to allow any bargaining unit member to continue to work.

Can the company change our pay, benefits, or rights on the job?

Because we have agreed to extend the contract while negotiations continue, the Company cannot take any actions that are not permitted under the contract. If they do so, grievances can be filed and processed, including, if necessary, through arbitration, according to the usual procedure.

If there is a strike or lockout, can I still retire?

Yes. If you retire after February 28, 2021, you will be entitled to the pension benefit that you have earned up to your retirement date. The company cannot reduce the pension benefits that employees have already earned.

The USW Strike and Defense Fund

For more than 40 years, the Steelworkers International Strike and Defense Fund has provided support for USW members during strikes and lockouts. The money is distributed on the basis of each member's individual need. If necessary, each local would establish a committee to assess members' needs and distribute money. The key to winning a strike or lockout is maintaining the solidarity of everyone, and all members working together to support each other.

How does our union's Strike and Defense Fund work?

The Steelworkers International Strike and Defense Fund provides money to help union members during strikes and lockouts. The Fund pays to your local union \$260 per week per member, beginning with the fourth week of a strike or lockout.

Strike Authorization Meetings

Your local union is currently in the process of scheduling Strike Authorization meeting and the meeting and process will be posted. You should attend the meetings, listen to the explanations, ask question if you have any and vote.

Your USW/ATI Negotiating Committee

Sign up to receive USW/ATI text updates - text ATI to 47486

