



TAILGATING

From the Business Manager's Desk

Recently I've received questions on grievance handling, "How does the Local determine which ones to fight and which go to arbitration?" We need to assess the situation and determine if there is a contract violation or labor law violated.

The various contracts we represent have different, but similar language in that there is going to be a "fact-finding" process of some kind prior to the actual filing of a grievance. You may have heard the term "gripe" before. A gripe is essentially a complaint. All grievances are gripes (complaints), but not all gripes are grievances. The Union must investigate and determine if the complaint is a "gripe" or a "grievance". Once the determination is made that there is a grievance, the appropriate paperwork is filed with the Company.

In the grievance document, we must briefly explain what the grievance is, what part of the contract was violated, and what is the resolution requested. There are meetings held between the parties in attempt to resolve the grievance through various "steps". Resolution would be the parties agreeing to a settlement. If the grievance is not resolved, the final step is arbitration.

"How do we determine which grievances go to arbitration?" Ultimately, the Executive Board votes to give authorization to proceed with arbitration. We give the facts, evidence, and in some cases, a lawyer's recommendation so the E-Board can make an informed decision. They also can reach out to those that are involved in the grievance. In certain circumstances, some of the Executive Board members may be aware of the situation and have firsthand knowledge of the grievance details. Your Executive Board does a very good job of asking questions and makes recommendations to us throughout the process. The cost of an arbitration is quite large, and more importantly, the lasting effects of an arbitrator's decision are crucial to the future, so we strive to get as much evidence and facts possible prior to the E-Board deciding.

Another question I have gotten is "why are we fighting for that person?" We are legally obligated to represent everyone whether they are a member or not. A grievance is not filed for a "person", it is filed for "the situation". At any time, another member may be faced with the same or similar situation. There cannot be a decision made to file or not file a grievance based on who the person involved in the situation is.

Taking a grievance to arbitration that has little to no chance of winning is a mistake that we must avoid because of the crucial impacts a decision has to the future. Throughout the grievance process, the Union may withdraw from a grievance on a non-precedent setting manner. This is done when the evidence and supporting information are not favorable to the Union's position. Withdrawing from a grievance in this manner allows the Union to grieve a similar or same situation later.

I hope this was helpful providing insight to the grievance and arbitration process.

In Solidarity,

Jon Van Zante



Jake Sabers Journeyman with Alliant- DBQ

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Attitude & Safety

Does your attitude at work affect how safely you work? You bet it does! Let's talk about the benefits of coming to work with a positive attitude. A positive attitude affects your performance in a good way. You care about the quality of work you do, and it helps you maintain an open mind. With an open mind, you are open to new ideas, and you pay closer attention to details. You are constantly looking for ways to improve, which helps you develop safer work habits. Having a positive safety attitude helps you think before you act. It keeps you more alert and recognize hazards before they become a problem. People with positive attitudes develop work habits that help you become more organized and efficient.

When you show up with a negative attitude, your quality of work suffers. You start becoming careless, and when that happens you pay less attention to the safety rules. You're less aware of your surroundings. When this happens, you are more likely to get hurt. (We all know that second chances are few and far between when you're dealing with high voltage electricity.) Your attitude can inadvertently affect your co-worker's attitude, bringing their mood down. When you affect your co-worker's attitude, they also start to care less, pay less attention to the safety rules, and are more likely to get hurt.



We can't control what the company does or doesn't do. The decisions we think they should or shouldn't make. What we can control is our attitude. Be the guy that says good morning. Be the person that puts a smile on someone else's face. Be the one to lift their mood. When you come to work with a positive attitude, your co workers will be more likely to follow your example. When you focus on the positive things about your job and avoid the negative, others will take notice and adjust their own negativity. Stress levels will reduce. Better work habits will form. You and your co-workers will become more alert. You'll be able to recognize hazards and mitigate them, keeping everyone from getting hurt. I often hear, this used to be a fun place to work until this person did this or that person did that, or the company changed this. Focus less on what you can't change and more on what you can. Improve your attitude and I guarantee you will have more fun at work!

In Solidarity,
Garrett Gutknecht
IPL Electric Blue Hat

A New Journeyman's Reflection on Apprenticeship

Being a gas apprentice at Alliant Energy was a really rewarding experience for me. Right out of the gate you have the obvious benefits of no college tuition and paid on the job training. Hands on training 2 weeks a year at the Marshalltown Training center where you get to learn your books, ask questions, try out new tools and techniques; with some of the best trainers around. With the paid on the job training, you get the opportunity to work along side people that have been doing their trade for many years. They have experience and knowledge they are willing and eager to pass down to apprentices. That kind of hands-on knowledge and training is unprecedented to any knowledge you get from sitting in a classroom. Being a new Journeyman, I still lean on my IBEW brothers for the additional knowledge they have. There's always going to be that one time you see something or question something you haven't come across before. Being an IBEW member, we are the example for the company and take a lot of pride in our work.

"I still lean on my IBEW Brothers for the additional knowledge they have"

All of us here at Alliant are well-aware of our safety culture. Safety is something most people don't think about much in a day. Crews at Alliant are always safety first in every aspect of the job. That is something instilled in you during onboarding and early as an apprentice. I think, like most people, I underestimated the importance that safety had on my new career. Now I'm constantly safety minded, thinking ahead, and being prepared for what's going on around me. It carries over into life outside of our working hours; a trait that everyone at Alliant Energy possesses.

Chris Buffington
Marshalltown Operating
IBEW Local 204 Brother



Alliant Energy, Weld Apprentices, cutting in a new 4" Valve in Marshalltown Iowa



A look back on a beautiful day for a little underground work

Local 204 Collective Bargaining Agreements

Alliant Energy Large Group contract (IES)
 Alliant Energy Small Group contract (IPC)
 Alliant Energy Distribution System Operation
 Alliant Energy Emery & Marshalltown Generating Stations
 Atlantic Municipal Utilities
 Black Hills Energy
 Cedar County Sheriffs Deputies
 CIPCO (Central Iowa Power Cooperative)
 Linn County Assistant Attorneys
 Linn County Sergeants
 Prairie Energy Cooperative
 ULCS (Utility Lines Construction Services)
 Windstream Iowa Communications



New Members

Please welcome the following members to IBEW Local 204! The following members joined Local 204 in the 3rd quarter of 2022.

Ethan Chenault - Alliant
Cade Bennett - Alliant
Mark McDonald - Windstream
Parker Lien - Alliant
Travis Blakely - Alliant
Rodney McNeal - Alliant
Nathan Hinton - Alliant
Trey Swaney - Prairie Energy
Levi Bolinger - Prairie Energy
Kyle Pralle - Alliant
Troy Bochmann - Alliant
Daniel Thrasher - Alliant
Alan Horn - ULCS
Matthew Krueger - ULCS
Jeff Rassman - Windstream
Kyle Deutsch - Alliant
Jared Tolander - Alliant
David Morroquin - Alliant
Ryan DeLong - Alliant
Jeb Clark - Alliant
Hernan Hernandez - Alliant
Matthew Hauptert - Alliant
Nathan Carpenter - Alliant
Cooper Merrill - Alliant
Darwin Dede - Alliant
Jordan Holthaus - Black Hills
Daniel Messersmith - Black Hills
Douglas Velasco - Black Hills
Jon Bickford - Alliant
Joshua Huff - Alliant

New Retirements

Please join us in congratulating the following IBEW Local 204 members on their recent retirement! The following members retired in the 3rd quarter of 2022.

Jerry Korpi - ULCS

Felix Castillo - Alliant

Kent Dougherty - Alliant

Brian Boyd - Alliant

Doug Drummond - Alliant

Jeffrey Squires - Alliant

Robert Vileta - Alliant

Tim Lynn - Alliant

Kim DeWitt - ULCS

David Williamson - Black Hills Energy

Jeff Christiansen - Black Hills Energy

Scott Arndt - Alliant



Business Manager, Jon Van Zante presents long time E-Board member Brad Rick, with a commemorative plaque for his years of service with Local 204. Brad was an integral part of the successful relationship between Local 204 and DAEC for the past 33 years. DAEC has been decommissioned in 2022.

Got Photos ?

If you 've got photos you'd like to share for future Tailgating issues, we'd love to see them!

Please submit photos to Jon, Sarah, or Adam via email or text message.



Austin Lloyd & Chris Harmon

IBEW 204

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Eligibility

The IBEW 204 Scholarship Program is open to all dependents of Members of IBEW, Local 204 who will graduate from high school in the 2022-2023 school year. The Member must have been in continuous good standing for at least two (2) years with Local 204, or predecessor Local, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. The 2023 Scholarship award is in the amount of \$1000.00/scholarship. The IBEW, Local 204 Executive Board is to determine the winner(s).

Qualifications

Applications must be submitted by March 31, 2023, to: Local 204 Executive Board at 1009 Longfellow Dr, Hiawatha, IA 52233 on official application forms which are available from the Local 204 office upon request. Applicants are required to submit a complete personal resume of their notable activities to date. This is to include involvement in high school programs, clubs, sports, class ranking, community service, and goals. Applicants are required to submit an essay of between 250 and 300 words on: **“What are pros and cons of both pensions and 401k’s.”** The Essay must be double-spaced and typed.

Each applicant must submit three (3) letters of recommendation. Two (2) from their high school and one (1) from outside the school (not a family member), who is familiar with their abilities and performance records.

To be considered as a qualified candidate in the scholarship competition, candidates must have taken the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT). A copy of the test results is required with the application.

Selection of Winner(s)

The Executive Board will examine the complete record of each scholarship applicant. Consideration will be given to the SAT/ACT, essay, resume, goals, and letters of recommendation. The Executive Board will choose the winner(s) of the IBEW, 204 Scholarship Program. All winner(s) will be notified, and the scholarship winner(s) will be published in the Local 204 Tailgating newsletter.

Award(s)

The scholarship will be awarded upon proof of acceptance into an accredited college, university, or trade school as a full-time student. The check will be made payable to the recipient and to the appropriate institution. The scholarship is to be used for all legitimate educational expenses.

Responsibilities of Winner(s)

Winner(s) is expected to attend a college, university, or trade school, to take classes appropriate for their chosen curriculum, and to begin study by the first (fall) semester of the following school year.

Continuity of Scholarship

If serious or chronic illness or injury intervenes before a winner has entered higher education, or other serious considerations justify, the scholarship may be held in abeyance for one (1) academic year, subject to the discretion of the Executive Board.

FREE ACT OF IBEW, Local 204

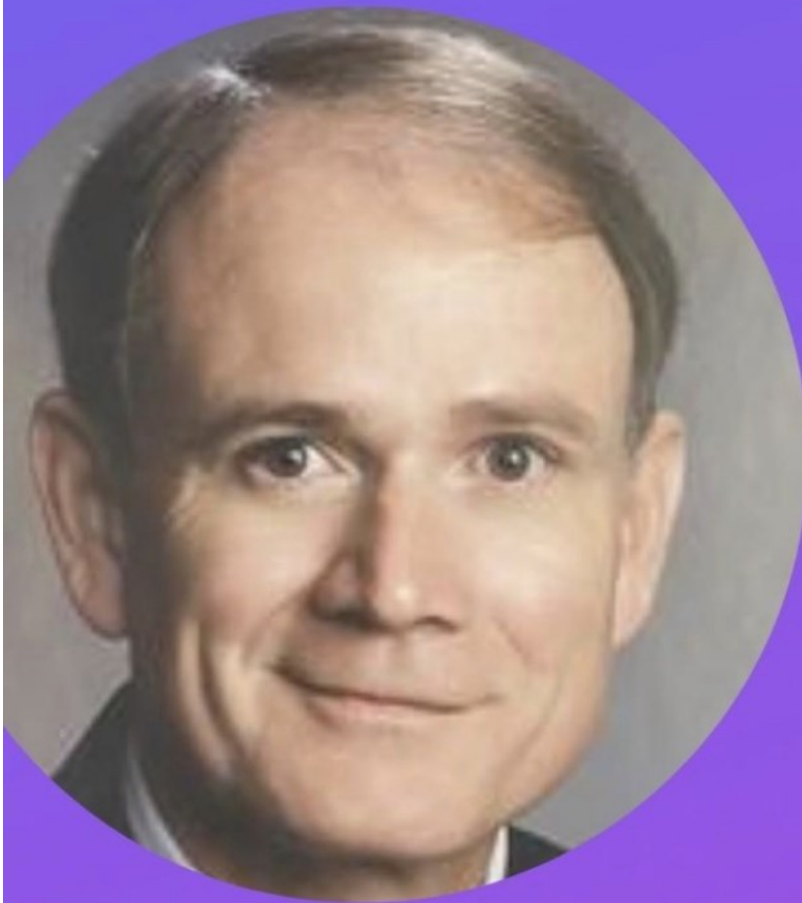
The creation of the scholarship program is a free act of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 204. IBEW, Local 204 retains its right to alter, suspend, cancel, or halt the IBEW, 204 Scholarship Program at any time and without giving any reason, provided however, that scholarship winners already in college, university or trade school under the program have received the scholarship for a total of \$1000.00.

Please contact the Office for applications or questions

Help spread the word on this great opportunity for our future generation!

Mac Donald "Mac" Smith Scholarship

**\$1,000 Scholarship for
College, Trade School or
Apprenticeship programs**



MacDonald Smith, better known as Mac, was a second generation Iowa Labor Union lawyer. He started working in his father's law firm at the age of ten. Early on Mac learned the challenges and importance of being an advocate for the working person. Throughout his life he worked diligently, both politically and academically, to advocate and represent those working people regardless of their financial status or diversity.

Eligibility: Union members and their immediate family defined in the application. Union members must be in good standing with a recognized Labor Union.



Application available on January 1, 2023
Application & Essay deadline April 1, 2023
Recipient announced May 1, 2023
Recognition at the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO Hall of Fame
dinner on August 24th, 2023

More Information: 515-262-9571
iowaaflcio.org/mac-smith-scholarship

Pre-Job Briefs & their *IMPORTANT!*

When my wife recently underwent rotator cuff surgery, I was impressed by the level of safety precautions that were taken at the hospital. It all started with hygiene protocols at home the night before surgery. She had to shower with a special anti-bacterial liquid soap, put on clean pajamas, then get into a bed with clean sheets. The next morning, she had to take another shower with the anti-bacterial liquid soap and put on clean clothes. Once we got to the hospital, she had to use iodine laden nasal swabs, anti-bacterial mouthwash, and wipe down her entire body with anti-bacterial wipes before putting on a sterilized hospital gown. In addition to all the hygiene protocols, there were at least five different hospital staff members that verified with my wife which shoulder was being operated on, with the last one being the surgeon who used a permanent magic marker to place his initials on the correct shoulder moments before she was rolled into the operating room.

All those precautions may have seemed somewhat excessive or perhaps even overkill, but when we stop and think about it, they were for the patient's own good. The mitigations the hospital took were calculated responses to known hazards. All the cleansing was intended to reduce chances of infections, and it was comforting to know that their desire was to operate on the correct shoulder. As my wife was in surgery, I began to reflect on how the focus of Alliant Energy's safety rules and procedures mimic hospital safety protocols. I have heard fellow employees complain that our safety rules and procedures at times seem somewhat excessive or even overkill, (just like the thoughts that crossed my mind about all the cleansing my wife had to do), but when we stop and think about it, they really are designed for our own good. In each case, the purpose of safety rules and procedures is to minimize risks when dealing with proven hazards.

"It doesn't have to be dangerous if we follow the rules"

Working in the utility business is arguably a hazardous occupation. Some might even say that it is dangerous. But it doesn't have to be dangerous if we follow the rules. Safety Consultant Carl Potter puts it this way "We don't work in a dangerous environment; we work in a hazardous environment that we make dangerous when we don't follow the safety rules and procedures". One such safety rule/procedure is the Pre-Job Brief process. It is one of the most useful tools we have for identifying hazards and mitigating risks and gives everyone a chance to address any concerns before the work begins.

Pre-Job Briefs don't have to be complicated. They should be a collaborative process including all personnel on the job and should focus on the job steps, potential hazards associated with the individual job steps, and methods to mitigate those hazards. Just like the precautions the hospital took to try to prevent an infection or inadvertently operate on the wrong body part, Pre-Job Briefs are meant to be a road map to guide us safely from the beginning to the end of every job without injury.

We could all move the injury needle in the right direction, both at work and at home, by always asking ourselves:

What am I/are we about to do?

What are the hazards associated with this task? (How can this hurt me/others?)

What am I/are we going to do to mitigate those hazards to ensure No One Gets Hurt!?

We all have the responsibility to create a safe and responsible workplace. We are all very important to our safety culture at home and at work. If it's not safe...don't do it! Be diligent in your efforts to guarantee you and your coworkers go home safely every day. Someone at home is counting on you!

In solidarity,

Terry Harris

Generation West Operations Safety Blue Hat

Remember, Nobody Gets Hurt!



2022 Inter-Union Gas Conference Report Out

I would like to thank Local 204 and Alliant Energy for the opportunity to attend the Inter-Union Gas Conference in the fall of 2022. This conference consists of 5 participating unions. International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), United Association (UA), International Chemical Workers Union Council (ICWUC), Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA), United Steel Workers (USW), and Unifor (Canada). This was probably the largest group of union members at any conference that I have ever attended with 430 members attending.

It is always good to hear from all the brothers and sisters talking about the challenges they face daily. It consists of everything from FR clothing allowances and clothing options to the safety of the union employees, crew sizes, how many qualified people need to do the tasks, OQ testing requirements, leak calls and response time, new updated gas equipment and many more topics. What is so interesting about this conference is the fact that nothing is off the table. You can talk about any issues that are taking place at your local or the company you work for. All the 430 union members are at the conference to get ideas and tools on how to improve safety for all the employees they represent and take them back to improve safety where they work.

This was very hard for some of the individuals to stand up and talk about some of the serious injuries and the one fatality that took place in 2022. Some of them were either part of the crew or the individual who ended up getting seriously injured from the workplace accident.

I would like for anyone reading this article to think about the definition of communication. Communication is simply the act of giving, receiving, and sharing information. We need to ask ourselves am I a good communicator? How do I improve my communication skills to be sure that nobody absolutely nobody on my job GETS HURT!!!

In each situation every single one of them said they did some form of a job briefing. We need to ask ourselves how this could happen when we completed a job briefing. Every single one of the situations that the members talked about had one thing in common. It was the lack of COMMUNICATION between the workers when the initial task changed. They just continued to go on with the job they were trying to complete. If they all would have taken the time to stop and regroup when the task at hand changed every one of these injuries and the one fatality would not have happened.

I would like everyone to stop and think about these things and if it is a minor change in the plan or something unexpectedly takes place, we need to make sure we communicate with everyone taking part in the job they are trying to complete. COMMUNICATION between you and the crew you are working with is the most important part of keeping you safe and able to go home to your family. When you are a good communicator, and everyone listens, and we follow the steps that we communicated or stop the job when we need to this will prevent injuries and accidents. Don't be afraid to stop and ask questions when you feel in your gut something seems like it is not going as planned. Let's all work on our communication skills and see if we can make 2023 the safest year yet for Local 204, Alliant Energy and at home.

If anyone would like to hear more about the conference, please reach out to me. I would be happy to share more information with anyone that is interested. Once again, I would like to Thank you all for the opportunity to attend this conference.

In solidarity,
Randy Brown
IPL Gas Blue Hat

Local 204 Structure

IBEW Local 204

Local 204 employs four full-time positions; Business Manager/ Financial Secretary, two (2) Assistant Business Managers, and an Office Administrator. All Officer and Executive Board positions are elected positions with 3-year terms. The BM/ FS appoints both Assistant Business Managers and Office Administrator. The Executive Board is comprised of 10 seats from 9 geographical areas and an additional At-Large seat. The Officers and Executive Board, along with the ABM's, attend Monthly Executive Board Meetings. (E-Board)

STAFF

Assistant Business Manager
Assistant Business Manager
Office Administrator

Sarah Faber
Adam Splinter

OFFICERS

Business Manager/Financial Sec.
President
Vice President
Recording Secretary
Treasurer

Jon Van Zante
Jeff Chapman
Pat Flannery
Adam Splinter
Shelia Altman

Gas Foreman / Alliant
Maintenance Mech. / Alliant
Lineman / ULCS
Corrosion Tech / Black Hills
Resource Coordinator / Alliant

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Unit 1 Chad Hilsabeck
Unit 2 Tyler Fredin
Unit 3 Corey Birkel
Unit 4 Josh Eaton
Unit 5 Keith Jones
Unit 6 Senica Fisher
Unit 7 Jim Hendricks
Unit 8 Gary Henry
Unit 9 Jeff Denz
At-Large Randy Brown

Gas Foreman / Alliant / Storm Lake, IA
Line Foreman / Alliant / Mason City, IA
Lineman / Alliant / Dubuque, IA
Line Foreman / ULCS / Perry, IA
Sr. Gas Trainer / Alliant / Marshalltown, IA
Line Foreman / Alliant / Cedar Rapids, IA
Operations Tech / Black Hills / Council Bluffs, IA
Line Foreman / Alliant / Centerville, IA
Lineman / Alliant / Burlington, IA
Gas Safety Blue Hat / Alliant / Lisbon, IA

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