



NEW MEMBER HANDBOOK • 2026

IBEW Local Union 520 Officers

Business Manager

Ben Brenneman

President

Kasey Lansangan

Vice President

Jonathan Murray

Treasurer

James Briceno

Recording Secretary

Elizabeth Brink

IBEW Local Union 520 Staff

Chief of Staff

Ronnie Hardi

rhardi@ibew520.org

Lead Organizer

Joseph "Big Joe" Hernandez

joseph_hernandez@ibew520.org

512-826-0134

Organizers

Josh Balzer

joshua_balzer@ibew520.org

737-230-6520

Abigail Leighton

abigail_leighton@ibew520.org

512-839-5411

Business Development Representative

Mike Grant

mike_grant@ibew520.org

512-657-5538

Contract Enforcement:

contractenforcement@ibew520.org

Michael Matteso

Jonathan Murray

John Zavala

Kasey Lansangan

Executive Board

Jonathon "Blondie" Huffman

Howard Chilton

Caressa Aamodt

Christopher Witt

Jason Apodaca

Matt Gursslin

John Orandy

The Executive Board meets the second Tuesday of each month. For inquiry on how to get on the Executive Board agenda please contact the Chief of Staff.

Examining Board

Ronnie Hardi

Gabe Flores

Joe Villarreal

Dispatcher

Keith Hetz

dispatch@ibew520.org

documents@ibew520.org

CE Coordinator

Juvenal "Juvie" Campos

juvenal_campos@ibew520.org

512-694-5202

Teledata

Jason Tatu

jason_tatu@ibew520.org

737-285-9876

Membership Specialist

Cassandra Gonzalez

cassandra_gonzalez@ibew520.org

Dues Secretary

Beatriz Moreno

dues@ibew520.org

San Angelo Staff

Assistant Business Manager

Diarmid Campell

diarmid_campell@ibew520.org

512-289-1561

Office Manager

Megan Tatsch

megan_tatsch@ibew520.org



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ANATOMY OF A YELLOW TICKET

You are now a part of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, an organization that has been the gold standard in the electrical industry for over 125 years.

Over these years we have started many traditions that show our pride in our membership. These traditions start with our **DUES RECEIPT** also known as our **YELLOW TICKET**.

Paid Through Date: This is the last month for which your dues are paid.

Card Number: This is your unique identifying number in the IBEW.

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS®							
MEMBER'S COPY		OFFICIAL RECEIPT 20363				DF# 452-452	
CC		P. Bal \$0.00		N. Bal \$0.00			
I.O. PORTION		LOCAL UNION PORTION				PAID	
AMOUNT	CODE	AMOUNT	CODE	AMOUNT	CODE	DATE	TOTAL
46.00	9	16.00	10			08/01/2024	
42.00	25						104.00
Dues Paid				L.U. NO.	MEMB. TYPE	CARD NO.	
2 Pmts. (Jul 2024 - Aug 2024)				0520	A	7999040	
REC'D OF: JOSHUA L BALZER 4818 East Ben White Blvd, Austin, TX, 78741						JIW	
						TRADE CLASSIFICATION	
						Ben Brenneman FINANCIAL SECRETARY	

Local Number: Local 520, Austin, TX

Classification: This is your "status" in the IBEW. Your classification sets your pay rate.

Bumping tickets: IBEW Local Union 520
Bylaws Article XVI Sec. 15

IBEW Local 520 is a democracy. We conduct our business by voting at our monthly union meeting. Everything we do is or has been approved by the membership. As soon as you have a yellow ticket, your vote counts the same as everyone else's.

In addition to voting on important business, we also do the following:

- Hear reports from the Staff and Officers about what is going on with the Local.
- Hear reports from committees about what they are doing to move the Local forward.
- Officially induct, or "swear in" new members.
- Vote on how to spend the Local's money.
- Get to know each other outside of work and have fun.

If YOU want to know what **YOUR UNION** is doing with **YOUR MONEY** come to **YOUR MEETING!**

Union Meetings are the 3rd Friday of the Month at 6:00 P.M. Dinner provided by your Picnic Committee.



YOUR UNION CONTRACT

The most important difference between working Union and working Open Shop is that you are now working under a CONTRACT, also known as an Agreement or CBA. Our Contract is a legally binding document signed by IBEW 520 of which you are a part, and by our contractors that covers everything from wages and benefits to overtime rules to how our Hiring Hall works to how our Apprenticeship is structured. The contract we have today is the product of over 125 years of negotiations between electricians and their employers. That's why we can't take any of the rights our contract gives us for granted.

Here's are the most useful part of the Contract that answer most day-to-day questions:

Article I : Grievance Procedure

Article IV: Wages, Working Hours, Overtime, Shift Work, Layoff Procedure, Holidays

Article V : Work Rules, Crew Structure, Travel Time, Required Tools

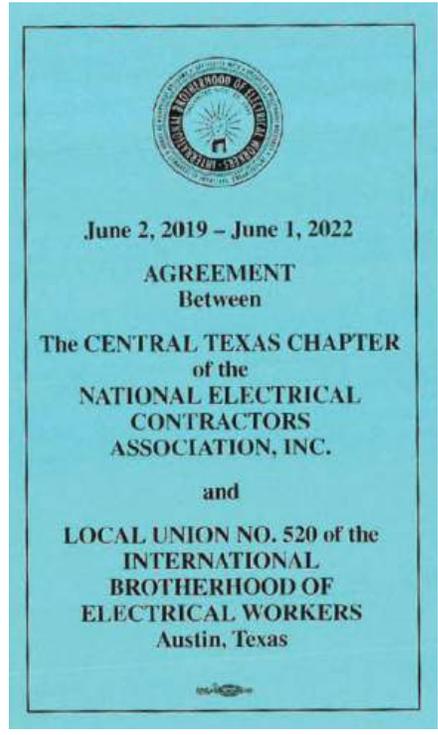
Article VI: Rules for Apprentices

CE MOU: Rules for CEs

MAKING CHANGES

Before the current contract ends, we will begin discussing what we want to de different in our new contract. A group of union members appointed by the IBEW 520 President will sit down with a group of Contractors to negotiate. Through these negotiations a new contract is agreed upon and brought before the membership for ratification by a majority vote.

This contract is agreed upon by a consensus of the membership and the contractors. In a perfect world, everyone would agree what every word in the contract means and follow it to the letter every time. Words can be interpreted differently by different people. That's why we have a process in our contract to solve issues between the workers and the employers without disrupting our day-to-day work on the job.



You have a right to a copy of your Contract. You can get one at the Hall.

When you're a member of Local 520, the Union is your source for jobs. You do not need to call contractors or do interviews. Just follow these steps.

1. Find out what jobs are available.

You can find out what your choices are for jobs at our website:
<https://ibew520.workingsystems.com/opencalls>

2. Choose a job in person.

Roll Call begins daily promptly at 8am.

Once you have signed the out-of-work book your name will be added to the Day Sheet. Report to the 3rd floor in the meeting hall between 7:30 A.M. and 8:00 A.M. Sign your name next to your printed name on the day sheet. The Dispatcher will begin calling names that are present at 8am. When your name is called, tell the dispatcher which job you choose, and he will then give you a job referral and instructions on reporting to the assigned employer.



Please contact the dispatcher for full dispatch rules, re-sign policy, and online bidding

Jobs are assigned on a first out-first in basis. In other words, the member who has been out of work the longest has the first choice of jobs.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE YOUR JOB

Again, when you're a member of Local 520, the Union is your source for jobs. If you get laid off or terminated for any reason, the IBEW will provide you with your next job. Follow these steps to move on with your career:

1. Sign the Out-of-Work List

Remember, job requests that come in go to the members who have been out of work the longest first. The way we track who is first in line is by their number on the out-of-work list. The first thing you should do, before you even cash your last paycheck, is to go to the Union Hall and let us know you are available.

2. File for Unemployment

If you are laid off because your project came to an end, you are eligible for Unemployment. You can file here: <https://login.apps.twc.state.tx.us/UBS/security/logon.do>

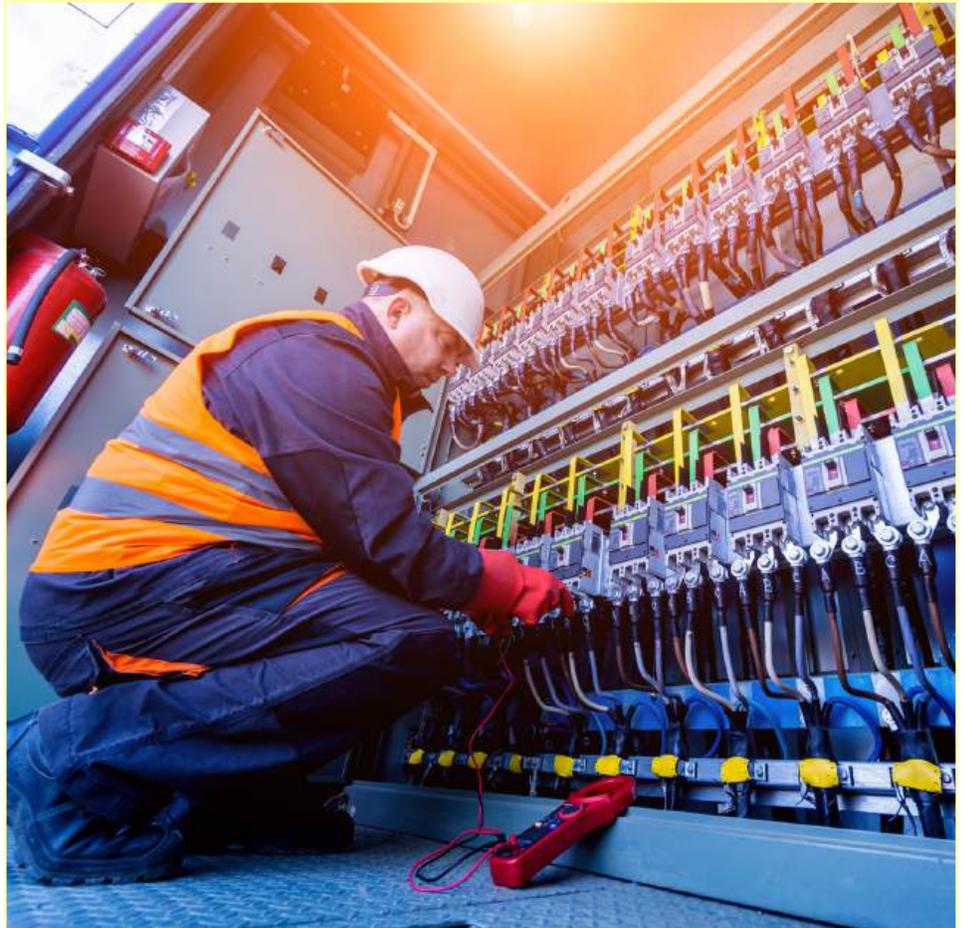
If you are a Union Member, you do not have to do a job search to maintain Unemployment! Texas Workforce Commission Assumes that we are doing that for you.

3. See "How Do I Get a Job?" on the Previous Page.

Come to the Hall to sign in between 7:30 A.M. and 8:00 A.M. Promptly at 8:00 A.M., the Dispatcher will begin to assign jobs.

If there are no jobs available on the jobs page, there are still opportunities to work. Call the IBEW 520 Organizing Department for details.

**Add Phone Number and Extension:
512-326-9540 ext. 3**



Dues are an important part of any organization. This money allows us to do the work required to support our members. Here's how to make sure you don't fall behind.

WORKING ASSESSMENTS

Working assessments fund the Local Union. They are currently 4.5% of gross earnings. 2.5% goes to fund general operations, and 2% market recovery fund. This money goes towards things like running the hiring hall, our union picnic, handling grievances, sending members to conferences to get training, and overseeing the Health and Welfare and Annuity funds.

Working Assessments are automatically deducted from your paycheck.

MONTHLY DUES

Monthly Dues are \$55. Of that money \$23.00 goes to fund the International Office. \$24.00 goes to your IBEW pension. \$8.00 remains with the local for the death benefits. Monthly Dues are your responsibility to pay each month. Here's how:

Online

You can pay your dues at the following website:

ibew520.workingsystems.com



You can also use this website to update your phone number, address or email.

In Person

The dues window is open between 7:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday.

FIRST TIME LOGIN TIPS

- Your username is your Card Number.
- Your initial password is your last name and the last four digits of your SSN in ALL CAPS.
- You will be required to change your password on your first login.
- Your last name will be as it appears on your dues receipt.

HOW DO I GET A RAISE?

In the open shop, each worker negotiates individually with the contractor. In these negotiations the contractor can take positive factors into account, like the worker's skills, knowledge, and value to the company. The contractor can also take negative factors into account, like the worker's tolerance for bad conditions or his or her personal relationship to the boss. Each worker's pay rate is a secret, and workers are discouraged from talking about wages on the job. This helps keep costs down.

In the IBEW, raises are negotiated as a group. We use the power of our over 2,000 members to get a better deal for everybody. This is called COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. Pay rates are set by the contract and are not dependent on the good graces of the employer.

JOURNEYMEN

The Journeyman wage rate is set by the contract. A committee of union members meets with a committee of contractors to determine what these rates will be during the length of the contract. Historically, raises occur either once or twice per year and have ranged between 0 and 5%. Upcoming increases are found in Article 4 of the contract.

APPRENTICES

In addition to contract raises, as an Apprentice you get raises based on OTJ (On The Job) training and classroom hours. Through this program you gain the skills, knowledge, and experience needed to be a Journeyman. These wages rates are a listed as a percentage of the Journeyman rate.



CE PROGRAM

As a CE, your initial pay rate is set by a hands-on skills evaluation. In addition to the raises everyone gets by contract, you get raises as you gain SKILL BASED CREDITS (SBCS). You get SBCs by turning in hours, taking classes, and obtaining hands on skills. These pay rates are based on a percentage of the Journeyman wage.



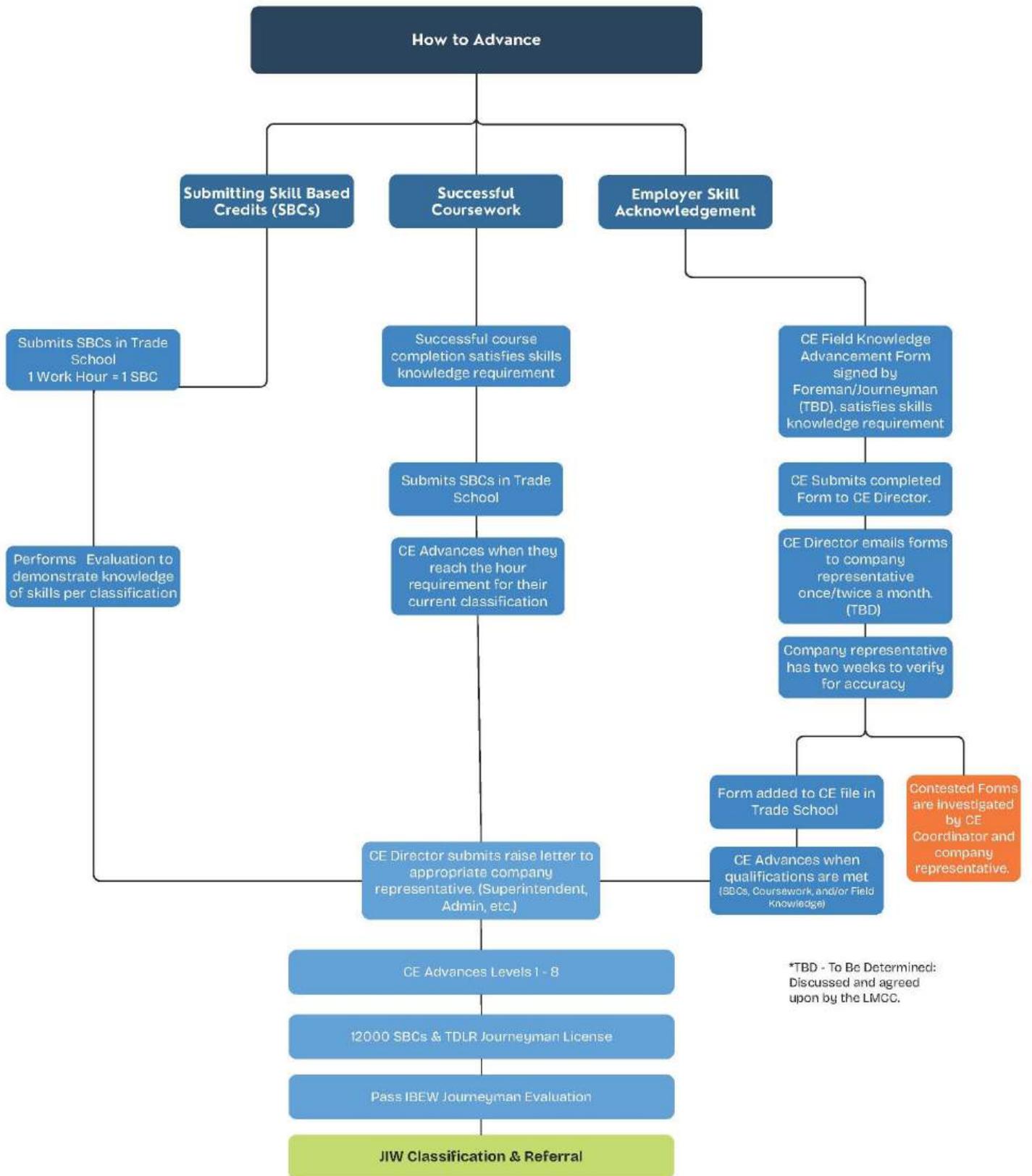
SBCs (Skill Based Credits) are required to advance as a CE. They are used to measure your skill level and show your progress towards becoming a Journeyman. Your initial SBC level is determined by a skills evaluation. This also sets your benefit level.

CE Program Overview

Electricians at IBEW 50 are classified into three categories. Journeymen, Apprentices, and Construction Electricians or "CE's" make up our workforce. The Construction Electrician Program was created to stay competitive with non-union contractors. CE's set their initial pay rate and benefit level by assessing their electrical knowledge with a hands on skills evaluation. The evaluation covers Raceways, Devices, Distribution, Lighting, and Motors. After evaluation the program allows CE's to obtain raises by acquiring additional skills and logging on the job work hours. IBEW Local Union 520 also provides journeyman preparation such as Basic Code and Codeology classes to help CE's obtain their journeyman license.



THE CE PROGRAM



All members of Local 520, except for members classified as CE 1 are eligible for Health Insurance. The Health Insurance is part of your benefits package and is not deducted from your check.

PLANS

We offer 2 plans. Your plan is based on your classification.

Plan A - Deductible \$750 For Single Coverage, Deductible \$2250 for Family Coverage. - Our top of the line plan offered to Journeymen. Covers the entire family.

Plan B - Deductible \$1000 For Single Coverage, Deductible \$3000 for Family Coverage. - Has slightly higher deductibles and reduced prescription coverage than the A plan. Offered all Sub-Journeyman with the exception of CE 1s. Covers the entire family.

Insurance starts on the first day of the fifth month after you have joined or become eligible.

Once you get insurance, you have to work at least 140 hours a month to keep it up.

Any hours you work over 140 go into an "hour bank". This hour bank keeps your coverage up if you are out of work or loose your job. You can store up to 420 hours in the hour bank.

A full hour bank will keep your insurance going for 3 months without work.

Your insurance follows YOU. It is not tied to the contractor.

If you get laid off, then take another job with a union contractor right away, you will have no lapse in coverage.



HEALTH INSURANCE

For questions about the Health Insurance, go to the following website:

Blue Cross & Blue Shield

www.BCBSIL.com

PPO Network/ [Blue Cross Blue Shield](#) Group #411089
Claims Administrator: Provider Finder 1-800-810-2583
Customer Service 1-800-367-8309 or www.bcsil.com

Blue Cross Blue Shield can help you with any questions related to benefits and claims information

Pharmacy: [SAV-RX](#) BIN# 006558 ADV / Group# CTXH / PCN# SAVRX
Customer Care 1-866-233-IBEW(4239) or www.SAVRX.com

Precertification: [Blue Cross Blue Shield](#)
Customer Service 1-800-635-1928
Blue Cross Blue Shield can help with any healthcare questions, case management and utilization management. All inpatient admissions and certain out-patient procedures require precertification.

Virtual Care: [MDLIVE](#)
Customer Service 1-888-676-4204 or www.MDLIVE.com/BCBSIL

Vision: [VSP – Vision Savings Pass](#)
Customer Service/Provider Finder 1-800-877-7195 or www.vsp.com/specialoffers
VSP Vision Savings Pass is a discount vision program that offers immediate savings on eye care and eyewear. It is not an insurance plan.

Dental: [Ameritas](#) Policy# I 0-351049-1
Customer Service 1-877-359-8346
Register for your secure account at www.ameritas.com
Your dental plan offers benefits for preventive care, minor and major restorative services, orthodontics, and benefit incentives.

Hearing: [Ameritas](#)
Customer Service 1-877-359-8346
Register for your secure account at www.ameritas.com
Your plan includes hearing exams, hearing aids and hearing aid maintenance benefits with no deductibles.

DOWNLOAD THE BCBS APP



Nobody wants to work forever. In the IBEW, our goal is for our members to be secure in their retirement.

PENSION

The NEBF is part of your benefits package. It pays \$33 per month for every year you work for a union contractor.

The IBEW Pension is paid for with your monthly dues. It pays \$5.50 per month for every year you are a member, whether or not you are working.

So if you work 30 years in the IBEW, and keep up with your dues the whole time, you will get $\$38.50 \times 30$, or \$1,125 per month for LIFE!

The pension is a defined benefit plan. No matter what happens to the stock market you will receive the same amount every month.

ANNUITY

The Annuity Plan works like a 401K, however you don't have to contribute any money out of your check. Most non-union employers will offer a match into a retirement plan, this means you are contributing your own money out of your check to your retirement. With IBEW 520 all retirement contributions are made by the employer. You can ask your contractor to take out more if you want.

Our plan has many options for investing. It is up to you to decide how it is invested.

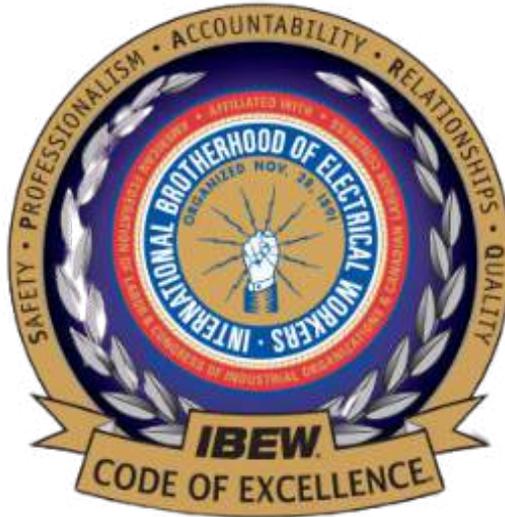
You will need to register your account to get started.

Fund Advisor Kevin Clift is available to help you make a plan for your retirement.



YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES/CODE OF EXCELLENCE

The IBEW Code of Excellence is a program designed to elevate the standards of work and demonstrate the value of IBEW members to employers and customers. It focuses on promoting safe and productive work practices, delivering the highest quality and quantity of work, and utilizing members' skills and abilities to the fullest.



The Key Principles of Code of Excellence

Quality and Quantity

Skill Utilization

Safety and Productivity

Professionalism

Accountability

Customer Satisfaction

Increased Productivity

Enhanced Quality

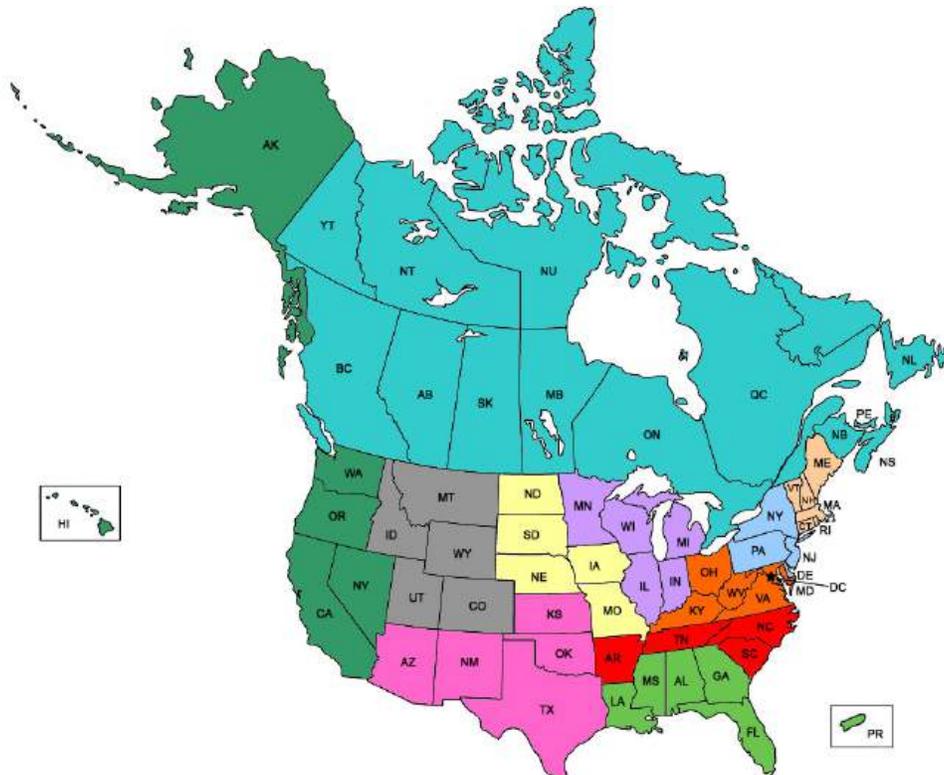
Improved Safety

Stronger Reputation

Competitive Advantage

JURISDICTIONS AND DISTRICTS

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is the largest electrical union in the world with over 800,000 members. The over 800 local jurisdictions cover the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. These areas are broken up into 11 districts. IBEW Local union 520 is in the 7th district. Each district is broken into Locals. IBEW 520 has a jurisdictional map in which we cover all the electricians, contractors, and jobsites.



TRAVELING

All travelers, whether from Local 520 or other Locals, need to be aware of the time it takes for their contribution. Monies and Hours to be communicated and transferred back to their home Local's Benefit Administrator.

See the example below:

1. Your Hours worked in the Month of APRIL are DUE from the Contractors by MAY 15th
2. MAY 15th through end of month is the processing period of contributions by the Local 520 Plan Administrator: (Southwest Service Administrators)
3. Once monies from Contractors have cleared and are confirmed, the process is completed the following Month through ERTS. Per example, no LATER than JUNE 15th

CONCLUSION

Your Hours worked in the Month of APRIL will NOT be in your ERTS ACCOUNT UNTIL JUNE 15th. There is a 72 Day or 2½ Month processing period for hours reported to reflect / show up on your ERTS Account.

PLEASE BE ADVISED

Local 520's insurance Hourly rate may be DIFFERENT THAN YOUR HOME LOCAL's Hourly insurance contribution rate and vice versa.

Example: Local 520's insurance rate is \$5.45/hour
Local 659's insurance rate is \$10.45/hour

PAID-UP DUES RECEIPT

No one wants to give an opportunity to a member from out-of-town who is not current on his or her obligations. Make sure you are current before you leave town.

TRAVEL LETTER

A travel letter is an official letter from Local 520 that verifies your classification and status as an IBEW Union member. Most Locals will not let you sign their out-of-work list without one.

ERTS ACCOUNT

ERTS stands for Electronic Reciprocal Transfer System. By signing up for ERTS, you make sure that the payments that contractors in other areas make towards health insurance and retirement go to the right place to maintain your coverage and increase your retirement account. Failure to sign up for ERTS can mess up your insurance coverage.

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL, IT IS IMPORTANT that you fill out paperwork at the Hall to get your account registered with the ERTS system and the Plan Administrator. If you are unable to come to the office, please call and we will email you the forms so that you can fill them out and get them back before traveling. Once you do this you are ready to work in another IBEW Local Union's jurisdiction.

IBEW Local Union 520 is more than just a job. There are many ways to be involved in our family. Participation in your Local Union is one of our strengths and key to our success. Joining a committee, volunteering in the community, or simply attending our monthly meeting are great ways to help us grow.

- Veterans Committee
- E.W.M.C. - Electrical Workers Minority Caucus
- Picnic Committee
- V.O.C. - Volunteer Organizing Committee
- Women's Committee
- R.E.N.E.W. - Renew Engage Next-Generation of Electrical Workers
- C.O.P.E. - Committee on Political Education

To promote increased participation in our union the Apprentice Scholarship was created. Apprentices get reimbursed for the cost of their tuition by getting involved. Apprentices that attend 7 of the 12 monthly union meetings within the year, complete 4 electives/volunteer events, and attend our New Member Orientation Class . Upon completion of the scholarship requirements apprentice are reimbursed the full amount of tuition.

THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

STEP ONE

**ATTEND 7 OF 12
UNION MEETINGS
WITHIN ONE YEAR**

STEP TWO

**PARTICIPATE
IN 4 ELECTIVES
THROUGHOUT
THE YEAR**

STEP THREE

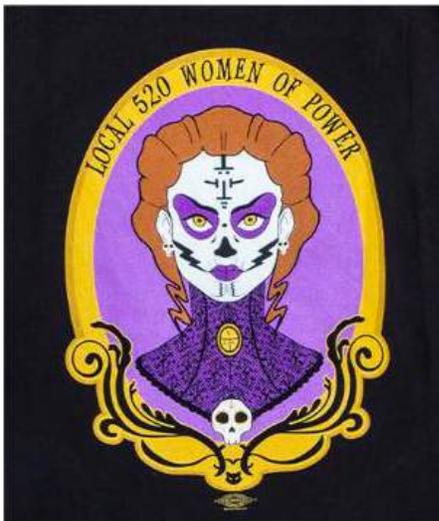
**ATTEND NEW
MEMBER
ORIENTATION
CLASS**

STEP FOUR

**GET REIMBURSED
FOR YOUR
TUITION**

IBEW PRIDE

Many members take pride in being in the IBEW. A great way to show pride is to wear hard-hat stickers, shirts, and other merchandise. Join other members in participating in Red Shirt Thursdays and Hawaiian Shirt Fridays. Come celebrate all our hard work at the union picnic and spring fling. Merchandise can be purchased at the union hall. You can always come get stickers and pencils at the hall from the dues secretary.



The Union protects members rights on the jobsite. If you experience problems on the job filing a grievance can be a possible solution. If you are to be disciplined on the job and you feel it is unjust you can ask for representation.

In a union context, a grievance is: An employee complaint that the employer violated the worker's rights under the law, pursuant to a contract, or as set forth in the employer's workplace policies and procedures. Generally related to the employer's breach of the terms of the collective bargaining agreement. Filed by the union when the employer violates the written terms of the collective bargaining agreement or the just cause standard for disciplining or firing an employee.

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

I believe this discussion and any subsequent meeting could lead to my being disciplined. I therefore request that my union representative or officer be present to assist me now and during the meeting. I further request reasonable time to consult with my union representative regarding the subject and purpose of the meeting prior to the meeting. Please consider this a continuing request; without representation I shall not participate in the discussion. I shall not consent to any searches or tests affecting my person, property, or effects without first consulting with my union representatives.

If you have job site problems the first step is to speak with your supervisor or job steward. A Job Steward is a member appointed by the local 520 business manager to be the representative of the union on the job site. If no solution is met and there no job stewards present, please contact contractenforcement@ibew520.org.

7th District – The IBEW is divided into eleven districts covering all of the United States and Canada. Our Local is part of the 7th District which includes Arizona, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Our District is overseen by one of the International Vice Presidents. Certain policies are set by the 7th District leadership and are common among all of the locals in the district.

AFL-CIO – American Federation of Labor – Congress of Industrial Organizations. The AFL-CIO is an organization that almost every union in America is a part of. We use our power as a group to fight for policies that help working people.

Agreement/Contract/CBA – The legally binding contract that is collectively bargained between the union and the employers.

Apprentice – A member who has been accepted into our Apprenticeship program.

Bump Tickets – Any member of Local 520 can ask any other member to show his or her dues receipt as long as the member is willing to show his or her receipt in return. We do this to show our pride in our membership and to make sure that each of us is fulfilling his or her obligation to the IBEW.

Bylaws – The set of rules that our Local operates under. The bylaws include dues, rules for elections, salaries of officers and staff, etc.

Call – A request for manpower from a contractor. An “open call” is a job that is available for a member to take.

Card Number – A member’s unique number identifying him or her as a member of the IBEW.

CIR – Council on Industrial Relations. This is a group of 6 IBEW Business Managers and 6 Contractors who decide on disputes between Locals and Employers from around the country.

CLC – Central Labor Council. This is the organization of all of the unions in Austin. The CLC meets once a month to help us support each other and make decisions about issues that affect all of us.

Collective Bargaining – Instead of bargaining with employers as individuals, union members bargain with employers as a group, giving them greater bargaining power.

CE – CEs are members who are not journeyman and are also not in our apprenticeship program.

Death Benefit – Our death benefit is life insurance that pays out to a member’s family upon his or her passing.

Dispatcher – The Local staff member responsible for connecting members with jobs.

EWMC – Electrical Workers’ Minority Caucus. This is a committee that advocates for leadership and community involvement among groups that are under-represented in the union electrical industry.

Executive Board – The union members elected to handle union business outside of the monthly union meeting. The Executive Board has all the powers of the membership. Their actions are reviewed and approved at each monthly meeting. They also act as a trial board if members have violated the IBEW Constitution or Bylaws.

Grievance – A dispute between the Local and an employer that cannot be solved on the jobsite. A grievance is solved by a committee of 3 union members and 3 contractors. If this committee can’t come to an agreement, the dispute is solved by a group of IBEW officials and contractors that hear cases from across the country.

Hiring Hall – Our “Hiring Hall” is our procedure for connecting members with jobs. This procedure makes sure that the members who have the first choice of jobs are the ones who have been out of work the longest.

IBEW Constitution – The document that describes how the IBEW is set up as an international organization and lists rules that apply to all members across the United States and Canada.

IO – International Organization. This is the organization of the IBEW that supports Locals across the United States and Canada. It handles issues that affect the entire IBEW and is based in Washington, D.C.

JIW – Journeyman Inside Wireman. A member who has been certified by the IBEW as having Journey-level skills. For Local members this requires a State of Texas Journeyman’s license.

NABTU – National Association of Building Trade Unions. This is the organization of all unions involved in the construction industry. Our local chapter is the Central Texas Building and Construction Trades Council.

NEBF – National Electrical Benefit Fund. This is part of our pension.

NLRB – National Labor Relations Board. The NLRB is the government agency that hears cases involving violations of Labor Laws.

Organizer – The Local staff member responsible for recruiting new members and unionizing the electrical industry.

Out-of-Work Book – The list of members who are available to work. The member who has been on the list the longest has the first choice of available jobs.

President – The union member elected to chair union meetings, appoint members to committees, oversee union finances and enforce the IBEW Constitution.

Referral – The paperwork that shows that you have been offered and accepted a job with a union contractor. You are required to bring this paperwork to the contractor to start work.

RENEW – Reach out and Engage Next generation Electrical Workers. This committee represents the interests of union members under 35. It is meant to help new members get involved with the union.

Robert’s Rules of Order – The set of rules we use to conduct our meetings.

Sign the Book – Putting your name on the out of work list.

Steward – A member appointed by the Local 520 Business Manager to be the representative of the Union on the jobsite.

Swear in – To take the IBEW Obligation at a union meeting.

Ticket – “Ticket” is another word for “dues receipt”. You are supposed to carry your dues receipt with you at all times.

Treasurer – The union member elected to oversee union finances.





HENRY MILLER & THE FOUNDING OF THE IBEW

Henry Miller (1853-1896) began his career at 14 as a water boy for a Texas telegraph crew. He went on to work as a lineman for Western Union and, by 1886, for the St. Louis Municipal Electric Light and Power Company.

In 1890, while working at the St. Louis Exposition, Miller saw the need to unite electrical workers nationwide. That vision became reality in November 1891, when Miller and nine other leaders met in St. Louis for the first convention of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. They drafted a constitution, adopted the iconic fist-and-lightning logo, and elected Miller as the first Grand President.

The founders built the union on six enduring truths: construction powers the economy, requires skill, demands training, weathers boom-and-bust cycles, involves employers of all sizes, and is rooted in local markets.

Today, Miller's legacy lives on at the Henry Miller Museum in St. Louis, opened in 2016 to honor 125 years of IBEW history.



IBEW LOCAL UNION 520
4818 E. BEN WHITE BLVD., AUSTIN, TX 78741
(512) 326-9540
WWW.IBEW520.ORG