Local 891 AFL - CIO
November, 2026

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 Next General Membership will be
November 5th at 7:00 PM
in the Bronx at
DeWitt Clinton High School
100 W Mosholu Pkwy S,
Bronx, NY 10468

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 October $203.517

Business Manager's Report

Now that Halloween is behind us, it is the unofficial start of the holiday season. I hope that all of us take time this thanksgiving to give thanks for the many good things that we have in our lives, including our employment and membership in the greatest union in New York! A very good fiend of mine, who was a retired Custodian Engineer who passed away this year, used to say, "The time we are living in at the moment is called the present because it is a gift." I could not agree with him more and I realize that none of us are guaranteed tomorrow.

The holiday season can also bring sadness and depression. As City of New York employees, we have some of the best Medical coverage available to us and our families. If you feel the need, please reach out to a mental health provider or physician if required. There is no shame in needing someone to talk to. Local 891 is also here to assist you if there are any issues that affect your ability to do your job. Theresa DiCristi our membership assistance committee chairperson, is excellent at what she does and has helped many of our members during her time in that role. She is nothing but professional, and all calls and assistance are kept strictly confidential. The Division of School Facilities will also allow you time off per our collective bargaining agreement if you need to attend an inpatient program.

Today is Election Day. Whatever issues are important to you, please get to your local polling place, and make your voice heard. If organized labor is an issue to you, please remember the candidates that are running in this election that are friends of Local 891 and organized labor. Although there are an extremely high percentage of Americans that are in favor of unions, there are many candidates who are opposed to labor and will not do what is in our best interest. Please keep this in mind when you cast your votes. For information on candidates, and your rights as a voter, a link to the AFL-CIO website can be found here.

To make it easier for members to attend union meetings, the Chair Officers have decided not to hold these meetings in only one Borough, but to move them around from Borough to Borough. November's general membership meeting will be held at Dewitt Clinton High School in the Bronx. If you are a Custodian Engineer who works or lives in the Bronx and have never attended a union meeting, now is your opportunity to not only see your brother and sister engineers, but to meet and talk with in person, your union Chair Officers, Executive Board members, and Committee Chairpersons. We look forward to meeting and speaking with you. I promise you will leave the meeting with extremely useful information.

I wish you and your families a happy thanksgiving!

Andrew

Business Manager/President Andrew Samberg and Vice President Kieran McKivergan with NYC Labor Commissioner Renee Campion

Electronic Communications

October 7th - Asbestos Screening
October 8th - Vacancy List Delayed
October 9th - Passing of Retired CE Troy Atkins
October 16th - Robert Bizzard elected to Treasurer
October 16th - Supply Funding
October 19th - Upcoming Course Schedule
October 22nd - Water Flush Training
October 22nd - Passing of Richard McCawley
October 23rd - ITEC Training Schedule 2026
October 26th - Vacancy / Transfer List Results
October 27th - Top Five Standings

Executive Board Member Joshua Cancel (Left) and Treasurer Robert Bizzard (Right)
Sworn in at October Executive Board Meeting

Local 891 Annual Reception

The 98th Annual Reception will be held at
Russo's On The Bay
on Friday, January 29th, 2027 at 6 PM

Join us for a great time with fantastic food, unlimited drinks, and awesome company

Don't Miss Out on the 50/50

$10 gets you one ticket for a chance at a large cash prize!

Members can purchase Two Tickets for $80
if purchased before December 4th
All other Tickets are $50 Each
MUST REGISTER BY JANUARY 15

PAYROLL & PERMITS

Philip Navetta, Payroll & Permits Committee Chairperson

Brothers and Sisters,

Please be reminded that we are not responsible for entering contractor permits. Please see below the process for the school to enter these requests.

Please be advised of an important update to the contractor permit process that went live on Friday, September 11. School staff will continue to enter permits for contractor work that requires access to the school building outside normal operating hours.

When creating a permit in CPS, you can now select Contractor as a permit type, in addition to School and CBO. Please select Contractor when entering permits for contractor work. When this option is selected, a new required field will appear asking whether the contractor is performing work on behalf of the School Construction Authority (SCA).

This selection determines how the permit is funded:
· SCA Contractor: If the contractor is performing work for the SCA, the permit will not be centrally funded. Once the permit is approved, the contractor will automatically receive an invoice and payment link for the permit fee. Payment must be received before the scheduled work can begin.
· Non-SCA Contractor: If the contractor is not performing work for the SCA, the permit fee will continue to be centrally funded.

Please ensure the SCA contractor field is completed accurately for all contractor permits, as it directly impacts permit billing and funding. This information can be found on the contractor permit application completed by the contractor.

A step-by-step guide for entering contractor permits is available here.

For questions or support, please contact your extended use specialist.

Additionally, Mark Voros sent out an email on 9/10/26 that SCA permits must be approved and paid before work begins. Please be mindful of this. Please continue to submit the necessary space sheets to your extended use person.

Thank you
Philip Navetta,
Payroll & Permits
718-455-9731 Ext. 267

HOSPITALIZATION

Kevin Troy, Hospitalization Committee Chairperson

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The New York City Office of Labor Relations has announced that the Annual Health Benefits Transfer Period will take place November 1 through November 30, 2026. During this period, eligible members may change their City health insurance plan, add or remove eligible dependents, add or drop Optional Rider coverage, or waive City health benefits. Changes made during the Annual Health Benefits Transfer Period will become effective January 1, 2027.

Members who wish to maintain their existing health benefits coverage are not required to take any action during the Transfer Period.

Before making a change, I encourage members to carefully review their options. Although several City health plans offer basic coverage without an employee premium, benefits may differ considerably. Members should confirm that their doctors and hospitals participate in the plan, review copayments, and other out-of-pocket expenses, and determine whether referrals are required. Once a health plan transfer is submitted, members generally cannot change plans again until the next Annual Transfer Period unless they experience a qualifying life event.

The City provides helpful resources for comparing health plan benefits and reviewing health plan premiums and Optional Rider costs.

Prescription drug coverage is another important consideration. The City's PICA Program, administered by Express Scripts, provides eligible members with coverage for certain self-injectable and chemotherapy medications. PICA is separate from an Optional Prescription Drug Rider, which provides additional prescription benefits depending on the health plan selected. Since drug formularies, copayments, and coverage requirements may vary, members should review the formulary for the upcoming plan year to ensure their medications will remain covered. Additional information, including covered medications, is available through the NYC PICA Program. Members should also consult their individual health plan's prescription drug formulary.

Active DOE employees who wish to make changes can do so through NYCAPS Employee Self Service (ESS):

1. Sign in using your seven-digit employee ID and ESS password.
2. Select the Health Benefits tile.
3. Choose Open Enrollment / TPE Event, followed by Prepare My Enrollment Event.
4. Under Transfer Period Enrollment, select the option to begin your enrollment.
5. Review your choices, submit your selections, and retain a copy of your confirmation.

Members adding eligible dependents may be required to submit supporting documentation, such as a marriage or birth certificate, through the DOE HR Connect Portal. For assistance, contact HR Connect at (718) 935-4000.

Retired members wishing to make changes should complete the City's Retiree Health Benefits Application/Change Form. Completed applications may be submitted through the City's secure online portal, faxed to (212) 306-7373, or mailed to the NYC Health Benefits Program, 22 Cortlandt Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10007. Retirees requiring assistance may contact the Health Benefits Program at (212) 513-0470.

Members who make changes should review their health benefit deductions beginning in January to ensure they are correct. Active members should report any discrepancies to DOE HR Connect, while retirees should contact the NYC Health Benefits Program.

Taking the time to review your coverage during the Transfer Period can help ensure that your health benefits continue to meet the needs of you and your family.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns regarding your health benefits, please feel free to contact me at hospitalization@local891.com.

I wish all our members and their families a happy and healthy Thanksgiving.

Fraternally,
Kevin Troy
Hospitalization Committee Chairperson

SUPPLY

Harry Cender, Suppy Committee Chairperson

Brothers & Sisters,

I've been getting questions regarding Micro-purchase procedures in FAMIS, so I want to make sure everyone understands the rules and knows how to protect themselves.

A micro-purchase should only be used when all three of the following conditions are met:

1. The item is not available in the catalog.
2. The purchase is for a one-time need.
3. The total cost is under $250.00.

If the item is available in the catalog, it must be ordered through the catalog.

Do not use multiple micro-purchases for the same item to bypass the procurement process, even if your DDF instructs you to do so. If you are told to do something that you believe goes against the established procedures, stop and contact your BPA before moving forward.

Brothers and Sisters, we all have a job to do, and the last thing anyone needs is to have a purchasing issue come back on them because the proper procedures weren't followed. We are responsible for making sure our purchases are done correctly and that we maintain the required documentation.

For instructions on how to enter orders in FAMIS, please refer to the FAMIS Purchasing Guide that DSF emailed to everyone.

Another important reminder: Do not select "Sole Vendor" when placing an order in FAMIS. This can raise questions about whether the proper procurement process is being followed, including obtaining three quotes when required.

If you are unsure how to purchase an item, contact your Borough Procurement Analyst (BPA) before placing the order. It's better to ask questions beforehand than to have to deal with a problem afterward.

As union members, we need to look out for one another and make sure everyone has the information they need to do their job properly. Please take this seriously and share it with anyone who may need the reminder.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out.

In Solidarity,
Harry W. Cender
Supplies Committee Chairperson
IUOE Local 891

CUSTODIAL HELPER

Marvin Rodriguez, Custodial Helper Committee Chairperson

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Keep in mind that NYCSSS employees (That includes CE's that work for NYCSSS also) need to have their training done by 11/28/2026.

Election day is a great time to have the employees do it. You can also request NYCSSS to send you a link and you can do a group training all at the same time.

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, 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.

Click link here to see example of a snow protocol letter.

Fraternally,
Marvin Rodriguez,
Custodial Helper Committee Chairperson

NYC COUNCIL DELEGATE

Judith Koonce/Richard Gorgoglione, Delegates

Fall Greeting Brothers and Sisters,

The NYC CLC meeting was held on 10/15/26 via zoom.

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence for those who died on the job during the prior month. Four new delegates by Treasurer-Secretary, Janella Hinds.

The meeting transitioned to our President, Brendan Griffith who introduced our guest speaker Jane Thompson, the Director of Statewide Labor Affairs at the NYS Department of Labor.

Jane's message was a ray of sunshine for anyone that will use unemployment benefits. The unemployment benefits process will be streamlined to be more efficient and user friendly for clients. The anticipated upgrade to the fifty year old system will commence on November 2, 2026 ,with a completion date within twelve days.

Brothers and sisters turn out to vote in the upcoming elections on 11/3/2026, if you have not done so as yet.

Have a Happy and Safe Thanksgiving.

In Unity,
Sister Judith

GOOD & WELFARE

Theresa DiCristi, Good & Welfare Committee Chairperson

Brothers and Sisters,

Sadly, we lost CE Peter Weber X153 in Mid-September. A Widow's Care is in place and I'd like to thank the following CEs for stepping up - Joshua Cancel, Adele McGreal, and Michael Fata. It's our willingness to volunteer that allows for this amazing benefit. Thank you to Susan Werner - Bronx Borough Chairperson - for making the arrangements.

I'd like to take this time to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving filled with love and family. Enjoy!!

Be Well!!
Theresa

FMLA

William Carroll, FMLA Committee Chairperson

Family Medical Leave Act vs. Paid Family Leave

Good day, Folks,

FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) and PFL (Paid Family Leave) are two benefits with stark differences. Every Local 891 member pays into PFL—this is a negotiated benefit authorized through the state of New York. PFL can be used for child bonding, care of a family member with a serious health condition, and for military leave. This is a paid benefit (providing partial wage replacement up to the state cap) and does not remove the member from the payroll system. Please note that PFL cannot be used for a member's own medical condition.

If a medical leave is required for a member's own serious health condition, the member should first request contractual leaves, as stipulated in the Local 891 CBA. Once the member has exhausted all contractual benefits for taking paid time off and paid leave, FMLA then becomes an option. FMLA is a federal unpaid leave for qualifying events providing job-protected time off for up to 12 weeks. These qualifying events can be used for one's own serious health condition. It can also be used for care of a family member, but only to care for a child if the child is under 18 years old, or incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability. It can be taken on an hourly or intermittent basis, which is not the case for PFL, which must be taken in daily increments. The minimum requirement for FMLA eligibility is 12 months of previous employment and at least 1,250 hours worked in the preceding 12 months.

All members must remember that taking FMLA takes one off payroll for the duration of the leave. While no pensionable time is accrued during unpaid FMLA leave, the member retains all their health benefits.

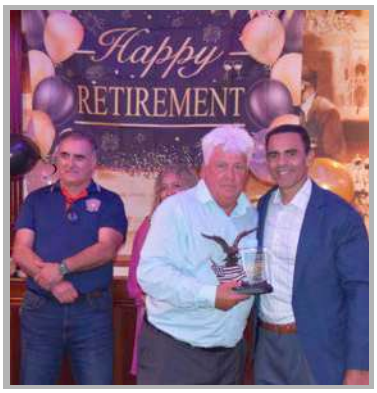
Before considering FMLA or submitting paperwork, a member should always contact the FMLA Committee for additional specific information and step-by-step application guidance.

In solidarity,

Will Carroll
Cell# 917-903-0335
Email: fmlassistance@local891.com

HAPPY RETIREMENT JOHN

Congratulations to you John, on your retirement after 35 years of service in the DOE. John has served the members of local 891 in many different roles, as the Editor of the Gauge, Exception and Grievances committees, and Executive Board member. For the past seven years John has represented the members of Local 891 as the Manhattan Borough Chairman. Thank you, John, for all that you have done over your career for the members of Local 891. We all wish you and your family the best health and wealth in the next wave.



LEGISLATIVE

Local 891's Legislative Committee Chairperson, Daniel Danvers, representing Local 891 at several recent political events.

Gregory Meeks, U.S. Congressman, a Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Carl Heastie, NY Assembly Member, served as Speaker of the New York State Assembly.

David Weprin, NYS Assemblyman and Correction Committee Chair.

Alicia Hyndman, Assemblywoman, District 29, Chair of the Standing Committee on Higher Education

Henry D. Rubio, President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA NYC)

Assemblymember Robert Carroll, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology and serves on the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions.

Ernesto Diaz, CE Q452-L.I.C High School with Kamar H. Samuels, Chancellor of New York City Public Schools.

EDITORIAL

Daniel Danvers, Editor of the Gauge

NLRB Navigates a Changing Labor Relations Environment

At a recent NYSPEC (New York State Public Employees Conference), attended by representatives from Local 891, NYSPEC attorney, Rich Mulvaney, reported on the current state of the NLRB (National Labor Relations Board). Mulvaney alerted unions on the changes currently happening at the NLRB and the implications these changes might mean for labor unions. He asked union leaders to be aware and be prepared to insulate members rights which were long fought for. This warning is out of the current erosion of protections for labor unions due to the reduction of the NLRB's structure. These sentiments were also echoed by NYS AFL-CIO's President, Mario Cilento at the recent COPE Convention in Albany.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the federal agency formed in 1935 and is responsible for enforcing private-sector labor law, continues to play a central role in workplace relations across the United States. The agency oversees union representation elections, investigates unfair labor practice charges, and protects employees' rights to engage in collective workplace activity.

Under the current administration, the NLRB has experienced a period of transition marked by leadership changes, Board vacancies, and renewed focus on agency operations. With a functioning Board now in place, the agency has resumed issuing decisions that influence how labor laws are interpreted and applied.

Current priorities include reducing case backlogs, improving the efficiency of investigations, and reviewing labor policies established in recent years. These efforts affect a wide range of stakeholders, including employers, employees, unions, and labor attorneys.

For labor unions, the NLRB's direction can have significant implications. Board decisions and enforcement priorities often influence how union organizing campaigns are conducted, how quickly representation elections are processed, and how disputes involving collective bargaining are resolved. Changes in legal interpretations can also affect workers' ability to organize and the strategies unions use to recruit and represent members.

The NLRB is also operating in an environment of increased judicial scrutiny of federal agencies. Court decisions regarding administrative authority may have long-term implications for how the Board carries out its responsibilities and how future labor policies are implemented.

As labor relations continue to evolve, observers will be watching Board appointments, policy developments, case processing trends, and court rulings. While perspectives on labor policy often differ, the NLRB remains a key institution in shaping the rules governing workplace rights and responsibilities in the private sector, with implications for both organized labor and management.

If you would like to know more about the NLRB, visit its website, nlrb.gov.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The October 1st, general membership meeting was held in Queens at Bayside High School with a tremendous attendance. Thank you all who attended. The newest members of local 891 were sworn in by Business Manager, Andrew Samberg. Years of service pins were awarded to members. Nick Souto was recognized by Business Manager Samberg and the members for his contribution to local 891 with a standing ovation. Anna Purpura was announced as the new entertainment committee chairperson. The panel recognized retiree Charles Scales Sr, who was in attendance with his son, active CE, Charles Scales Jr. Multi gallon blood doners were awarded thier certificates. Attend the next .November 5th at 7:00 PM in the Bronx at DeWitt Clinton High School

New members being sworn in by Business Manager, Andrew Samberg

Congrats to the Galloneers Club members!

Anna Purpura, new Entertainment Committee Chairperson

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

YEARS OF SERVICE PINS AWARDED

CONGRATULATIONS!

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

YEARS OF SERVICE PINS AWARDED

CONGRATULATIONS!

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

YEARS OF SERVICE PINS AWARDED - CONGRATULATIONS!

THANK YOU AND FAREWELL NICK SOUTO!!!

In Memoriam

James O'Connell

Condolences to:
Barbara O'Connell (Spouse)
60 Madison Street
Franklin Square, NY 11010

Robert Rhein

Condolences to:
Diana Rhein (Spouse)
1367 West Diamond Shore Loop
Hernando, FL 34442

The Gauge

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Robert Bizzard
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Daniel H. Cook Associates
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212-505-5050

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Brooklyn	Andrew Foti	ext. 221
Manhattan	Edward Irizarry	ext. 222
Queens	Joe Sanfilippo	ext. 223
Staten Island	Harry Cender	ext. 224

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Blood Bank	Evan Manca	ext. 250
Compensation Ins.	Stephen Hourihan	ext. 251
E.P.E.C.	Gregory Sutton	ext. 252
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Membership	Robert Bizzard	ext. 264
Membership Assistance	Theresa DiCristi	ext. 258
Occupational Health & Safety	Lionel Santiago	ext. 266
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Pension	Frank Sirabella	ext. 268
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