



6923 Lakewood Drive West B-1 Tacoma, Washington 98467-3221 (253)474-3123 - Fax (253)475-4059 www.atu758

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COVID VACCINE UPDATE

Isaac O Tate – President Business Agent

I have been contacted in regards to the COVID vaccines and what is the position of this Local as it applies to the vaccinations. ATU Local 758 does not have a position in regards to the vaccinations but, would be remiss in not informing you that the Amalgamated Transit Union International President and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) of which Pierce Transit belongs, have both advocated for essential transportation employees be some of the first to receive these vaccines.

I do not think (please don't hold me to this) the vaccines will be mandatory as they will and are for healthcare workers who per the nature of their positions (even in non COVID times), it is mandatory to receive vaccinations. Many are concerned in regards to the testing of the vaccines. In particular it has been stated that people with underlying health conditions were part of the testing. The question is; did they have the same underlying health conditions as I have? Did they have multiple underlying health conditions say two, coupled with age? If I have severe respiratory issues as an underlying health condition is it safe? If you are both asthmatic and have allergies is it safe? Severe allergic reactions have been noted. PPE(s) work for me and I don't or feel that I need anything else. All of these are valid questions and concerns.

Personally, I and probably you as well can only consult your personal physician to give you the answers, or I imagine you can wait to see the effects of the vaccines on others. Either way ATU Local 758 would and will not advocate that any or every member receive the vaccine. If it becomes a State or Federal mandate, we'll deal with it at that time.

NEGOTIATION RUMORS

It has come to the Union leadership's attention that there is a rumor going around that the Union is willing to have members laid off, and additionally take a cut in wages. If you heard the rumor(s) or were told the same, ask the person who is telling you why they are saying or repeating that. Evidently they weren't here before when I was in office and the Agency wanted the represented members to take a wage cut and or freeze. It didn't happen and the membership didn't back down. Maybe these people aren't aware of the many times we have worked to keep our members from being laid-off and sure in the heck not going to roll over and just let it happen. Maybe the people spreading these rumors have been sent out by Pierce Transit management to lower your expectations and hopefully increase their chances for some position in the agency. We do have members like that now, and they were here before and still didn't get promoted. What "these" people failed to realize was that if management thought or knew they were a or "rats" willing to do their bidding and go out and advocate against the hand that feeds them, they didn't want a "rat" scampering around in the same office as theirs biting them either. Maybe the person(s) saying these things don't like the Union or the benefits, so why don't they just go away? Maybe the person(s) saying things like this don't realize that Pierce Transit management in some cases is looking at 4% wage adjustments. Maybe these same people don't realize that the CEO just received a 3% wage increase (that's just the wages). Maybe they do, but just can't help themselves from being "rats".