



Engineers & Scientists of California

Local 20 IFPTE



Union Membership, CBA, and Ratification FAQs

What is a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)?

A collective bargaining agreement is a contract (a legally binding agreement) between a union and an employer. CBAs cover mandatory subjects of bargaining (subjects that directly impact wages, hours, and working conditions) and can also include permissive subjects. Once a CBA is completed and ratified, the employer and union are legally obligated to abide by the agreement. Therefore, if the CBA is violated, the parties must resolve disputes through a negotiated grievance procedure. In contrast, employees at a workplace without a union and CBA have no recourse if their employer makes changes to their working conditions and no binding process through which to resolve disputes.

One of the most important provisions of any CBA is the Just Cause provision, which provides employees with due process rights before the employer can discipline or terminate them. In contrast, employees without unions, or at-will employees, can be disciplined or terminated at any time with or without cause.

What does contract ratification mean?

Once the bargaining process concludes, bargaining unit employees at HAC vote on the tentative agreement for ratification. Every bargaining unit employee at HAC gets to vote to ratify their first contract. 50%+1 of voters need to vote “yes,” and the CBA must be approved by the ESC Executive Board and the HAC Board of Directors for a tentative agreement to be ratified. Once ratified by the members and approved by the boards, the agreement is binding. The employer is held accountable for contract implementation,

which includes providing the agreed-upon raises, back pay, and benefits. For future negotiations and ratification votes, only dues-paying members are eligible to vote.

Why should I become a union member?

In 2020, a group of staff at HAC approached ESC Local 20 to request support in forming a union at their workplace. An organizing drive was developed, most bargaining unit staff signed cards requesting subsequent union representation from the employer, and the HAC staff union was formed. Since then, the Bargaining Team has met with management regularly to negotiate your Collective Bargaining Agreement. Once ratified and approved, bargaining unit employees can become dues-paying union members.

As 501(c)(5) organizations, membership dues fully fund unions. Union dues are for conducting union business, providing staff and legal resources to the members, and investing in bringing new members into the union, like when HAC staff organized to join ESC in 2020!

Whether it be a violation of the contract, a staffing issue, or a payroll problem, your union is here to serve you. Beyond better pay and benefits, having a union affords you a voice at work and a seat at the table with management on the decisions that impact you. A union contract balances management's unilateral decision-making power, establishes fair working conditions, improves communication, protects quality care and services, and promotes professional development opportunities.

HAC employees who wish to become "Beck Objectors" may follow the procedure outlined on the ESC Local 20 membership card to pay agency fees in place of union dues.

How much are union dues?

ESC members pay 1.5 hours of pay per month toward union dues. ESC Local 20 union dues have remained the same amount for decades.

Here is how you can calculate your union dues based on your pay:

Dues are calculated at 1.5x an employee's hourly rate for full-time employees and 1x an hourly rate for employees who work 20 hours a week or less. If you are a salaried employee, you can find your hourly rate by dividing your annual salary by 2080. Then

multiply that hourly rate by 1.5 to get your monthly dues. If you get paid hourly, just multiply your hourly pay by 1.5.

For example, if your annual salary is \$75,000, you will divide \$75,000 by 2080 to get an hourly rate of \$36.06. Then multiply that hourly rate by 1.5 to get your monthly dues of \$54.09.