



Local 44 – WGA Strike FAQs 2023

What is the IATSE and Local 44's position on the WGA strike?

IATSE International President Matthew Loeb has stated as follows: "IATSE supports the Writers Guild of America West (WGAW) and the Writers Guild of America East (WGAE) in their collective fight to win a fair contract from Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) on behalf of the talented workers they represent. The motion picture and television industry thrives on the creativity, skill, and labor of every worker involved, and writers' contributions are an important part of the success of the films, television shows, and other media IATSE members work on. We recognize and support our fellow entertainment workers in their mission to negotiate an agreement that addresses their issues from the AMPTP, an ensemble that includes media-mega corporations collectively worth trillions of dollars."

Now that the writers are on strike, do I still go to work?

If you have a work call, then yes, you should go to work.

What are my options if I encounter a WGA picket line at my worksite?

If you encounter a physical picket line at your worksite, you have a legally-protected right not to cross the picket line. If you encounter a picket line and choose not to cross it, you should immediately contact your supervisor and let them know that you encountered a WGA picket line and are choosing to honor the picket line.

Your right not to cross a picket line applies regardless of where you encounter the picket line, whether a studio lot, a facility, or an off-site location.

However, if there is no picket line at your worksite, you must go to work.

What happens if I choose not to cross a picket line?

Again, contact your supervisor immediately. You may not be terminated, disciplined, or retaliated against if you choose not to cross a picket line. However, you may not get paid and the production may replace you with another person.

Local 44 is discouraging members from accepting work calls to replace other Local 44 members who have exercised their right not to cross a picket line. You have the right to ask if you are being called to replace another member who refused to cross a picket line.

Now that there is a writers' strike, will I still have to pay my union dues?

Yes. Under our Constitution and By-laws, members must continue to remain current on their dues.

Will Local 44's strike fund be available to the members who decline to cross a picket line or whose production is shut down as a result of the strike?

No. Local 44's strike fund may be used only when the IATSE or Local 44 is on strike. That is not the case.

What happens to my MPI hours?

There is currently no bridge for health/pension/IAP hours.

Can I collect Unemployment Insurance if my production shuts down as a result of the strike?

Yes.

What about my kit?

If your show is affected by a work stoppage, your employer is not responsible for paying your kit rental. Please consult with your UPM to make specific arrangements to collect your property.

Can I join a WGA picket line?

Just as you have a right to choose not to cross a picket line, you also have a right to participate in a WGA picket line on your own time. However, you should not refuse to cross a picket line at your worksite and then immediately join the same picket line.

Can I hold an IATSE sign on the picket line?

No. Holding an IATSE sign may give the incorrect impression that IATSE is on strike. The IATSE has no active dispute with the employers. IATSE and Local 44 are not on strike or sponsoring any picketing.

Can I wear IATSE clothing/pins on the picket line?

Yes.

I work in commercials, does the WGA strike impact me?

No. The commercial contract is not affected by the WGA strike. The WGA is not on strike against the Association of Independent Commercial Producers. If you are working on a commercial that is being produced at the same location where picketing against a studio or film/television producer is occurring, you may be directed to enter using a separate "reserve" or "neutral" gate. This is permissible.

I am a member of both Local 44 and Teamsters Local 399. How do I navigate information coming from separate locals?

The Teamsters and the IATSE are largely aligned in their support of the WGA's goals, and our collective bargaining agreements with the AMPTP allow for similar protections to members who choose not to cross a picket line. However, you should contact Local 399 directly for your Local 399-specific questions.

Contact a Local 44 Business Representative at (818) 769-2500 if you have additional questions or need clarity.

Helpful Links:

- A message from President Matthew Loeb: [here](#)
- Please see the Teamsters Local 399 FAQ embedded in this [Hollywood Reporter Article](#)
- For more details on the WGA negotiations click [here](#)

- If you would like to know the locations of WGA’s picket lines [click here for a full list of locations and more information](#). We are providing this list only as an informational tool.
- To any member who has already been laid off and is in the SoCal Gas network, please [fill out this intake form](#) from Labor Community Services LA to **sign up for bill payment assistance of up to \$500**.
- Motion Picture Television Fund (MPTF) - WGA Strike FAQs: [here](#)
- Entertainment Community Fund – Social Services and Emergency Financial Assistance: [here](#)
- First Entertainment Credit Union – Hardship & Strike Assistance: [here](#)
- Entertainment Industry Assistance Organizations: [here](#)