

BARGAINING BASICS

HOW OUR UNION BARGAINS A CONTRACT
WITH BRIDGESTONE



WHAT IS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING?

Collective bargaining is the legal process for reaching an agreement between our union and an employer over important issues like wages, hours of work, paid time off, benefits, employment security and other workplace protections.

WHEN DOES OUR CONTRACT EXPIRE?

Our contract expires on July 29, 2022.

WHAT UNITS AND EMPLOYEES ARE COVERED BY THESE NEGOTIATIONS?

Negotiations with Bridgestone this year cover more than 4,000 USW members at six locations:

Local 310L – Des Moines, Iowa; Local 7L - Akron, Ohio;
Local 787L – Bloomington, Ill.; Local 884L – Russellville, Ark.;
Local 1055L – La Vergne, Tenn.;
Local 1155L – Warren County, Tenn.

HOW DO WE WIN A FAIR CONTRACT?

We win by working together. The company isn't going to just hand us anything, but our solidarity and determination give us power in bargaining.

Sharing information and taking part in actions like sticker days and rallies can send a message that we are not satisfied with the company's proposals and will all fight for a fair contract together.

Management is more likely to take us seriously when it sees members are united and that workers across the country are supporting the negotiating team.

WHAT KINDS OF PROPOSALS ARE DISCUSSED IN NEGOTIATIONS?

The parties can discuss any issue affecting the workplace. Generally, contract proposals fall into one of two categories:

1. economic proposals such as wages, benefits, retirement and healthcare, or
2. non-economic items such as safety standards, the grievance procedure and seniority.

Neither the company nor the union will get 100 percent of what it puts on the table, but if management knows that our membership is unified, we will be more likely to reach a fair contract.

Local union and management representatives will also discuss plant-related or unit-specific items. These are often referred to as "local issue negotiations."

WHEN DO NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN, AND HOW DO THEY WORK?

The union and company will meet to kick off bargaining on June 13. Both sides will draft and discuss proposals. They will also request and exchange information.

Both sides caucus (meet separately), make counter proposals, test out ideas, look for ways to bridge differences and find common ground. The goal is to reach an agreement for union members to consider and approve.

DO MEMBERS GET TO VOTE ON A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT?

Union members in good standing may vote to ratify or reject a tentative agreement. They will receive a detailed summary of the tentative agreement before the vote, and members will have an opportunity to meet with their bargaining committee members to ask questions.



The contracts between our union and Bridgestone at locations covered by these negotiations expire on July 29, 2022.

Local 310L
Local 7L
Local 787L
Local 884L
Local 1055L
Local 1155L

Des Moines, Iowa
Akron, Ohio
Bloomington, Ill.
Russellville, Ark.
La Vergne, Tenn.
Warren County, Tenn.



WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON'T FINISH NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE THE CONTRACT EXPIRATION DATE?

If the company and the union have not reached an agreement by the expiration date, there are a number of possible outcomes:

1. We may negotiate a contract extension.
2. We can also continue to work under our existing terms and conditions without a formal contract extension.
3. We may take a strike authorization vote from the membership and then choose to strike.
4. Or the company may impose a lockout.

Even without an agreed-upon extension, the terms and conditions remain the same after the contract expiration. This is true as long as there is no lawful impasse, which only occurs when neither side is willing to budge from its bargaining position.

Local union leaders will keep members up to date during this process as we all work together to win a fair contract.

