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NEWS >>

CHICAGO-AREA TEAMSTERS AT RAILWAY INDUSTRIAL SERVICES VOTE TO STRIKE

Teamsters Local 710 Files Unfair Labor Practice Charge Against Rail Company

Approximately 74 rail workers represented by Teamsters Local 710 in Chicago overwhelmingly voted on Jan. 11 to authorize an unfair labor practice strike against Railway Industrial Services (RIS).

An unfair labor practice strike could begin as early as Monday morning in suburban Crest Hill, Ill.

Local 710 filed the charge against RIS after the company repeatedly failed to comply with an information request regarding employee benefits, retirement information and health care coverage. The Teamsters have been engaged in negotiations for a new contract since Oct. 29, 2016 as RIS has consistently put up roadblocks impeding progress at the bargaining table.

After 14 rounds of negotiations, RIS has failed to take meaningful steps toward a new contract, despite the fact open issues on the table related to worker benefits could be resolved by the employer's compliance with the unresolved information request.

"The company's refusal to provide pertinent information for bargaining has made it impossible for Railway Industrial Services to continue negotiations in good faith," said Michael Ramirez, Local 710 Business Agent. "The Teamsters will not stand by while Railway continues to drag its feet. From day one, our goal has been to reach a fair agreement, and the union will not rest until we have one in our hands. The membership has been backed into a corner by this employer and we are prepared to strike unless the company takes meaningful action to return to the table with the information we need to finalize negotiations."

The Local 710 Bargaining Committee first began meeting with RIS in October, two months prior to the current contract's original expiration on Dec. 31, 2016. With a mutually agreed upon extension agreement in place, the parties met for months to reach a contract, but that extension expired at midnight on Jan. 15. The union issued its original information request with RIS back on Sept. 26, 2016.

Local 710 members at RIS repair rail cars, including grinding, welding and painting. Any questions regarding the potential unfair labor practice strike should be directed to Ramirez or Business Agent Mike Cales at (773) 254-3200.

Teamsters Local 710 is an affiliate of Teamsters Joint Council 25, America's premier labor union for Chicago, Illinois and northwest Indiana.