

The Union News

Local Lodge 743 Newsletter



Local 743

May/June 2016

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A Message From The President



Dianna Koch
LL743 President

First of all I want to start out by saying what a fantastic job you all did during our contract negotiations over the past 2 months. I want to give a special thanks to the union representatives, along with all the other union activists, who did a great job at communicating and making sure you had the flyers after every negotiating session with the company. The members all came together like never before and showed support for their negotiating committee and for the contract. You made us proud to sit at the table knowing how much support you gave us during the entire process.

It is truly through all of your efforts that the last, best and final offer the company presented to us was as good as it turned out to be. Unfortunately, we were not successful in keeping the defined benefit pension for those hired after June 30th 2016. It is with heavy hearts that we move forward with this take-away. It will have a huge impact on future members for years to come. Our focus for the next few months will be to reach out to our IAM leadership to help us come up with a plan to educate our new hires on the best financial path forward to maximize their 401K plans so they will have the best retirement possible.

Typically, we all come back to work after contract negotiations and the ratification vote meeting with many questions as to what we voted on. We can only cover so much at the meeting and some things may be different for some people than they are for others, depending on individual circumstances.

In this newsletter you will find frequently asked questions we have received from members on the new contract language changes. We have provided answers which hopefully will take care of any questions you have.

There are some facts that you may not have known prior to filling out the form for your signing bonus decision. If this information makes you change your mind in how you have elected your signing bonus to be paid out, you can redo the form and re-submit it to HR as long as it's before the deadline of June 3rd, 2016.



Please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any other union representative if you have any additional questions. If they don't know the answer, they will certainly find out and get back to you.

In Solidarity,

Dianna Koch

LL743 President

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Please note: I do not have UTAS email.

AFL-CIO

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Monthly Meetings

Our Next
Monthly Meeting
will be held on
June 12th
at the Union Hall
Bring a Friend!

Wednesday Info-Share

2nd shift: 2:30 PM
1st shift: 3:45 PM
3rd shift is invited
to either meeting.

**Everyone
Is Always
Welcome!**



2016 Contract Negotiations FAQ's

Here are some questions and answers that we have been receiving on the new contract language changes. There was some confusion at the ratification meeting on a few issues that were not clearly defined on the handout and were not verbally communicated during the presentation.



Question: When will the forms be available for signing bonus elections?

Answer: The forms are available now from HR. Forms will need to be filled out and returned to HR by Friday, June 3, 2016 5:00pm.

Question: How does the signing bonus get matched?

Answer: If you elect to put some, or all of your bonus, in \$500 increments into the 401K or into an HSA you will get 50% match on the dollar. Example \$2500 deposited into your HAS account or your 401K will be \$3750 deposited. In 2020 the \$2000 bonus will be matched at 50% as well for \$3000 deposit if you put it into either or both of these accounts. **NOTE: Any or all portions of the signing bonus that is elected to be deposited into an HSA account will NOT be deposited until January 31st, 2017.**

Question: What if I don't have an HSA (health savings account) or a 401K account yet but I want my signing bonus to be matched at 50% and deposited into one of these accounts?

Answer: The Company will hold the bonus at your request until you open either one or both of these accounts and at that time they will make the deposit with the 50% match as you elect in \$500 increments. You can put some or all into each of the accounts as you so designate on the form. If depositing it into an HSA the maximum amount allowed by law is \$6750 for family plus \$1000 additional if 55 or over. The maximum allowed by law for single is \$3350 plus \$1000 additional if 55 or over. If you are single be careful to not exceed that amount with your \$3750 signing bonus. **NOTE: If you exceed the IRS maximum, you will be subject to personal tax penalties.**

Question: When can I open a 401K account?

Answer: An employee is now allowed to open a 401K account as soon as they become eligible for medical benefits, which is on the 31st day of employment. They no longer have to wait 12 months. This will not go into affect until the system has been updated on June 7, 2016. The bonus will be matched at 50% by the company immediately, but weekly contribution will be unmatched until 12 months after the start/hire date. <https://www.irs.gov/401k-and-Profit-Sharing-Plan-Contribution-Limits>

Question: How much can I now contribute to my 401K account?

Answer: Employees can now start to contribute the maximum allowable by law each year. This may change annually and people should refer to the IRS website for any changes or increases due to cost of living adjustments. Currently the IRS guidelines for 2016 are \$53,000/Year or \$59,000/Year if over the age of 50. **NOTE: These annual totals include the company contributions.** Keep in mind that only \$18,000 or \$24,000 if over age 50, of those amounts will be pretax contributions.

Question: When can I open an HSA account?

Answer: During the next open enrollment period in October 2016. If you enroll in the HDHP (high deductible health plan) you will then be able to open the HSA (health savings account). If you have not elected an insurance plan as of yet (because you were recently hired) you may elect the HDHP and open the HSA account. **NOTE: The company will hold your signing bonus until January 31st 2017 if you wish to deposit some or all of it into your HSA account in \$500.00 increments with 50% company match.** If for some reason you change your mind during the open enrollment period and stay in the BYO plan, the bonus can then be deposited in your 401K with the 50% company match.



Question: When does the BYO medical plan options go away, leaving the HDHP as the only option?

Answer: January 1st 2020 – Anyone who is enrolled in one of the HDHP medical plans along with an HSA account on January 1st, 2019 will get a 100% company match up to \$500 deposited into their HSA account. The following year on January 1st 2020, the company will provide a one-time health savings account contribution of \$500 regardless of the amount the employee contributes. This money is intended to help people build up funds in their HSA accounts.

Question: What if I want my signing bonus in a check or direct deposit?

Answer: You can elect to take the money however, **there will NOT be any company match and the money will be taxed at a bonus tax rate of approximately 40% (approximately \$1500 after tax).**

Question: When will the new hires defined contribution 401K/Pension plan start?

Answer: New hires that start after June 30th 2016 will automatically be enrolled in a 401K after 45 days of employment and the company will then start to make a 4% deposit of their gross pay (including overtime) into the account. They can also open the 401K on their own on the 31st day of employment and they may start to contribute their own money. The 50% company match on the \$78/week will not start until they have worked for the company for 12 months.

Question: When can I start to deposit money into a Roth IRA?

Answer: The Roth IRA will be available for employees on January 1st 2017.

Question: When can I start to use my vacation/sick time in one hour increments?

Answer: Once payroll gets the system updated to allow the time to be taken in 1 hour increments. You will see the hours in your accruals screen the same way you see the 4 hour incremental vacation time that's available to use. **Note: You can only use 1 Vacation day and 1 Sick day in one hour increments.**

Question: Can hourly people use the UTC's Birth/adoption and Parental leave policy now?

Answer: Yes although the policy is not in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the company has agreed to afford HBU employees the same paid leave benefits that have previously only been available to salary employees.

Question: Who will answer questions about things like our Pension, 401K or -what if I die tomorrow type of questions?

Answer: New contract language says the company will be hiring a salary person to fill that position. As soon as they do that, we will provide the contact number for employees to call that person. Until the company fills that position, employees should call the Pension/Benefits center at 1-800-243-8135 or they can email the benefits people in Windsor Locks Ct. Email Jill Beckett at jill.beckett@utas.utc.com.

Question: How does the bridged seniority affect me?

Answer: In order for your seniority to be bridged under this new language employees must have previously worked for Hamilton Sundstrand under one of our collective bargaining agreements and they must NOT have been previously fired. Example; someone who was laid off involuntarily from HSD previously with 10 years of service and their recall rights expired before they came back to Hamilton and because of that they were brought back as a new hire, they would have their seniority bridged. 10 years of service would be added to their time plus all the time they have accrued as a new hire.

Question: Does my time while out on layoff count towards my seniority with this new bridging of time?

Answer: No it does not. **No time outside of the bargaining unit counts towards seniority.**

Question: What if I worked for another UTC division? Does that time get bridged?

Answer: No it does not. **It only applies to employees who were once covered under the local lodge 743 collective bargaining agreements.**

Question: Does my new bridged seniority date count towards my vacation time?

Answer: No it does not. **The seniority bridge is for layoff, recall, promotions and shift preference only.**



Local 743

ELECTED OFFICERS

Dianna Koch	President / Shop Committee
Larry Brooks	Vice President
Karen Blanchard	Recording Secretary
Roger Nadeau	Secretary Treasurer
Paul Duff	Trustee
Gary Pierkowski	Trustee
Travis Williams	Trustee
Glen Garfield	Conductor/Sentinel
Larry Brooks	Shop Committee
Steve Dumond	Shop Committee
Vic Ghidoni	Shop Committee
Bob MacLean	Shop Committee
Keith Dehaney	Shop Committee (TLD)

Newsletter Editor / Communicator

Vic Ghidoni

Webmaster / Videographer

Jeff Dynia

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Windsor Locks, CT 06096

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LOCAL 743 EAP

Employee Assistance Program

Call your EAP Representative
for a Confidential Session.

Mike Morin

Cell: 413-977-3712

Office: 860-654-5674

Or Email:

Michael.morin@hs.utc.com

"We're always here to help"

FAQ's Continued

Question: What other scenarios are there that seniority will NOT get bridged?

Answer: A) If someone was terminated WITH just cause and the union was NOT able to get their job back through the grievance procedure, they will NOT have their seniority bridged. B) If someone took a voluntary lay off or a VSO (voluntary separation offer) ie: retirement package or if they retired on their own and then came back as a new hire they will NOT have their seniority bridged. C) If someone simply quit they would NOT get their seniority bridged. D) If someone went from an hourly bargaining unit position to a salary position and then back to an hourly position their time does NOT get bridged.

Question: When does my new adjusted seniority date go into effect?

Answer: The new adjusted seniority date will not go into effect until January 1st 2017.

Question: What is the new contract language for military benefits?

Answer: **The new language now states that all employees will be eligible for military pay compensation once they become eligible for medical benefits which is on their 31st day of employment.** The old contract language had no compensation until after 12 months of service.

Question: What is the new policy for personal protective equipment?

Answer: Starting January 1st, 2017 employees will be eligible for a new pair of steel toed safety shoes every 12 months (old policy was 1 pair every 18 months). The company will now pay \$125 (was \$100) towards a regular/ESDS pair of safety shoes or \$150 (was \$125) towards a pair of the electrical hazard rated shoes. Also starting on January 1st, 2017 each employee will be eligible for 1 pair of free prescription safety glasses every 12 months (was every 2 years). Employees will also be eligible for 1 free pair of anti-fatigue insoles every 6 months. NOTE: if anyone's personal safety equipment gets damaged or becomes unusable prior to these time limits, they can get replacement equipment with the approval of the EH&S department.

I hope this helps to answer any questions people may have had since the ratification vote. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any union representative if you have any additional questions.

If they don't know the answer they will find out and get back to you.

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