

CONTRACT SETTLEMENT

Between

SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION,
LOCAL 500, CtW

And

WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE NEWS GUILD,
LOCAL 32035

July 1, 2023 through September 30, 2026



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This agreement is made effective this first day of July, 2023, between Service Employees International Union, Local 500 (hereinafter referred to as “Employer”), a non-profit labor organization, and the Washington-Baltimore News Guild (hereinafter referred to as the “Guild”) chartered by The News Guild-CWA, AFL-CIO, CLC, as Local #32035, for itself and on behalf of all the employees described in Article 1.

ARTICLE 1 – COVERAGE

1. This Agreement covers all employees of the Employer.
2. The following are excluded from this agreement: all officers as well as all managerial, supervisory and confidential employees of the Employer, as defined in the National Labor Relations Act.

ARTICLE 2 – UNION SECURITY

1. It shall be a condition of employment that all employees covered by this agreement who are members of the Guild in good standing on the effective date of this agreement shall remain members in good standing and those who are not members on the effective date of this agreement shall become and remain members in good standing in the Guild. It shall also be a condition of employment that all employees covered by this agreement and hired on or after its effective date shall, on or after the thirtieth day following the beginning of such employment, become and remain members in good standing in the Guild. The foregoing provisions shall be effective in accordance and consistent with applicable provisions of federal and state laws.
2. The Guild agrees that it will admit to and retain in membership any such employee subject to the provisions of the Constitution of the News Guild and the by-laws of the Washington-Baltimore News Guild.
3. The Employer shall, in compliance with all applicable law, deduct biweekly from the salary check of each employee, and shall remit to the Guild not later than the tenth (10th) day of the following month, all dues and assessments levied by the Guild for the current month. Further, the Guild agrees to indemnify and hold the Employer harmless against any and all claims or other liability arising out of implementation of this provision, or by reason of action taken or not taken by the Employer to comply with this article.
4. The Employer shall consult with the Guild before hiring temporary employees for a period of up to six (6) months, with extensions beyond that date subject to agreement with the Guild. It is further agreed that upon these jobs becoming permanent, negotiations will begin immediately with the Guild to cover these jobs under the contract. Temporary employees shall not be used where, in effect, they would displace a regular full-time employee.
5. If the Employer engages a contracted employee for bargaining unit work, it shall notify the Guild. Should the contracted employee’s period of work go beyond twelve (12)

months, the Employer will consult with the Guild regarding the extension of their work. It is further agreed that upon these jobs becoming permanent, negotiations will begin immediately with the Guild to cover these jobs under the contract. Contracted employees shall not be used where, in effect, they would displace a regular full-time employee.

6. The Employer and the Guild each agrees not to discriminate against employees because of age, sex, race, creed, color, sexual orientation or preference, national origin, or disability not affecting their ability to perform the duties of a position.
7. There shall be no interference or attempt to interfere with the operation of the Guild in the performance of its duties as the bargaining agent for the employees covered by this agreement.
8. The SEIU Local 500 Guild Unit shall be permitted to use the Employer's premises for membership meetings at least once monthly.

ARTICLE 3 – MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

All management functions, rights and responsibilities that have not been modified or restricted by a specific provision of this Agreement are retained and vested exclusively in SEIU, including but not limited to the exclusive right to manage, operate and administer the business and operations of SEIU Local 500; to determine the nature, scope and structure of SEIU Local 500's operations; to determine job content; to determine the methods by which work is to be performed; and to establish, modify, maintain, and enforce work rules.

ARTICLE 4 - INFORMATION FURNISHED TO THE GUILD

1. Unless otherwise specified, the term "the Guild" shall include the assigned staff of the Washington-Baltimore News Guild.
2. An employee and the Guild shall have the right to review the employee's files at any time and, upon request, shall be provided copies of all material in the employee's file. An employee shall have the right to file an answer to any material submitted for inclusion in the employee's file and such answer shall be attached to the file copy.
3. Bulletin Boards - The Employer agrees to provide a bulletin board in close proximity to guild members' work locations for the use of the Guild.
4. Upon request, the Employer agrees to supply the Guild quarterly with a salary list of all employees covered by the Guild bargaining unit, showing name, address, personal email, personal phone number, gender, pronouns (if disclosed), ethnicity (if disclosed), date of birth, date of hiring, job title, rate of pay and step placement. The Employer agrees to include with each month's dues remittance, a listing of any new unit members hired or unit members who

have separated since the previous remittance. Information on new hires shall include date of hire, job title and rate of pay.

5. The Employer shall notify the Guild within thirty (30) days by email of:
 - a. New unit employees, including all the information required in Section 4, to the extent the Employer has it.
 - b. Any resignations, terminations, retirements, and deaths of employees
 - c. Names of employees of the International Union assigned to SEIU Local 500, temporary employees who will be working for less than 6 months, for what purpose or project they have been hired; and for what length of time
 - d. Changes in job title and salary with effective date
 - e. Employees who are starting a transitional period according to Article 5
6. Once each year, the Guild agrees to provide Local 500 with a listing of current Guild Officers and staff assigned to servicing the Local 500 bargaining unit, their office address and business telephone numbers. In addition, the Guild agrees to provide and periodically update a list of Guild staff who should be permitted access to Local 500 offices under terms of Article 2 of this agreement.

ARTICLE 5 – SENIORITY & SECURITY

1. Whenever seniority is referred to in this Agreement, it shall include all service with the Employer since the employee's original date of hire. Except for reduction in force purposes and probationary period purposes, work for the International Union while assigned to SEIU Local 500 or as an Organizer-in-Training at the International Union irrespective of assignment for a cumulative total of six (6) months during a continuous eight (8) month period shall apply.
2.
 - a. The probationary period for all unit members shall be six months.
 - b. Probationary employees shall receive an evaluation of their work after three (3) months and five (5) months of employment. As a result of this performance review, the employer may elect to take one (1) of the following actions:
 - Place the employee on a performance improvement plan;
 - Extend the probationary period for a period up to an additional sixty (60) days, provided that the employer shall notify the Guild of any such extension and that only one (1) such extension is permitted;

- End the probationary period and grant the employee regular status in the position; or
- Remove the employee from the position.

c. When an employee applies for and receives a promotion or transfer, they shall serve a transitional period of four (4) months following their first date of employment in the new position.

The employee shall receive an evaluation of their work after three (3) months of employment in the new role. As a result of this performance review, the employer may elect to take one (1) of the following actions:

- Place the employee on a performance improvement plan;
- End the transitional period and grant the employee regular status in the position; or
- Remove the employee from the position.

If the employee is removed from the position by the employer or if the employee does not wish to continue in the position during the transitional period, the employee will be moved back into their former positions, provided there is an opening. If the employee's former position is not open, the employee will be placed on a recall list as described in Article 8, 4.

d. The Employer shall have the unlimited right to discharge a new employee who has not concluded the probationary period.

3. Employees who have completed the probationary period shall not be subject to discipline or discharge except for just cause.

Except in the case of gross misconduct, discipline shall be applied progressively by SEIU Local 500 within 20 working days of the event(s) giving rise to the discipline, or the discovery of the event(s) if later. Discipline will generally begin at Step 1, however, based on the severity of the event giving rise to the discipline, may start on Step 2 or higher. The steps for progressive discipline are:

Step 1: Informal verbal warning codified in email

Step 2: Written warning

Step 3: Final written warning or a Performance Improvement Plan as appropriate

Step 4: Termination or resignation in lieu of termination

4. Employees who have completed their probationary period and are discharged for other than gross misconduct shall be given two (2) weeks' notice, or two (2) week's pay in lieu of notice.

5. The Guild shall be notified in writing, simultaneously with the employee, of any discharge.
6. Any written notice of discipline given to an employee will include the following message, "You have the right to have this notice furnished by SEIU Local 500 to a representative of the Washington-Baltimore News Guild." The Employer will honor the request if the employee responds that they would like to exercise that right.
7. Written documentation of oral or written warnings or disciplinary action in an employee's personnel file shall not be used to support disciplinary action after eighteen (18) months from the date the written documentation or oral or written warnings or disciplinary action was placed in the file during the eighteen (18) months.

ARTICLE 6 - EVALUATIONS

1. Employees shall receive a written evaluation of their performance, based on their job description, from their supervisor annually. The metrics of such evaluations will be presented to and discussed within the JLMC.
2. The purpose of annual performance evaluations are:
 - a. To review the employee's achievement of their previously set goals;
 - b. To mutually set future goals;
 - c. For the employee and supervisor to discuss their working relationship (and overall working relationships throughout the organization);
 - d. To assess the employee's current job description and title, and whether any necessary adjustments will be made.
3. The contents of annual performance evaluations are not considered discipline; however, it is understood that unsatisfactory job performance can be grounds for separation from SEIU Local 500.
4. Union members will provide feedback to their supervisors during the performance review period. The purpose of this feedback is to help strengthen the relationship between the employee and their supervisor while also providing a mechanism to hold supervisors accountable. The JLMC will explore ways for employees to provide structured feedback to supervisors.
5. If performance is assessed as unsatisfactory or in need of improvement, a supervisor may create a Performance Improvement Plan with the employee.
 - a. The Employee will be given the opportunity to identify the tools needed to be successful and together with their supervisor will create a Performance Improvement Plan. The performance Improvement Plan will clearly identify goals and objectives to give the employee the tools necessary to be successful. The employee and the supervisor will meet regularly to review the Plan and progress towards the goals.
 - b. The supervisor will provide regular written feedback detailing the employees progress during the performance Improvement Plan.

- c. At the end of the Personal Improvement Plan, the supervisor and employee will meet to review progress towards the goals.
 - i. If the employee has improved based on the Plan, they will return to a normal work plan with relaxed supervision to include planning meetings and goal checks.
 - ii. If sufficient progress was not made or only partial progress was made, the employer shall determine whether additional time would support the employee toward reaching their goals.
 - iii. After all reasonable efforts have been exhausted, if the employee is still not meeting performance goals, the employee may be separated from SEIU Local 500.

ARTICLE 7 – FILLING OF VACANCIES

1. The Guild shall be notified of all openings covered by this agreement. The Employer recognizes the importance of seniority and desirability of filling vacancies by promotion and, accordingly, will first give consideration to qualified employees within the unit and their level of seniority in the filling of vacancies.
2. When a vacancy occurs, the Employer shall post the opening for seven (7) working days, to give employees the opportunity to apply for the vacant position and will not interview outside candidates during that period. Internal candidates meeting the minimum qualifications for the position will be ensured of an interview prior to the position being filled.
3. All bargaining unit employees who have applied for a specific bargaining unit position will be notified if they are not selected and will be informed why they were not selected. Non-selected candidates who have interviewed for a position may request specific feedback.

ARTICLE 8 – LAYOFF/RIF

1. Layoffs and reductions in force shall be by seniority within job classifications. The Guild shall be notified three (3) weeks in advance of any layoff or reduction in force.
2. A laid-off employee shall have the right to bump any less senior employee in a different classification as long as they have previously held the position with Local 500, provided the employee successfully completed their probationary period in the previously held position and that the employee's most recent evaluation in the previous position, if any, was at a "meets competency" level.
3. Employees terminated from employment because of a layoff or reduction in force shall receive three (3) weeks' notice or three (3) weeks' pay in lieu of notice and two (2) weeks'

severance pay for each year or major portion thereof of employment. In addition, such employees shall continue to be covered at the Employer's expense with their health insurance coverage until re-employed or for six (6) months whichever occurs first.

4. Each employee laid off to reduce the force shall be placed upon a recall list for two (2) years. Said laid-off employees shall be notified, sent by email and regular mail to the employee's last known email and address, by the Employer of openings covered by this Agreement and shall be able to apply for vacant positions in accordance with Article 7
5. Time spent on a recall list by a laid-off employee shall not constitute a break in continuity of service and seniority.

ARTICLE 9 – GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. A grievance within the meaning of this Agreement shall be any dispute concerning the interpretation, application or claimed violation of a specific term or provision of the Agreement. A prompt and efficient method of settling grievances, as herein defined, is both desirable and necessary. This is the sole and exclusive procedure for the resolution of grievances under this Agreement.
2. Informal Resolution. The parties may first try to resolve a grievance informally. This may involve an informal discussion between the Employee and their supervisor and at the employee's discretion, a Guild representative will participate in this meeting. Resolutions reached during the informal grievance stage will be non-precedent setting. Grievances that are not settled informally will be processed as a formal grievance.
3. Formal Resolution.

Step 1.

An aggrieved employee or the Guild shall present a grievance within twenty (20) work days of the action giving rise to the complaint, or twenty (20) work days of when the grieving party should have been aware of the grievable action. Step 1 grievances shall be filed with the employee's immediate supervisor. The Employer will meet with the grievant within five (5) work days to discuss the grievance, the five (5) work day period may be extended by mutual agreement. The Employer shall respond in writing within fifteen (15) work days of the initial meeting. If the grieving party is dissatisfied with the response, they may proceed to Step 2.

Step 2.

Within fifteen (15) work days following receipt of the Step 1 written response, the grieving party shall submit the grievance to Step 2. The grievance shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Director of SEIU Local 500 or their designee. The Executive Director or their designee will meet with the grievant within five (5) work days to discuss the grievance, the five (5) work day period may be extended by mutual agreement. The Executive Director or their

designee shall respond in writing within fifteen (15) days of the initial meeting. If the grieving party is dissatisfied with the response, they may proceed to arbitration.

The Guild may initiate a grievance over the discharge of an employee at Step 2.

Arbitration.

If a settlement is not reached in the grievance process outlined above, and the grievance is subject to arbitration under this Agreement, then the Guild may file a demand for arbitration with SEIU Local 500 and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) or American Arbitration Association (AAA) in accordance with this Article. Such demand shall be filed within fifteen (15) work days of the delivery of the written response in Step 2. If the Guild does not file the demand for arbitration within this time period, the grievance shall be deemed waived and shall not be subject of further discussions or appeal through arbitration.

The Guild shall submit a request for a list of arbitrators with the FMCS or AAA at the same time as filing the demand for arbitration. The Guild shall include SEIU Local 500's Executive Director as SEIU Local 500's contact on this request. The arbitrator shall be appointed by the parties from the list supplied by the FMCS or AAA and in accordance with the FMCS or AAA procedures and time limits for selecting arbitrators or within ten (10) working days of receipt, whichever is shorter. The arbitrator will be selected from the list by the parties alternately striking one name each. The parties shall alternate making the first strike. The person whose name remains of the list shall be designated as the arbitrator. Each party has a right to request a new list once per arbitration.

The arbitrator shall have no power to add to, subtract from, modify or disregard any of the provisions of this Agreement.

The costs of arbitration shall be borne equally by the parties, except that no party shall be obligated to pay any part of the cost of a stenographic transcript without express consent.

4. Failure to file a grievance in a timely fashion in one instance shall not preclude filing on a similar issue which occurs subsequently.
5. The term "grievant" shall be considered to include: any individual staff member, a group of staff members or the Guild.

ARTICLE 10 – HOURS

1. The regular workweek for employees not assigned to field assignments, or who are nonexempt employees shall be five days, Monday through Friday. The regular work day shall be eight hours, in addition to one (1) hour duty free. Non-exempt employees are also allowed one fifteen-minute paid break for every four hours of work time. The break(s) shall be scheduled at such time(s) as approved by the supervisor. The timing of breaks may be adjusted by the supervisor for operational or programmatic reasons. In the event an employee does not take or receive a break, there shall be no impact on the employee's compensation as a result

2. Employees other than Field Representatives and Organizers or similar employees shall be paid overtime at the rate of 1 ½ times their hourly rate of pay for time worked over 40 hours in a week. Overtime must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor prior to beginning overtime work. Employees required to perform overtime work on weekends and holidays shall be guaranteed a minimum of three hours pay.
3. Contract Administration Representatives, Contract Administration Representation Coordinators, Member Strength Organizers, Member Strength Coordinators, Organizers, Senior Organizers, Coordinators for Member Political Engagement, and similar employees will be granted four (4) compensatory days per year in recognition of their status as exempt employees with irregular hours.

Overtime is not paid in these positions. In extraordinary situations, such employees may request additional compensatory time from their supervisor. Such requests will not be unreasonably denied. Compensatory time shall not carry over past the leave year in which it was granted. Unused time shall be lost. It is understood that holidays and weekends are normally time off of work. For organizers, other than when necessitated by organizing campaign needs, it is understood that holidays and weekends are normally time off of work. There should normally be a program related reason for work on these days. Such work should not become routine for all non-hourly staff.

Employees have the ability to flex time throughout the work week to adjust to their schedule/needs, and the schedules/needs of the staff and workers with whom they are working with the approval of their supervisor.

4. A part-time employee is one hired to work regularly less than the work week provided in Section 1 of this Article. A part-time employee shall advance on the schedule of minimum salaries and shall receive all benefits depending on length of service according to the length of employment with the Employer, and not according to the actual hours worked. A part-time employee shall receive all benefits under this agreement on a pro-rata basis, except that a part-time employee hired to regularly work thirty (30) hours or more per week shall be granted full coverage under Article 14, Sections 1 and 2 of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 11 – TELEWORK

1. Employees who wish to telework will need to request a telework schedule from their supervisor. Approval for telework will not be unreasonably denied.
2. The supervisor of each department will set up a telework schedule with the members of their department who wish to telework. The schedule for each department will be based on the operational needs of the employer. Telework schedules will give preference in accordance with seniority, however if there is any disagreement the Employer shall have sole authority to determine the schedule. If the telework schedule changes due to operational needs, Employees shall be given at least one week notice, when possible.

3. Telework privileges can be revoked by the Employer at any time based on the employee's demonstrated quality of work or for operational needs.
4. Not all Guild positions will be eligible for telework. Eligibility will be determined by the Employer. At the time of ratification, all bargaining unit positions, with the exception of Administrative Support Professionals, are eligible for, at minimum, 2 days of telework per week.

ARTICLE 12 – CLASSIFICATION AND SALARY SCHEDULE

1. The salaries effective July 1, 2023 and thereafter for the classifications covered by this Agreement are set forth in Appendix A attached hereto and by this reference made a part of this Agreement.

The parties agree that a 5.2% increase shall be applied to all rates, effective July 1, 2023. Database Operations Associates and Administrative Support Professionals shall receive an additional 3% increase.

As of July 1, 2023, institute Step G (2% increase over Step F) on the next anniversary date after July 1, 2023.

As of October 1, 2024, the parties agree that a 3% increase shall be applied to all rates. Database Operations Associates and Administrative Support Professionals shall receive an additional 3% increase

The parties agree to meet no later than April 1, 2025, to bargain wages for the third year of this agreement that will result in no less than a 1% increase. The negotiated wages will be effective as of October 1, 2025.

The parties agree that all employees will advance to the next appropriate step on their anniversary date during each year of this agreement.

2. The Employer agrees to discuss with the Guild any proposal to abolish, create, or reclassify jobs which fall within the bargaining unit.
3. There shall be no reduction in salaries.
4. Payment of salary shall be made bi-weekly.
5. Employees shall receive an annual holiday pay equivalent to one week's gross wages, less required tax deductions, prior to December 25. Employees with less than one year's service as of December 1 shall receive holiday pay pro-rated according to the number of months in which employed up to December 1.

6. An Employee with ten (10) years of services with SEIU Local 500 will receive a one-time longevity bonus of one thousand (1,000) dollars. An Employee with fifteen (15) years of services will receive a one-time longevity bonus of one thousand five hundred (1,500) dollars. Employees with twenty (20) years of service will receive a one-time longevity bonus of two thousand (2,000) dollars. Employees with twenty-five (25) years of service will receive a one-time longevity bonus of two thousand five hundred (2,500) dollars. Employees' longevity increases will be tied to their date of hire, and be paid in the first full pay period after their anniversary date. Upon ratification, current employees shall receive the last bonus they are entitled to, based on years of service. For example, an employee who has 23 years of service will receive the twenty year bonus upon ratification.
7. Employees who feel they are improperly placed on the salary schedule may request an adjustment in their pay to their direct supervisor and the Executive Director within thirty (30) days of the end of their probationary period or within thirty (30) days of the ratification of this agreement. The supervisor will confer with the employee and communicate the decision in writing on the adjustment within thirty (30) days from the date the request was filed. Requests shall not be unreasonably denied. No request shall result in the reduction of salary or benefits for an employee.
8. During the first year of this agreement, the Employer shall create a Member Services Coordinator position in the Member Services Department. The purpose of this position will include, but not be limited to, providing assistance to the Director of Member Services and Operations in programmatic leadership for the department, to assist in providing professional development to the database staff, and to provide supplemental guidance and support to other database operations associates.

The Employer further agrees that when the position is created it will be in the Guild bargaining unit, and the Employer will confer with the Guild regarding a job description for the position, prior to adoption. Decisions with respect to filling the position shall be determined by the Employer.

ARTICLE 13 – VACATIONS

1. Vacations with pay shall be granted employees as follows:
 - a) Upon hire, fifteen (15) days. These days must be used by the employees first anniversary date and are not eligible for payout should the employee leave SEIU Local 500 before their first anniversary date.
 - b) After one year, fifteen (15) days shall be granted annually on the employee's anniversary date, and
 - c) After four years, the number of days granted annually shall be increased to twenty (20) days, and

- d) After ten (10) years, the number of days granted annually shall be increased to twenty-five (25) days.
2. The vacation schedule shall be agreed upon by mutual consent, but employees shall have preference in accordance with seniority. In the event employees choose the same day for vacation requests, the employee whose request was approved first shall prevail. If there is any disagreement the Employer shall have sole authority to determine the vacation period(s).
3. Upon termination of employment after completing the probationary period, an employee (or the employee's estate in case of death) shall receive pay for any unused and accrued vacation. However, vacation that is carried over as described in this article is not eligible for payout.
4. Employees should make every effort to use earned vacation during the year of entitlement. However, an employee may carry over up to 5 days of vacation for use in the next vacation year or receive payment for the unused vacation. Such rollover or payout can only occur once every two (2) years.
5. Other than times described in sections 3 and 4 above, unused leave will not be carried over or cashed out.

ARTICLE 14 – HOLIDAYS

1. The Employer shall allow time off with pay for the following holidays: Work days during the period Christmas Eve's Day through New Year's Day shall be considered paid holidays, Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday, President's Day, Good Friday, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Indigenous People's Day, the day before Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving, Friday following Thanksgiving, Employee's birthday, and Juneteenth. Employees may request to substitute another religious or cultural observance of importance to the employee in place of one of the following: Easter Monday, Good Friday, President's Day, the day before Thanksgiving or Juneteenth. Employees intending to make this substitution shall notify their supervisor no later than the July 1st immediately preceding the Holiday(s) they intend to substitute.

SEIU Local 500 will endeavor to ensure that employees will not need to work on holidays. Should their supervisor approve that a non-exempt employee work on a scheduled paid holiday, they will either receive another day off with pay to be used within two (2) months or will be paid for eight (8) hours at 1.5 times their normal salary, at the employee's discretion.

Exempt employees who work on a scheduled paid holiday at the approval of their supervisor will get to use their day off within two (2) months unless other arrangements are made with their supervisor.

2. An employee who has completed one year of employment may select four (4) personal holidays per year, subject to the Employer's operating requirements. After ninety days of employment, newly hired employees may elect to use one personal holiday, subject to the operational needs of the Employer and to be deducted from the calendar year accrual. Unused personal days, as of an employee's anniversary date, will be converted to sick leave.

ARTICLE 15 – GROUP INSURANCE & RETIREMENT

1. The Local shall pay the monthly premium for health insurance for employees and 95% of the additional cost for dependent coverage group health insurance, group dental insurance, and group vision. For a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) provided under this Article, as allowed by law, the Local shall contribute to a health savings account (HSA) for each eligible employee, in the amount of \$1850/year for individual coverage and \$3700/year for family or dependent coverage if the insurance provider and plan remains the same. Should the plan provider change and/or plan change, then the HSA employer contribution and premium cost will be determined based on current percentages cost share. However, Employer contributions to Health Saving Accounts are subject to IRS limits. All determinations of eligibility of benefits under any type of health plan offered by the Employer shall be subject to the terms of the applicable plan and the processes and procedures of the plan's insurance carrier, and the carrier's decisions, procedures, and processes shall not be subject the grievance and arbitration provisions of Article 9 of this agreement
2. The Employer shall provide life insurance to employees for two times the employee's salary, as stated in Appendix A of this agreement, with a maximum benefit of \$200,000.
3. All employees shall be participants in the SEIU Affiliates, Officers, and Employees Fund according to the terms of that fund.
4. The Employer shall maintain the SEIU 401 (K) program for bargaining unit employees. It is understood that the Employer shall make no matching contributions to those made by bargaining unit employees
5. The Employer shall provide long-term disability insurance beginning with no more than a ninety-day waiting period for benefits.
6. The Employer shall provide orientation for all new employees and provide them with a copy of this agreement and other relevant information, including, but not limited to, health insurance, retirement and time keeping.
7. The parties agreeing that health insurance is a concern for both sides, agree to establish a Health Insurance Committee to seek and examine quality insurance products and determine and recommend insurance plans. The committee shall be subject to the following provisions:

- a. The Committee shall be comprised of three (3) Employer representatives and three (3) Guild Staff representatives.
 - b. The Committee will determine its agenda, process, means of communication to staff, and how it will proceed.
 - c. The Committee will convene annually at mutually agreed upon times between the Employer and the Guild Staff.
 - d. The Committee's recommendations, if accepted by the employer and the Guild, will be implemented. The approved recommendation shall be implemented as soon as practicable.
8. If the insurance Committee has not reached an agreed upon recommendation by the time the Employer is notified of new rates for each plan year, the employer will give the Guild notification of any insurance changes within five (5) business days of receipt of receiving the renewal quote or changes from the plan provider. The Employer shall provide the Guild with the scheduled date for notifying the insurance provider of the plan choice and/or rate changes. The Guild will respond to the Employer with notification of their position on the health insurance decision within twenty (20) business days of receipt of information to allow the Insurance committee sufficient time to evaluate alternative potential plan options.

In 2024, the parties agree to discuss plan options provided by the United Furniture Workers Insurance Fund.

ARTICLE 16 – SICK LEAVE

1. Employees shall accrue sick leave at a rate of one day per month. Sick leave days shall accrue to a maximum of seventy (70) days.
2. New Employees will start with five (5) days of sick leave at time of hire. New employees will begin to accrue sick leave during their sixth month of employment.
3. The Employer may require a physician's or dentist's certificate of illness following three (3) consecutive sick days.
4. Physical inability to work due to pregnancy or childbirth will be considered to be the same as inability to work due to sickness.
5. Employees with four (4) years of seniority shall be able to cash out thirty percent (30%) of their accrued sick leave upon termination of employment from Local 500 and employees with five (5) or more years of seniority shall be able to cash out forty percent (40%) of their accrued sick leave upon termination of employment from Local 500, provided that termination was for reasons other than gross misconduct.

ARTICLE 17 – LEAVES OF ABSENCE

1. On employee request, a leave of absence shall be granted to an employee elected or appointed as a delegate to attend conventions of The News Guild or special meetings called by The News Guild or by a branch thereof on the following conditions:
 - a) No more than one Field Representative or Organizer shall be on leave at the same time.
 - b) No more than two (2) employees will be entitled to be on leave at the same time.
 - c) An employee shall be entitled to no more than five (5) consecutive days of leave at any one time and there shall be an entitlement to no more than fifteen (15) days total leave for all employees per calendar year.
 - d) All leave hereunder shall be unpaid.
2. An employee, on the birth or adoption of their child, shall be permitted to take child rearing leave of up to twelve (12) weeks with pay and without loss of seniority or benefits. At the request of the employee, the last week of paid parental leave may be scheduled and taken in half-day increments (example: The employee may take eleven (11) weeks of child rearing leave as full days, followed by 2 weeks taken in half-day increments). Starting January 1, 2025, when the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program – Modifications (Maryland Time to Care Act) goes into effect, employees will receive leave payment through the Maryland Time to Care act with SEIU Local 500 making up the difference so the employee will receive their full pay.
3. Employees will be provided with full pay during periods of required jury service. Employees may be granted up to four (4) days of paid leave for service resulting from a subpoena for a criminal case, where the employee is not the defendant. Requests for such leave must be made in advance and submitted with a copy of the subpoena.
4. Employees shall be allowed five (5) days compassionate leave without loss of pay in the event of death in the immediate family, which shall be limited to spouse or person with whom the employee immediately beforehand shared a residence, child or parent (in either case natural, foster, step or in-law), sibling, aunt, uncle, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, or spouse's grandparent. The employee may request compassionate leave through their supervisor for someone who is viewed in an equivalent familial role, who is not identified above. With prior notification and approval from the Employer, the employee may take the compassionate leave over five (5) workdays, which begin prior to, but include the date of the decedent's passing. The Employer shall not unreasonably deny requests to adjust part or all of the compassionate leave to accommodate funeral arrangements provided that the total period of compassionate leave does not exceed five (5) workdays. The five (5) days must be used within sixty (60) days after the decedent's passing. Verification of the funeral date shall be provided at the Employer's request, upon the Employee's return. Bereavement leave may be used for miscarriage. Medical verification may be requested by the Employer.

5. Employees who donate blood will be allowed a maximum paid leave of one-half (1/2) day to recuperate.
6. Employees who are parents, grandparents or legal guardians of school children from kindergarten through grade twelve (12) shall be allowed to take up to four (4) hours of paid time off per school semester to visit their child's school. The time must be requested and approved by their supervisor at least two (2) weeks in advance.
7. Employees shall be entitled to spend one (1) day per year on paid time performing a community service. The time off for said purpose must be requested and approved by the employee's supervisor at least two (2) weeks in advance. Verification of participation in the service may be required by the employer.
8. Employees who are lactating parents will be given reasonable flexibility, to take breaks required to pump sufficient breast milk.
9. Under conditions of inclement weather or other state of emergency, as determined by the Employer, employees will not be required to report to the office, but will be paid. However, supervisors may assign work that would not require unsafe travelling to employees during such times, in the employee's reasonable judgment.

ARTICLE 18 – LABOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. A Labor-Management Committee will be established of up to three (3) representatives chosen by the Employer and up to three (3) representatives selected by the Guild. The committee will meet at least quarterly or as needed, except by mutual agreement. The Labor-Management Committee will seek to identify and resolve issues of mutual concern to the Employer and employees. The Labor-Management Committee further will be used to facilitate attaining the goals and objectives of the Employer.
2. The Employer acknowledges that it has the sole responsibility to provide a safe workplace. Local 500 is committed to providing a safe and healthful work environment. The Guild and its members agree to cooperate to achieve such a workplace. Issues regarding safety and health will be brought to the Labor-Management Committee.
3. Any agreements made by the Joint Labor Management Committee shall be communicated jointly, and in writing, to all managers and to members of the bargaining unit.

ARTICLE 19 – TRAINING & ORIENTATION

1. The Employer will consult with the Guild in developing an orientation program for new employees. In addition to the orientation program, the Employer will work with the Guild to develop policies around onboarding of new employees and job specific training. The

timeline for program development will be established in consultation with the Labor Management Committee by December 31, 2023.

2. The Employer will provide a thorough new hire orientation that includes, but is not limited to, a review of the following:
 - a. Overview of SEIU Local 500: history of the organization, an organizational chart and contact information for all colleagues, overview of the various chapters and connection to the International Union;
 - b. Policies and processes: accessing benefits, requesting leave, travel, submitting mileage and expense reimbursements;
 - c. Job specific training: orientation to relevant software, access to relevant files, job description and expectations, performance appraisal, and any additional training that would be helpful;
 - d. A copy of this collective bargaining agreement.
3. New Hire Orientation will start immediately after a new employee's start date and will be completed as soon as possible, but no later than the first month.
4. New hires will be encouraged to have an up to 30-minute meeting with each person on their team within the first ten (10) working days of the employee's start date.
5. New hires will have access to sixty (60) minutes with a Guild representative, without the presence of the employer, within five (5) working days from their start date, during the work day.
6. SEIU Local 500 is committed to LGBTQ+ and reproductive rights. To that end, SEIU Local 500 will provide information on covered procedures available from the current employer health plans with new employees.

ARTICLE 20 – EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. When an employee is required by the Employer to take further education, the Employer will pay the cost of, and provide the time for, such education.
2. Employees must be allowed, with the approval of the Employer, time off to attend educational institutions.
3. An employee who is pursuing a course of study related to work performed by the Employer, conducted by a recognized non-profit college or university, or by an educational institution accredited by nationally recognized agencies or associations, will be reimbursed for the costs of tuition and fees up to a maximum of \$1,065 per school year (September-August) incidental to such course of study. For employees with two (2) to four (4) years of continuous service, the maximum shall be \$1,375. For employees

with 5 or more years of continuous service, the maximum shall be \$2,000. The following requirements must be met in order for a bargaining unit employee to be eligible for reimbursement under this provision:

- a) The employee must have completed one (1) year of service prior to enrollment.
- b) The course of study must be related to an employee's current work assignment or probable future work assignment. Certification of relevance to work must be obtained from the Employer prior to enrollment.
- c) The course of study must be on the employee's own time, unless specifically approved by the Employer.
- d) The employee must provide evidence of satisfactory completion of the course with his/her application for reimbursement (a course grade of "C" or higher).
- e) The combinations of scholarships, grants, and reimbursements from the Employer cannot exceed the total costs of tuition and fees.
- f) The maximum payable under this provision to any individual is \$5,250.
- g) The employee agrees to repay any amounts received hereunder if the employee does not remain in the employment of SEIU Local 500 for at least one year following completion of the related course.
- h) Denials of educational reimbursement shall be made in writing, including an explanation of the decision, when requested by the employee.
- i) SEIU Local 500 agrees to work with the Guild to set up requirements and procedures to allow educational reimbursements to be used for payment of student loans already incurred. These student loan payments will commence upon the completion of this work.

ARTICLE 21 – EXPENSES AND TRANSPORTATION

1. Employees using their personal automobiles for a business trip will be reimbursed for mileage at the prevailing IRS rate. Employees requesting reimbursement shall account for mileage at the prevailing IRS rate. Employees requesting reimbursement shall account for miles traveled on the Mileage Reimbursement Form. The Employer also reimburses for the costs of tolls, parking, or the use of other modes of transportation (subway, taxi, bus, etc.) incurred for business purposes.
2. Employees who, because of the Local 500 business use of their automobile, must pay a higher insurance premium shall be reimbursed for the amount of the additional premium. Documentary evidence must be submitted. Reasonable miscellaneous expenses incurred by an employee for business purposes shall be reimbursed on submission of proper documentation.

3. The Employer shall provide a car allowance of \$750.00 per month for Organizers, Senior Organizer, Member Strength Organizers, Member Strength Coordinator, Contract Administration Representatives, Contract Administration Representation Coordinator and Coordinator for Member Political Engagement. The Employer may set standard and reasonable requirements for verifying mileage claimed by employees covered by this section. The allowance shall be paid along with the employees' pay and taxed as income. Car allowance shall not be used for computation of retirement, leave pay, or other benefits.
4. The Employer will provide forms for documenting work-related driving and driving related expenses.
5. Consistent with the collective bargaining agreement and established practice, employees who do not receive a car allowance, who use their personal automobiles for work purposes, will be reimbursed for mileage at the prevailing IRS rate. Employees requesting reimbursement shall account for mileage at the prevailing IRS rate. Employees requesting reimbursement shall account for miles traveled on the Mileage Reimbursement Form.
6. Employees attending a conference with the approval of the Employer shall be reimbursed for the conference fees.
7. Employees who work out of town and are directed by the employer to remain overnight shall receive seventy-five (\$75) per day to cover all meals and other incidentals for each day in which the employee remains overnight. To receive reimbursement, the employee must turn in an expense form and provide receipts. Accommodations must be approved in advance for room and tax and will be reimbursed or paid for by the employer.
8. Employees who are required to work past 7:00 pm, where food is not otherwise provided, shall be entitled to reimbursement for a meal, while working. The cost of the meal shall not exceed \$30.00 without advance permission from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees must complete an expense form and provide receipts to receive payment.

ARTICLE 22 – WORKING ENVIRONMENT

1. The parties agree that all employees should be treated with respect and dignity. The Guild and Local 500 recognize their shared interest in building a relationship that is effective, constructive, and oriented towards problem-solving, to ensure that Local 500 fulfills its mission and that employees are supported in bringing their creativity and energy to the work. The parties agree to uphold the guiding principles of equity and inclusion, transparency and accountability, courage and integrity, and collaboration and humility in their joint efforts to strengthen the work, and the workforce, of Local 500.
2. The parties acknowledge the following fundamental understandings:
 - a. The Employer and the Guild agree to cooperate with one another in efforts to assure efficient operations, to serve the needs of Local 500 and its members, and to meet the highest standards in such service.

- b. The Employer and the Guild agree that it is their mutual aim to act at all times in such a manner as to treat all employees of Local 500 with respect and dignity.
 - c. The Employer agrees to work closely with the Guild, through the Guild unit officers and the labor-management committee to explore all reasonable means to help employees improve their performance and to enjoy success on the job.
3. Every effort will be made to include all guild members in the discussion of Local 500 work plans and goals.
 4. The Employer recognizes the importance of input into hiring decisions (for both management and bargaining unit positions) by staff members whose work will be affected by a new hire. Accordingly, for open positions where candidates outside the organization are being considered, a member of the bargaining unit from the affected department will be asked to participate in the interviewing of the final candidate pool for an opening, and the unit member's assessment will be taken into consideration for final hiring decisions. The Guild Chair and Vice Chair will be notified as to which unit member is participating in the hiring process for each new hire ahead of the interview that includes the unit member.
 5. The parties agree that Local 500 has an obligation to provide capacity to employees to enable them to meet work expectations that Local 500 creates. Where employees are unclear about their responsibilities for communicating regarding work with supervisors, members and others, they are entitled to obtain clarification and guidance.
 6. Employees are encouraged to make suggestions to improve the operations of the Local.
 7. The parties agree that all people have the right to work in an environment free from bullying, verbal abuse, threats, or harassment. All employees of SEIU Local 500 will adhere to the harassment policy, ethics code, and internal politics policy. Violations of these policies may be reported as defined in each policy. These policies will be reviewed on an annual basis by the LMC.
 8. Professional Attire – Employees are expected to dress in a professional manner. No employee will be reprimanded for wearing clothing they had a good faith reason to believe was appropriate for the task they were performing unless they repeatedly violate the professional appearance policy.
 9. Troubled Employee – The Employer and the Guild jointly recognize alcoholism, drug abuse and emotional problems as illnesses which are treatable. It is also recognized that it is in the best interest of the employees, Employer and the Guild that these illnesses be treated and controlled. Our objective is to help, not harm, and is for the rehabilitation of the employee. An employee who seeks treatment for any of the above illnesses shall, during the first period of treatment, be entitled to all of the rights and benefits provided to other employees under this Agreement. However, addiction and its consequences shall not be a defense to a charge of gross misconduct justifying discharge or disciplinary action.
 10. Bylines – an employee's byline shall not be used over their protest on any written material.

11. Employees shall not engage in or continue to engage in outside employment without approval of the Employer.

ARTICLE 23 – CONTROLS SAVINGS CLAUSE

1. If government controls are instituted affecting this contract, the Employer will implement this contract to the fullest extent possible under such regulations, including diversion of any disallowed economic provisions to other allowed benefits.
2. The parties agree that they have had a full and complete opportunity to bargain on all issues and practices. The parties agree that this Agreement contains all elements of the parties' understanding. There are no other agreements, except as specifically incorporated herein.

ARTICLE 24 – TECHNOLOGY & EQUIPMENT

1. SEIU Local 500 provides certain tools, which are employer-owned property, to assist employees in performing their jobs. We expect employees to exercise reasonable care in using and possessing these tools.
2. Regarding employer-owned property — including devices, networks, programs, or information — employees are responsible for ensuring that there is no misuse or neglect of the property.
3. SEIU Local 500 will provide employees with the necessary employer-issued devices, access to software, and log-in information (including, but not limited to, NGPVAN, eMembership, and the VPN) within two (2) weeks of their start date in order to ensure the timely completion of job responsibilities.
4. SEIU Local 500 shall provide reasonable accommodation for employees under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).
5. Staff are permitted reasonable personal use of SEIU Local 500 employer-owned property. Personal use of employer-owned property may not interfere with the purposes for which the property is made available to an employee by the employer. Any such personal use that does interfere with the intended purposes of the property is strictly forbidden. Employees may not store information or use employer-owned devices for any information that is pornographic, discriminatory, or harassing. Employees should bear in mind that the employer reserves the right to review and disclose any information sent, received, or stored on the employer-owned devices.
6. Employees may not share devices assigned to them with non-employees. Similarly, they may not share their passwords except when specifically authorized to do so by the employer. Regarding shared-usage employer owned equipment, employees must ensure that the prior user has been logged off the device before logging on. Employees must log-off the equipment when finished using it.

7. Employees may not intentionally copy software programs or download programs or information that can result in copyright violations or viruses. Employees may not make copies of employer-owned software without prior approval from the Office Manager or the Executive Director of Local 500. Employees may not install software from home on employer-owned devices, without express authorization from the Office Manager or the Executive Director.
8. There shall be no secret surveillance of employees' work areas or use of communications systems. Surveillance does not include accessing work areas or use of communications systems when based on reasonable belief that there may be misuse, the need to retrieve information for IT needs, or to comply with legal obligations. In the event SEIU Local 500 intends to institute a monitoring program, it will notify the Guild in advance.
9. Loss or damage to employer-owned property must be reported immediately, to the employee's supervisor, and the Director of Member Services and Operations. Necessary repairs, or (at the Organization's discretion) replacement of employer-owned property will be paid for by the employer. However, employer-owned property that has been damaged due to repeated neglect or vandalism may result in the employee being required to pay for repairs or replacement.
10. Employees may make a request of their supervisor, for the need of non-employer issued technology, either hardware or software, necessary for the completion of employees' job duties. Such requests will not be unreasonably denied. Management will provide a response to such requests within two (2) weeks of receiving them.
11. The Employer will consult with the Guild before making substantial changes in the technological tools provided by the Employer to the employees. The Labor Management Committee will meet within the first year of contract ratification to discuss existing technology provided by the Employer and whether it meets the needs of employees. Final determinations shall be made by the Employer based on its operational needs.

ARTICLE 25 – SUCCESSORSHIP

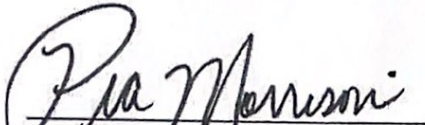
1. Subject to appropriate confidentiality agreements, before any affiliation, transfer, consolidation, or merger (hereinafter "successors") of the Employer, the Employer shall advise the Guild in writing, with at least 60 days' notice when possible.
2. In the event of such a contemplated change, the Employer shall meet with the Guild to receive input concerning the transaction. The Employer also shall use its best efforts to have the successor party similarly meet with the Guild.
3. The employer shall give notice of this Agreement to any successor prior to concluding such transaction and request that the new organization offer employment subject to the terms of this agreement to all bargaining unit employees as a condition of said change.


4. The parties acknowledge their obligation to engage in effects bargaining as required by law. The parties further agree to meet and confer concerning successorship and/or assigns issues.

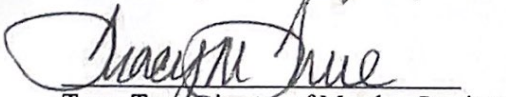
ARTICLE 26 – DURATION AND RENEWAL

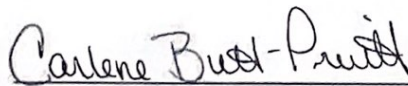
This Agreement is for a three (3) year term, and will take effect as of July 1, 2023, and remain in effect until September 30, 2026. Within ninety (90) days prior to the expiration date of this contract, the Employer or the Guild may initiate negotiations for a new agreement to take effect October 1, 2026. The terms and conditions of this agreement shall remain in effect during such negotiations. If negotiations do not result in a new agreement before October 1, 2026, the new agreement shall be made retroactive to October 1, 2026.

For SEIU Local 500, CtW



Pia Morrison, President

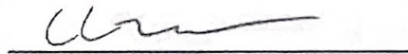

Rebecca Drayton, Director of Representation



Tracy Trus, Director of Member Services and Operations

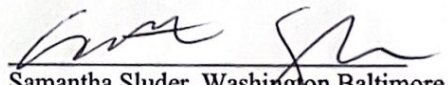

Carlene Butt-Pruitt, Board Member

For Washington-Baltimore News Guild,
Local 32035


Colin Smith, Unit Chair


Chadwick Lazarescu, Vice-Chair


Greg Petrilli, Bargaining Committee Member


Samantha Sluder, Washington Baltimore Guild

APPENDIX A

1. New bargaining unit employees shall be placed on the salary schedule based on experience and operational needs at the discretion of the Employer. At the completion of a full year, a bargaining unit employees shall be moved to the next step on the salary schedule. For example, bargaining unit employees placed at Step A of their classification, upon completion of their first year of continuous employment with the employer will then be placed at Step B. Upon completion of their second year of continuous employment with the employer, the employee will be moved to Step C, and so on.
2. New Organizers or Member Strength Organizers who have already successfully completed at least six (6) months of the Organizer-in-Training program at the International Union before their date of hire shall be placed at at least Step A.

Salary rates on next page

Member Strength Coordinator
 Coordinator for Member Political Engagement
 Senior Organizer
 Contract Administration Coordinator
 Member Services Coordinator

Salary Schedules

Step	Effective July 1, 2023	Effective October 1, 2024	Effective October 1, 2025
Start	N/A	N/A	N/A
Step A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Step B	N/A	N/A	N/A
Step C	N/A	N/A	N/A
Step D	\$75,292.39	\$77,551.16	\$78,326.67
Step E	\$76,798.23	\$79,102.18	\$79,893.20
Step F	\$78,334.19	\$80,684.22	\$81,491.06
Step G	\$79,900.88	\$82,297.90	\$83,120.88

Contract Administration Representative
 Member Strength Organizer
 Organizer

Step	Effective July 1, 2023	Effective October 1, 2024	Effective October 1, 2025
Start	\$57,871.24	\$59,607.37	\$60,203.45
Step A	\$61,086.32	\$62,918.91	\$63,548.09
Step B	\$65,725.05	\$67,696.80	\$68,373.77
Step C	\$67,410.33	\$69,432.61	\$70,126.97
Step D	\$68,758.54	\$70,821.30	\$71,529.51
Step E	\$70,133.72	\$72,237.73	\$72,960.98
Step F	\$71,536.39	\$73,682.48	\$74,419.31
Step G	\$72,967.12	\$75,156.13	\$75,907.69

Database Operations Associate

Step	Effective July 1, 2023	Effective October 1, 2024	Effective October 1, 2025
Start	\$47,108.90	\$49,977.83	\$50,477.61
Step A	\$50,473.82	\$53,547.67	\$54,083.15
Step B	\$53,838.92	\$57,117.71	\$57,688.89
Step C	\$56,530.69	\$59,973.41	\$60,573.14
Step D	\$60,568.59	\$64,257.21	\$64,899.79
Step E	\$61,779.96	\$65,542.36	\$66,197.79
Step F	\$63,015.57	\$66,853.22	\$67,251.75
Step G	\$64,275.88	\$68,190.28	\$68,872.18

Apprentice Organizer

Step	Effective July 1, 2023	Effective October 1, 2024	Effective October 1, 2025
Start	\$45,010.98	\$46,361.31	\$46,824.92

Administrative Support Professionals

Step	Effective July 1, 2023	Effective October 1, 2024	Effective October 1, 2025
Start	\$44,705.53	\$47,428.10	\$47,902.38
Step A	\$48,420.85	\$51,369.68	\$51,883.38
Step B	\$50,971.87	\$54,076.05	\$54,616.81
Step C	\$52,278.91	\$55,462.69	\$56,017.32
Step D	\$53,324.50	\$56,571.96	\$57,137.68
Step E	\$54,391.00	\$57,703.41	\$58,280.44
Step F	\$55,478.81	\$58,857.47	\$59,446.05
Step G	\$56,588.39	\$60,034.62	\$60,634.97

Wages as of October 1, 2025 will not be less than a 1% increase but are subject to negotiations as stated in Article 12, 1.

**ASSIGNMENT AND AUTHORIZATION TO DEDUCT GUILD
MEMBERSHIP DUES**

To: Local 500, Service Employees International Union, CTW, CLC

I hereby assign to the Washington-Baltimore News Guild an amount each pay period in accordance with a schedule to be submitted by the Guild and I hereby authorize SEIU Local 500 to deduct such amounts from my salary and to remit same to the Washington-Baltimore News Guild no later than the tenth (10th) day of the following month.

This authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by me and shall be irrevocable for a period of one (1) year from the date appearing below, and I agree and direct that this authorization shall be automatically continued unless written notice of its revocation is given by me to SEIU Local 500 and the Treasurer of the Washington-Baltimore News Guild by registered mail, return receipt requested. Such notice of revocation shall become effective the month following the month in which such written notice was received by SEIU Local 500.

This assignment and authorization is voluntarily made in order to pay my equal share of the Guild's cost of operations and is not conditioned on my present or future membership in the Guild.

This assignment and authorization supersede all previous assignments and authorizations heretofore given by me in relation to my Guild membership dues.

Date

Employee Signature

Dues, assessments, contributions, or gifts to this local union are not deductible charitable contributions for federal income-tax purposes