



NEWSLETTER

atu758.org

October 2021

President's/BA Report -

Isaac O. Tate

ATU Update

There are and have been many changes that will affect the workplace. But first and foremost, we are in a pandemic. We've had five (5) positive cases in a week. We're up to 80 positives and two (deaths) among our coworkers. There are shortages of Operators (everywhere) and Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) are being negotiated by ZOOM. Neither of which in the history of this Local has ever occurred. The world is different, stressful, more of us have become more intolerant of each other. It's becoming harder to be "we", instead of "I". Unfortunately, it's becoming worse than better. But it's got to get better.

Union Meetings

Whether you believe it or not, your Union is bound by the same CDC and health authority guidelines as Pierce Transit, which brings me to the topic of Union meetings. In trying to find a meeting space that adheres to CDC guidelines we have been stymied in our search for such venues. It was only a week ago that we were told that the IBEW Union Hall and home of the Pierce County Central Labor Council, "may" be available for the contract informational meeting. If it is available we will use it. Previously your Union used the Clover Park Rotunda, but due to COVID it will not be available until 2022. Additionally, the International has sent the Local guidance regarding meetings and the extension of dues waivers for COVID impacted members up until and through December 2021. However, if there is any way possible, we will conduct a meeting. While many may believe this COVID is a joke, it isn't.

Shake-up -Operators

Again, never in the history (well not in the 37 years of my employment) nor the 40 years that Pierce Transit has been existence has this agency had a "pandemic" nor have there been so many factors that have affected the bid process (and contract) regarding the Operator Shake-up. There has never been a shift in ridership that happened over such a short time but has lasted for a long time. The model for our contracts and past practices regarding the shake-ups were not negotiated with the idea of a pandemic in mind, nor all of the ramifications such an occurrence would create. Neither were these contracts and practices ever predicated on not having enough Operators to provide the services promised by the agency and operated by us as Operators. What has been communicated and is clearly understood is; no Full-time Operator will be moved to a Relief Transit Operator (RTO) position due to the upcoming unplanned shake-up. The last (September)

shake-up had 46 slots; this Special shake-up will have 62 slots. Forty-six (46) of those positions had the choice of Saturday/Sunday off, not all of the Extra Board Operators took Saturday/Sunday off. Preliminarily, on the upcoming shake-up there will be 42 Saturday/Sunday slots. The rest of the slots will be Thur/Fri., Fri/Sat., Sun/Mon and (1) Wed/Thur. This had to be done to ensure no fulltime Operators will be bumped back to a Relief Transit Operator position. Again, this will be necessitated by the shortage of Operators and will be a “**non-precedent setting**” scenario if implemented, and said parameters noted in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and **would not be an open ended** working condition or change to the CBA or past practice as it relates to the shake-up. Options are limited and we've explored them all. But to throw a “curveball” into this whole upcoming shake-up issue is, what will happen if there is a vaccination mandate and we lose among other member/employees more Operators?

Vaccine Mandate – Members/Employees

What will happen with a/the shake-up if Pierce Transit as an Agency is directed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to have all ATU members and employees vaccinated much the same as the State of Washington public employees and King County which has affected both the Seattle Local 587 members and our Sound Transit (ST) Operators. The reality is a directive such as that could or would have the potential to not only affect Operators, but numerous other members/employees in other job classifications who choose not to receive the vaccine(s). I have discussed the vaccine mandates with both an individual in Human Resources for Washington state employees specifically asking about the exemption, and the President/Business Agent of Local 587. In most cases “timelines” to receive the vaccinations have been extended past the proclamation date, but and however to keep your job one would still have to be vaccinated. In regards to the medical and religious exemption, it is my understanding that in requesting such, the employer can couple said exemptions with the agency's ability to accommodate the requests. (Note: this is only my understanding). I have contacted the President/BA of Local 1433 - Phoenix, and Local 757 - Portland, to get a perspective on what is happening outside Washington state, and in regards to the ones that have responded their respective transit agencies are waiting for an OSHA directive/mandate as well. Local 1277 - Los Angeles is in talks regarding a mandate effective November 1, 2021, however they are in ongoing discussions regarding percentage vaccinated versus testing scenario.

Hours of Service

I have received inquiries regarding the hours of service (operation) and 70 hour limit. It is the law and although violated in the past by the agency, the violation(s) have ended. Overtime will still be available and in discussion with management staff, the tracking of hours to both provide overtime and an Operator's desire to work overtime which will be tracked and calculated by Dispatch to ensure said overtime does not conflict with an Operator's bid day off.

In closing

As these winter months approach and there is less and less daylight, and the winter doldrums start to set in, hard as it may be, try to stay positive. There will be and since the inception of this pandemic a holiday season wherein family times during the holidays have been strained or non-existent. I have always looked forward to gathering on the holidays with my mom, family and extended family especially the little ones at those times. This year I have worked as well as has my family to insure if we make it happen, everyone is as safe as possible. Mainly because my mom is older and my great nieces are younger. I personally don't want to harm either.

Take care, be safe and try to be good to each other.

Isaac





Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 758

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This statement could save your job! "If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated I respectfully request that my shop steward be present at the meeting. Without Union representation present, I choose not to respond to any questions or statements."

UNION MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTICE

Due to COVID-19 all Union meetings have been cancelled until further notice or direction from the International Offices.

Thursday, Union Office 6923 Lakewood Dr W Suite B-1

Friday, Union Office 6923 Lakewood Dr W Suite B-1

Longview, Wednesday, 254 Oregon Way Longview, WA 98632

Executive Board—(Executive Board Only)

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