

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 700

# 700 STRONG MEMBER BULLETIN

FALL/WINTER 2024 | TEAMSTERSLOCAL700.COM



## FROM THE

## *President*

### Brothers and Sisters,

As we enter into the fall season, we have so many accomplishments to celebrate. From the new union hall to a number of historic contract wins, the State of the Local is strong. As we round out the year I want to update you on some exciting news and victories we've celebrated across Illinois recently.

I'm proud to announce the acquisition of a new headquarters in Lombard that will secure our financial standing for the long term while providing our members with a wonderful place for gatherings and trainings beginning next year.

As a core labor union partner with We Are One Illinois, Local 700 is leading the way in the Fix Tier Two fight. We continue to flex our political muscle and fight to reverse the unfair inequities of diminished pensions for our members who are essential personnel and first responders. You sacrifice and work tirelessly for communities across the state, and you deserve the promise of a fair and equitable retirement.

From the Illinois Tollway winning all backpay and wage adjustments, to the Juvenile Temporary Detention Center winning back thousands of benefit hours to members, Local 700 continues to demand the respect and dignity that you deserve. And there are more battles to be fought!

Local 700 continues to lead the way for labor unions across Illinois, driven by a deep sense of service and commitment to our brothers and sisters in labor. We will continue to the fight to secure historic wage increases and additional benefits for our members and their families. We will utilize all the resources at our disposal to better your way of life, the true heroes of our society. Teamsters Local 700 celebrates you one and all!

Stay strong. Stay safe. Stay united.

Fraternally,

Ramon D. Williams



## TEAMSTERS LOCAL 700 ANNOUNCES HISTORIC PROPERTY ACQUISITION

In August, Teamsters Local 700 completed the historic acquisition of its new headquarters and member center located at 1910 S. Highland Ave. in Lombard, Illinois. The acquisition was approved by the membership at a special meeting in early August.

"This is truly a historic moment in the history of our union," **said Local 700 President Ramon Williams.**

"This new facility will allow us to better serve our members every day with new meeting rooms, a new hall, and new offices for staff. Plus, this income-generating property will bolster our union's finances and ensure that every penny paid in member dues is used as efficiently as possible."

Local 700 has begun the process of building out the new space, which will include training facilities, a meeting hall, and more. The current expected move-in timeline has Local 700 entering the new space in mid-2025.

The Local will continue to keep members updated as the move progresses and looks forward to welcoming members to the new space for years to come!



**1910 S. Highland Ave.**

## MELISSA MOLINA JOINS THE LOCAL 700 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Please welcome the newest Local 700 trustee, Melissa Molina! Melissa was unanimously approved by the current board and will replace William Moskal, who has served Local 700 with distinction.

Melissa has been a Teamster since 2012, beginning her career as a correctional officer with CCDOC. She became a Business Agent in 2021 and serves a number of units across the local.



**Melissa Molina**

"I am so proud to work with members across Local 700, and I look forward to finding additional ways to support our union as a trustee," **said Melissa Molina.** "Local 700 is stronger than ever, and it is that strength that allows us to ensure each member has the strongest voice on the job."

"Melissa has been an outstanding Teamster, and I look forward to welcoming her to the Executive Board," **said Teamsters Local 700 President Ramon Williams.** "Melissa always puts the members first, and her dedication to her job and our local will serve her well in this new role."

Melissa's term on the Executive Board begins immediately.



Happy fall! On the heels of my busiest summer yet with the Local, your legal department has been working nonstop all summer long to meet the expectations of all of our members.

We have succeeded in bringing nearly 100% of all grievance arbitrations in-house. This is a huge accomplishment by the legal department as it allows us to foster and grow our legal team in ways that ensure consistency, dedication, diligence, and loyalty to the membership.

We spent much of the summer taking advantage of our newly bargained-for right to arbitrate discipline matters, as opposed to being forced to take them before the Human Resources Board at the City of Chicago. As a result, we have negotiated numerous meaningful settlements as well as taken several matters to arbitration. The legal department as a whole maintains a winning record and continues to exceed all expectations.

For the City of Chicago this summer, we have settled matters resulting in thousands of dollars in back pay to our members, recouped hundreds of hours of lost time, and returned members back to work. We have multiple settlements in the works and 10 arbitrations scheduled against the City before the end of the year.

In the Clerk's office, we made efforts to finalize several Covid pay cases, returning multiple sick days to our Clerk members. We also concluded the PPP arbitration, maintaining our position that if an Employer seeks to terminate a member for alleged off-duty misconduct, they must be able to prove a relationship between the alleged misconduct and the job.

We negotiated the return of over 1700 hours in benefit and unpaid time for our JTDC members and over 2200 hours for our members at CCDOC,

as well as a recommendation to return a member to work from the CCDOC Merit Board hearing officer. We currently have 21 scheduled arbitration dates pending with that bargaining unit, in addition to 15 pending Merit Board cases.

We have been working tirelessly with other municipalities represented by Local 700 as well. We completed arbitrations, settlements and/or labor board hearings for UIC, Country Club Hills, Niles Fire Department, Prospect Heights Fire Department, IDOT, and the CTA to name a few. We are consistently achieving success after success in our representation of the membership, meeting and exceeding our goals for you, and we will continue to do so.

## **IN MEMORY OF RAFAEL WORDLAW**

In July, Local 700 was devastated to learn of the senseless murder of Rafael Wordlaw, a Local 700 member at the Cook County Department of Corrections. Wordlaw was shot and killed during an attempted robbery at a gas station in West Woodlawn.

"We demand the perpetrator of this horrific crime be brought to justice immediately, and we will work to provide support to all our members impacted by this tragedy," **said President Williams.**

A suspect was later apprehended by the Chicago Police and charged with several offenses, including murder. Local 700 will continue to track the case as it progresses, and our hearts are with Brother Wordlaw's family, friends, and brothers and sisters on the job.



**Rafael Wordlaw**

## LOCAL 700 FUTURES COMMITTEE ORGANIZES TO FIX TIER 2

On September 24, dozens of members of the Local 700 Futures Committee attended a Fix Tier 2 rally at Teamster City in Chicago. The event, hosted by the We Are One Illinois coalition, brought attention to the flawed and unfair Tier 2 pensions impacting many Local 700 members.

CCDOC member Ryan Molina spoke at the event, which brought together hundreds of public employees across the labor movement as well as legislators. Local 700 held a pre-town hall rally for the Futures Committee and other members.

“Tier 2 is unfair and unacceptable to our members,” said **Teamsters Local 700 President Ramon Williams**. “There is no reason why one employee should have a severely diminished pension simply because of their start date. This hurts our members and their families, and it also undermines public safety as we are limited in our able to recruit new members. It’s time to fix Tier 2!”

The town hall was one of eight held across Illinois during September, drawing thousands of union members and many legislators.

The We Are One Illinois coalition will be holding a rally at the state capitol in Springfield on November 13. For more information, visit [www.FixTier2.com](http://www.FixTier2.com)



*Local Members at the Fix Tier 2 Town Hall*

## LOCAL 700 DELIVERS WINS FOR CITY OF CHICAGO MEMBERS

Over the summer, the City of Chicago Department of Aviation denied and revoked Motor Truck Driver promotions to members, stating that the department did not accept candidates with an E restriction on their driver license. However, previously the department had accepted individuals with various limits on their license. The union filed a grievance on behalf of all affected members, which it successfully won.

In February 2024, a Streets and Sanitation employee was suspended for five days for allegedly failing to fill the gas tank of his garbage truck, resulting in it running out of fuel during his route. However, an investigation by Local 700 revealed the employee had followed proper protocol and informed his supervisor about a malfunction in the truck. In fact, truck in question had been driven by someone else the night prior, and it was on its way to the gas station when it unexpectedly ran out of fuel. After meeting with HR, the suspension was overturned, the employee was compensated for the days he had been docked, and his seniority status was restored.

# LOCAL 700

# Quick Wins

## ILLINOIS TOLLWAY

Won all due backpay from last year's historic contract victory over the summer; most members received over \$10,000 in retroactive wage adjustments

## LAGRANGE PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

Members received payouts of \$1,000 each as result of meetings discussing vacation accrual time and uniform allowances

## GLENDALE HEIGHTS PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Ratified a new CBA in July including pay increase and CDL reimbursement

## HAZEL CREST CLERICAL

Won tentative agreement on a new 3-year deal with wage increases of 4.5%, 3.5% and 3.25%, increased uniform allowance and increased longevity payments

## JUVENILE TEMPORARY DETENTION CENTER

Came to settlement agreement and won back 1,760 hours of benefit time back to members

## NORTHWEST MOSQUITO ABATEMENT

Won a \$5.00 starting wage increase, savings on health coverage, and increased sick and vacation time

## SOUTH CHICAGO HEIGHTS PD

Successfully negotiated a successor three-year contract currently awaiting final approval from village board

## STICKNEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Secured a victory on better defining seniority in the part-time unit; seniority will be preserved for up to 14 months while assessing new job.



# COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS UPDATE

## AFTER MULTIPLE INJURIES, LOCAL 700 CALLS FOR ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MEASURES AROUND CCDOC FACILITY

After several incidents of Local 700 members being hit by cars around the Cook County Department of Corrections complex at 26th and California, Local 700 President Ramon Williams announced a new partnership with Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart to advocate for increased pedestrian safety measures.

“Our members have to worry about enough danger on the job, they should not fear for their safety while crossing the street on their way to work,” **said President Williams.** “We have raised this issue multiple times, and are optimistic that we can secure enhanced pedestrian safety measures in the near future. It’s time for action from the city to keep our members safe.”

Improving pedestrian safety, especially on California Ave., is primarily the responsibility of the Chicago Department of Transportation

Local 700 and the Sheriff’s Office will jointly lobby for increased protections not only for CCDOC staff, but for all visitors to the complex. There have been multiple occurrences of pedestrian injuries around the courthouse and jail, with a Local 700 member injured crossing the street last month.

Local 700 will share updates with membership as this process unfolds.



## LOCAL 700 RESPONDS TO DEEPLY TROUBLING ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM

Local 700 was notified about a potential proposal from the Cook County Sheriff’s Office to eliminate the Electronic Monitoring Program, which would impact more than 150 Local 700 members.

Electronic monitoring is a critical public safety mechanism, one that has become increasingly prevalent in recent years.

Electronic monitoring allows law enforcement to ensure offenders are abiding by the terms set forward by a judge, and the CCDOC Electronic Monitoring Program provides the necessary manpower to keep this program operational.

This hasty announcement raises extremely serious concerns about terms and conditions of employment for our members

as outlined in the collective bargaining agreement.

As this process moves forward, please know that Local 700 is ready to fight using every means at its disposal to both protect public safety and protect the rights of our members. Our communities, our public safety, and our members are absolutely paramount.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: TEAMSTER TRUCK DRIVER, BILL MATEJA

In the world of everyday heroes, few stories shine as brightly as that of Bill Mateja, a dedicated Teamster Motor Truck Driver with a remarkable 22 years of service. Currently working at the Water Reclamation District, Bill's commitment to his job extends far beyond the call of duty, as he recently demonstrated during a life-or-death emergency on September 16, 2024.

On that fateful day, Bill was part of a crew tasked with addressing a leaking valve in a sewer vault just east of Central on 39th Street. The situation escalated quickly when laborer Jose Escobedo, equipped with an air tank, entered the vault to cut off the valve. Minutes later, Bill peered into the vault and was met with a horrifying sight: Jose's body was limp, and he was unresponsive.

Without hesitation, Bill sprang into action. He leaned into the sewer vault and lifted Jose out, his instincts and training kicking in as he assessed the dire situation. Jose had turned blue, a sure sign of the hazardous environment he had been exposed to, filled with dangerous hydrogen sulfide gas.

Bill didn't waste a moment. As soon as he had Jose safely above ground, he began performing CPR. His quick and decisive actions proved to be lifesaving. After a few tense minutes, Jose began to regain consciousness, much to Bill's relief. Shortly thereafter, the Stickney EMTs arrived, rushing Jose to the hospital for further care.

**"BILL MATEJA'S HEROISM IS A TESTAMENT TO THE COURAGE AND COMMITMENT OF THOSE WHO PUT OTHERS' LIVES BEFORE THEIR OWN."**

Thanks to Bill's swift intervention and unwavering determination, Jose is now expected to make a full recovery. Medical professionals noted that if it weren't for Bill's rapid response, the outcome could have been tragically different.

Bill Mateja's heroism is a testament to the courage and commitment of those who put others' lives before their own. His actions serve as a powerful reminder of the impact one individual can have in a critical moment, embodying the spirit of true heroism within the community.



**Bill Mateja**

### NOTICE

*Teamsters Local 700 allocates .50 cents from the dues of each member per month to the Teamsters Local 700 Political Action and Legislation Committee Fund.*

# NOTICE OF NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION 700 OFFICERS

Teamsters Local 700 will conduct its nomination of officers at the general membership meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2024. The meeting will take place at 6:00 p.m. at the Teamsters Local 700 First Floor Meeting Hall, 1300 W. Higgins Rd. in Park Ridge, IL.

Later this month, Local 700 members will receive an official Notice of Nomination and Election via U.S. Mail which will include all relevant procedures and details. Please make sure the Union has your updated mailing address. If you need to update your mailing address please call Local 700 at 847-939-9700.

## UPCOMING MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

**October 8, 2024**  
**November 12, 2024**  
**December 10, 2024**

All meetings held at 6:00 p.m.  
Teamsters Local 700  
First Floor Meeting Hall  
1300 W. Higgins Rd.  
Park Ridge, IL 60068



## SAVE THE DATE:

**FIX TIER 2 RALLY**

Local 700 is a member of the We Are One Illinois coalition of unions fighting for better retirement benefits for public workers. Join the We Are One Illinois at the Fix Tier 2 Rally in Springfield!

**November 13, 2024**  
**Illinois State Capitol**  
**Springfield, IL**

**Learn more or RSVP at [www.fixtier2.com](http://www.fixtier2.com)**