

## Frequently Asked Questions – ASA September 15, 2021

**Extension Agreement: The 2018 Theatrical and Television Motion Picture Area Standards Agreement (ASA) was set to expire July 31, 2021. The IATSE agreed to extend through September 10 in an effort to exhaust every opportunity to make a deal.**

**1. Now that the Area Standards Agreement has expired what happens next?**

- Work can and will continue under the expired agreement until further notice.
- The wages, benefit plan contributions and working conditions will remain unchanged (“status quo”) while work continues.
- You should continue working and seeking new work.

**2. Then What?**

- The employers can declare impasse and impose their last, best-and-final offer.
- The IATSE can hold a strike authorization vote.
- If strike authorization is granted, the IATSE could call for a strike.
- The employers could impose a lock out.

**3. What is the difference between a strike and a lock out?**

A strike is the union’s members withholding their services until they secure an acceptable contract. A lock out is a decision by the employers to bar union workers from working until the workers agree to certain terms.

### **Strike Authorization:**

**4. How does a strike authorization happen? Do we vote?**

Members of the Locals vote independently to authorize a strike, not to call a strike. All Locals working under the ASA will hold a secret ballot vote simultaneously.

The vote will be conducted electronically by a balloting service through e-mail, so make sure that your Local has your current e-mail address.

Members in good standing who have been members for at least six months are eligible to vote.

The overall authorization vote is decided in the following format. It is imperative for all members to cast a “yes” vote to grant strike authorization.

- The threshold for a Local Union to pass “strike authorization” is a “yes” vote of 75% of the votes cast in the Local Union “strike authorization vote.”
- If a Local reaches that 75% “yes” threshold, the Local will authorize a strike and be placed in the yes column. Then, the number of delegate votes each Local is assigned under Constitution will be used to reflect the members’ votes for ratification.
- A simple majority of the total ASA Locals’ delegate votes determines the outcome.

A strike authorization does not mean there will be a strike. It authorizes the IATSE President to call a strike if it is necessary.

If a Local Union does not reach the 75% threshold, then all that Local’s delegate votes would be counted as “no.”

## **Strike:**

### **5. Can I collect unemployment while we are on strike?**

This question is generally addressed differently under each U.S. state’s respective unemployment insurance laws. In most states (with some limited exceptions) workers may not qualify for unemployment insurance benefits while engaging in a strike. In California, for example (and other states not specifically mentioned here), the answer is generally “no”—striking workers are not eligible for unemployment benefits. In New York State, residents who reside and work in New York State, can apply for unemployment benefits after 14 days; and after 30 days in New Jersey. In Kentucky, striking workers may be eligible if an employer fails to notify a relevant state agency of the strike in advance. In addition, in some locations, individuals who became unemployed before the strike began (and are already collecting unemployment benefits) may continue to be eligible.

Lock outs, on the other hand, are treated differently under many state laws. If the employers impose a lock out, workers may be eligible to apply for unemployment benefits in the following locations (with certain conditions in some states): Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin.

### **6. Are we allowed to continue work under any of the other contracts?**

Contracts not affiliated with or attached to the Area Standards Agreement remain in full force and effect such as Sports Broadcasting, Low Budget Theatrical, Pay Television (HBO, Showtime, Starz) and Commercial Agreements. The Videotape Agreement is being negotiated with the Producer-IATSE Basic Agreement, but does not expire until the end of September 2021. For other productions or facilities agreements, check with your Local.

### **7. Will our dues be reduced or waived because of the strike?**

Each Local's elected leaders will make that decision in compliance with their governing documents as they did during the pandemic.

### **8. What happens if I am on location when the strike begins?**

Your employer is still legally required to arrange and pay for you and your equipment to return home. You will need to take the return trip offer as they will not be required to continue housing you if you refuse the offer. If you have a lease or other ongoing obligations, contact your Local.

### **9. If there is a strike, which Locals will be on strike?**

If a strike is called, because the Locals involved in the Hollywood Basic Agreement will be conducting their own vote at the same time as we are, those 13 Hollywood locals (Locals 44, 80, 600, 695, 700, 705, 706, 728, 729, 800, 871, 884, 892) three of which are national (Locals 600, 700 and 800) will all be on strike, along with the Studio Mechanics and other Locals under the ASA.

### **10. What happens with my health insurance?**

The IATSE National Benefit Funds (NBF) are structured so that quarterly premiums are paid from contributions that have accumulated in your CAPP Account. Those quarterly premiums will continue to be paid from that CAPP balance until that balance is \$0, even if you are not currently working. Once the balance is reduced, you may need to self-pay premiums to continue your coverage.

### **11. Will I be expected to walk a picket line?**

Yes. Every member will be called upon to take action to ensure the strike is successful.

### **12. What if a member crosses the picket line?**

Members who undermine the strike by performing struck work will be subject to internal union discipline and may be brought up on charges related to strike breaking.

### **13. What if they hire strike replacements?**

While this is a possibility, it is unlikely the employers can replace tens of thousands of the most talented and skilled craftspeople throughout the United States.

What Can You Do?

- Make sure your Local has your current contact information, especially mobile phone numbers and email address.
- Make sure you are in good standing so you may participate in important meetings and votes.

- Keep checking and reading emails and other communications from your Local and the International.
- Volunteer for “get out the vote” efforts for any strike authorization vote.
- Talk to every IA crew member you know to engage them in this fight.