March 2025

Local 891 AFL - CIO

The Gauge

Principal Rating

Members are reminded they only have 30 days to grieve a Principal's Rating. Any member wanting to grieve a rating should contact the Grievance Chairperson.

General Membership Meeting

The Local 891 March General Membership Meeting will be March 6th in Bronx at Edward R Byrne Middle School 2750 Lafayette Avenue

Renewals

Please be aware of your license and permit renewal date. Apply and renew on time to avoid fees and disciplinary action.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT ALL RENEWALS MUST BE DONE ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Variable Rate

Variable Rate Unit Value for February 2025: $170.106

Business Manager's Report

Local 891's unique "Widow's Care Benefit" is the greatest benefit you hope to never use. Our widow's care system ensures that for six months after an active member passes, their beneficiary will continue to receive the income you would have earned. The trustees have voted to once again enhance the amount your beneficiaries will receive to 100% of the gross pay of your last assignment, instead of the net amount they previously received. The new policy will be applied to the current widow's care for our union brother Steven Santoro. Please keep in mind, you must be a dues paying member of our local to receive this benefit. If you haven't paid your initiation fee or transfer fee this benefit won't be available to you. Be certain that the person or persons named as your primary and secondary beneficiaries on your Local 891 Welfare Fund enrollment form is the person you wish to be paid this benefit as well as the life insurance we provide.

Surely by now you're all aware of ongoing issues regarding the DOE's recent ridiculous actions issuing letters of complaint regarding budgeting and specifically coding of 113, 202 and 2025. We are currently entering the second step of the grievance process on this matter and will head to arbitration if necessary. We believe that the Department violated our CBA when they issued letters of complaints to members over this issue. Custodian Engineers were not properly trained how to code and did not receive notice that they were doing it incorrectly before receiving these letters. We will reach out to the Office of Labor Relations about having these letters removed from our members' folders. Our members should not be held responsible for the departments ineptness.

Electronic Communications

February 14th - February Gauge Supplies Article Correction
February 18th - Passing of Josephine DeAngelo
February 18th - Seniority Lists
February 18th - Passing of Patrick McGovern
February 27th - NYC Department of Education Emerald Society Event

SUPPLY

Harry Cender, Supply Committee Chairperson

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As you know, the city has given funds to DSF for a third round of supply money for this fiscal year. This will be the last allocation until July.

DSF will soon release a PowerPoint presentation on the Famis training. It is in the final stages of completion and should be sent to all CEs.

The Supply Excel Catalog that is on the Facilities information hub page can be accessed here: Supply Catalog.

Please notify your borough procurement analyst if any vendor attempts to cancel an order due to a price discrepancy. Vendors are expected to honor any orders approved before a price increase.

If you have any questions about the new supply process or have any procurement-related inquiries, please contact your dedicated B.P.A.

Fraternally,
Harry W. Cender
Supplies Committee Chairperson
Supplies@Local891.com

HOSPITALIZATION

Kevin Troy, Hospitalization Committee Chairperson

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Union will be hosting a Retirement Seminar on April 1st and April 3rd. I will be available to answer any questions you may have about the transition from active to retiree health benefits. Please take a moment to note any questions and bring them to the seminar.
It is important to understand that city health benefits do not automatically roll over from active to retiree status. However, benefits provided by the Local 891 Welfare Fund (including hearing, vision, and dental coverage) will transition automatically.
Please be aware that BERS is only responsible for enrolling you in pension benefits, not for your retiree health benefits. You will need to handle your own enrollment for health benefits.

To ensure a smooth transition to retiree status, please follow these steps:

For Non-Medicare Retirees:

6-8 weeks before your retirement date, submit a Retiree Health Benefits Application through DOE HR Connect. If you need assistance, you can contact HR Connect at 718-935-4000 or visit their website at https://doehrconnect.custhelp.com<https://doehrconnect.custhelp.com/> to log in and access the application.
* If both you and your spouse are under 65, and your spouse is covered under your health plan, only the health benefits application needs to be submitted.

For Medicare-Eligible Retirees:

* If you and/or your spouse are 65 or older, sign up for Medicare Part A & B 2–3 months before your retirement date to ensure coverage starts on your first day of retirement.
* Before enrolling in Medicare Part B, complete the CMS-L564 form and upload it to HR Connect. HR Connect will fill out the form and return it to you, allowing you to submit it to Social Security for enrollment in Medicare Part B.
* The CMS-L564 form serves as proof of group health coverage, helping to avoid late enrollment penalties for Medicare Part B.
* Then, submit your application on the HR Connect Portal at the web address above with a copy of your Medicare Part A & B cards.
* The optional rider, which is your prescription coverage, will become your Part D plan in retirement.

If you are unable to attend the seminar, please feel free to reach out to me directly with any questions or concerns about your health benefits as you prepare for retirement.

Fraternally,
Kevin Troy

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

Lionel Santiago, Occupational Health & Safety Committee Chairperson

I am happy to announce that we are hosting another Asbestos Screening on May 3rd, 2025.

Please send the forms to me ASAP. I need to have the paperwork on hand by April 4th, 2025.

For those of you who are not aware, this is a health screening where there are NO Out-of-pocket expenses to you.

In this time of cost cutting & penny pinching, I think this is a great deal to local 891 members.

Please take advantage of this opportunity. If we don't use it, we will lose it.
All it will take is a few hours of your personal time.

The screening will consist of chest x-rays, blood work, urine sample, EKG, & a lung capacity test.

Any 891 member with 10 years of service, Local 891 & Local 32BJ/94, combined are eligible.

You are eligible to take the screening every 2 years.
A light breakfast will be provided after the screening.

Any questions please reach out to me.

Lionel Santiago,
Occupational Safety & Health Committee Chairperson,
M130/M615
212-376-4890
212-625-4848

FMLA

Judith Koonce, FMLA Committee Chairperson

Brothers and Sisters,

After you are approved to take Paid Family Leave should your circumstances change you are required to notify Absolve at least five (5) business days prior to the dates you are canceling, if possible. Absolve Agency is the Administrator for the Insurance carrier that processes our Paid Family Leave.

Such circumstances can include you no longer taking the dates that were indicated in your approval letter or the dates that you provided on your application to Absolve at any point in the future,

If you need your Paid Leave is to be extended beyond the date that you indicated in your application, you will be required to contact Absolve and the Division of School Facilities with an updated estimated return to work date as soon as practicable.

An updated medical certification may be required at that time to justify this extension. Until such certification is received, your continued Paid Family Leave may
be delayed until certification is received.

Absolve can be contacted at (800) 401-2691.

Please feel free to contact me for any additional information.

Thank you for reading this article.

In Unity
Judith Koonce

NYC CENTRAL COUNCIL

Delegates, Richard Gorgoglione & Judith Koonce

Brothers and Sisters,

I hope that all is well with you and your families.
The February Meeting of the AFL-CIO NYC Central Labor was held via Zoom on 02/20/25.

The Introduction's and swearing in of New Delegates was done by Janella Hinds, Secretary/Treasurer. This was followed by the reading of lasts month's minutes

The guest speakers for the night were Elected Officials, David Gonzalez and Tim McLaughlin, from the American Federation of Government Employees.
President Alavarez introduced the men and thanked thank for being on the forefront fighting for their members.

David spoke on the January 20th Trump Executive orders that attacked Federal Workers. During his 1st term as President Trump attacked Federal Labor Unions and is now continuing during his second term. The President is firing workers that are on probation. Memos are stating that employees are not performing to expectations.

One pivotal date that we should never forget is March 25, 1911, when 146 workers—mostly young, immigrant women—were killed in a horrific fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory at Washington Place and Greene Street in lower Manhattan.
Inadequate fire escapes, locked doors, and an overall disregard for worker safety resulted in tragedy. Many jumped to their deaths trying to escape the flames.

On Tuesday 3/25/25, the AFL-CIO, Workers United, New. York City Central Labor Council, SEIU, and the Remember the Triangle Fire Coalition will gather to celebrate the 114th Anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. We hope that you will be able to attend.

The next meeting of the AFL-CIO will be held on March 20, 2025, via zoom.

Thank you, brothers and sisters for taking the time to read this article.

Be well.
In Unity
Judith Koonce*

GOOD & WELFARE

Theresa DiCristi, Good & Welfare Committee Chairperson

Brothers and Sisters,

I want to take this time to say "Thank you" for all of your donations for the Santoro family. Your generous donations - matched dollar for dollar by the 891 Beneficiary Fund - have been forwarded to the family. They are truly grateful for all of our support. Donations are still being accepted.

Thank you to Harry Cender for being first Widow's Care TC and to Evan Manca who has taken over. It is with our willingness to participate that this amazing benefit continues.

In appreciation,
Theresa

CUSTODIAL HELPER

Marvin Rodriguez, Custodial Helper Committee Chairperson

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This year's Vacation blackout dates will be August 21st until September 4th. No NYCSSS employee can take time off during this time or NYCSSS will take disciplinary action.

Please keep in mind that part-time employees are not exempt from snow duty, neither is having another job or calling out sick.

I have placed a snow policy in this article here, please feel free to copy it or change it to your building needs. We have and continue to have a lot of grievances for no show for snow and it's important to have a detailed policy in place.

I've also have been recommending to CEs to text or have the FI send out a group text before a snow event reminding them of your policy.

Marvin Rodriguez C.H.C.

CONGRATULATIONS

NYC Department of Education Emerald Society Event Honoring William Carroll!

The New York City Department Of Education
Emerald Society Annual Scholarship Dinner
Dance is scheduled for Friday, March 14, 2025, at:

Terrace on the Park
52-11 111th Street Flushing.

This year, they will be honoring Local 891 Executive Board Member William Carroll. Will has been an instructor for the nighttime refrigeration class for years training many of our newer members. Will also will be the third generation Carroll to win this award; both his father and grandfather have won it.

You can click here to access information about attending the event to support this important brother of our union.

The Gauge

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Occupational Health & Safety	Lionel Santiago	ext. 266
Payroll & Permits	Philip Navetta	ext. 267
Pension	Frank Sirabella	ext. 268
Rating & Transfer	Robert Calamia	ext. 269
Store Keeper	Stevo Pepdjonovic	ext. 270
Supplies	Harry Cender	ext. 271
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Webmaster	Dan Morgan	ext. 274
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