



BETTER JOBS. BETTER LIVES.



MACHINISTS UNION

LiveLifeUnion.org

So, What Exactly is a Union?

The short answer: You.

Well, you and your co-workers. By definition, a union is a group of co-workers that come together under federal law to negotiate with their employers over their wages, benefits and other working conditions. It's really all about you and your co-workers joining together to demand better.

It all boils down to putting power back into the hands of those of you that make your employer run on a daily basis. Alone, you have no more power than what the company gives you. But together—you can make real, purposeful changes on the job.

In negotiations, the IAM (the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers) will be here to help you. As your bargaining representative, we'll throw all of our weight behind getting you the best collective bargaining agreement possible. And then we'll be there to make sure that agreement is properly enforced. It's nothing new. We do it for more than 600,000 workers across North America. That includes aerospace workers, air and rail transport workers, manufacturing workers, and healthcare workers — just to name a few.

The Union Advantage

Fairness

A union-negotiated contract puts rules in place that allow you to do your job without fear of retaliation or unjust treatment. If you feel those rules have been broken, you have the legal right to appeal through a grievance procedure. As a result, everyone is treated with respect. Not just management's chosen favorites.

Wages

Fairness also means higher and more equitable wages. Yeah, union members earn roughly \$200 more every week than non-members. But it's so much more than that. It's about negotiating with your bosses over set wage increases that can't change at management's whim.

Dignified Retirement

For IAM members, it also means a secure retirement. Three out of every four union members have a pension plan. Only 16 percent of others have the same. For union members, that means a defined benefit in retirement that they can count on. Even for union members without a pension, they are still able negotiate over what their 401(k) and other employer-provided retirement plans look like.

Work-Life Balance

Eighty-seven percent of union workers have access to paid sick days, compared to 69 percent of non-union workers. Roughly 89 percent of private-sector union workers get paid vacation and holidays, compared to roughly 75 percent of non-union private sector workers. 1. At the IAM, we have members with legally binding contracts stating that every member has to have at least 2-3 weeks notice before receiving a schedule change. We understand that and make sure your time is respected. Taken together, it means more quality time to spend doing the things we love.

Health & Safety

Finally, power is the ability to negotiate better health care benefits. Life can be tricky. So can our work. You never know when we'll be put in a position where we need serious medical care. It's nice knowing we'll be able to negotiate over what that care looks like and how much it is going to cost.

What do we have to do to form a union?

The first step is submitting an authorization card. The authorization card's purpose is to show the National Labor

Relations Board (NLRB) there is sufficient interest in a Union to hold a secret-ballot election. The NLRB is the federal agency charged with conducting union elections and enforcing U.S. labor law. If there is enough interest among our group, the IAM will file a "Petition" for representation with the NLRB. A "hearing" is then needed to define the "unit". There are certain individuals such as supervisors that may not belong in the union. Elections are secret ballot and typically held at the place of employment. The IAM becomes your official bargaining representative if 50% +1 of us voting cast a "yes" ballot.

Your Rights Under the Law

Under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), workers have a right to:

- Organize a union to negotiate with your employer concerning wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment
- Form, join or assist a union
- Bargain collectively through representatives of employees' own choosing for a contract with the employer setting wages, benefits, hours, and other working conditions
- Discuss terms and conditions of



STRENGTH

SECURITY



RESPECT

employment or union organizing with their co-workers or a union

- Take action with one or more co-workers to improve working conditions by, among other means, raising work-related complaints directly with the employer or with a government agency, and seeking help from a union
- Strike and picket, depending on the purpose or means of the strike or the picketing
- Choose not to do any of these activities, including joining or remaining a member of a union.

Source: [nlrb.gov/rights-we-protect/employee-rights](https://www.nlrb.gov/rights-we-protect/employee-rights)

Violations of the Law

According to the NLRA, it's a violation of the law for employers to:

- Threaten employees with loss of jobs or benefits if they join or vote for a union or engage in protected concerted activity
- Threaten to close the plant if employees select a union to represent them
- Question employees about their union sympathies or activities in circumstances that tend to interfere with, restrain or coerce employees in the exercise of their rights under the Act.
- Promise benefits to employees to

discourage their union support. Transfer, layoff, terminate, assign employees more difficult work tasks, or otherwise punishing employees because they engaged in union or protected concerted activity.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is collective bargaining?

The process in which working people, through their unions, negotiate contracts with their employers to determine their wages, benefits and other working conditions. Every year, millions of America's workers negotiate or renegotiate their bargained contracts.

What can union members bargain with their employers over?

By law, the employer is required to bargain over "wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment."

- Wages
- Health and safety procedures
- Discipline and grievance procedure
- Arbitration
- Seniority

Fringe benefits are also negotiable.

- Vacation
- Holidays

- Pensions
- Health insurance
- Sick time

What happens after we join the Union?

If you vote to join the IAM, one of the first things we will do is survey all of the workers at your shop to identify issues and problems you would like to see addressed during negotiations with the company. A negotiating committee is then formed, consisting of employees in your bargaining unit. Alongside an experienced IAM representative, this negotiating committee then meets with the company to start contract negotiations. Once a “tentative agreement” is reached, you and your co-workers will vote on whether to accept or reject the contract offer.

How much will my dues be?

IAM dues are established through Local or District Lodge bylaws and add up to just a fraction of your monthly take-home pay. Dues are typically about 2x your hourly rate + \$10. So, if you are making \$20/hour, you can expect dues at roughly \$50/month.

What do my dues pay for?

Dues secure all the benefits, rights, services and privileges that are nego-

tiated through collectively bargained contracts. Check out the “union advantage” page to see all that dues pay for.

How is the Money Monitored?

In every Local and District, at least six officers share responsibility for protecting the members’ dues money. Local Lodge funds must also be audited twice a year. The members nominate and elect auditors (Local Lodge officers may not serve as auditors) and three Trustees to review and verify the auditor’s reports. The reports must then be submitted for review by the Local membership and the General Secretary-Treasurer. As a further check, the International Union conducts periodic, unannounced audits of Local and District Lodge books. Likewise, the integrity of International Union finances are protected through annual audits by an independent firm of certified public accountants.

Will my dues money go to politics?

Dues money does not go towards political candidates. Every dollar spent on political lobbying comes from voluntary donations to the Machinists Non-Partisan Political League (MNPL).

Does the union protect lazy people?

Work standards and conduct are just as important in a unionized workplace, and management still has a responsibility to

address poor performance. Unions make sure the hiring process is objective, so management can't just hire and promote their friends.

Will we have to strike?

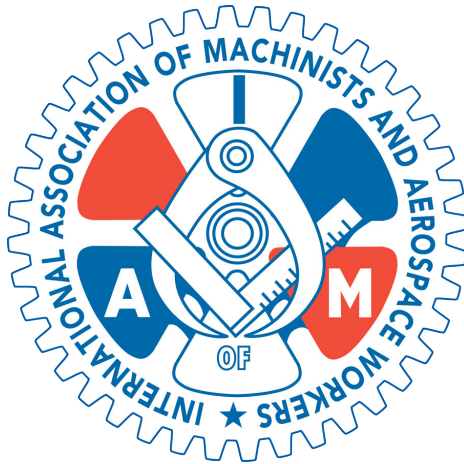
Strikes get tons of publicity, but the odds are you will never go on strike. Every year, 99 percent of all IAM negotiations are settled without a strike, through businesslike, professional negotiations with the employer. No IAM-represented Ikea facilities have ever gone out on strike. If, as a last resort, you do have to go on strike - it will be your decision and it will be about using your collective strength to secure better wages, benefits and working conditions.

Members covered by the contract are notified and given the chance to vote on the proposed agreement and on whether to strike. It takes a simple majority (50 percent plus one) of those voting to accept a contract. It takes a two-thirds majority (at least 66.6 percent) to strike.

How do dispute resolutions work at a unionized facility?

Without a union contract, employers can make whatever rules they choose, and change the rules whenever they choose. With a union contract, you have rules and legal rights in the workplace that the

employer cannot change without negotiating with the union. Everyone covered by the contract has the legal right to appeal – that is, to file a “grievance” – if they believe the rules have been broken. Trained IAM stewards and business representatives will meet with management to attempt to resolve the grievance. Ultimately, cases can be taken before an impartial arbitrator to be resolved.



The International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers