From Your President

As a union, there are several responsibilities which we have. We negotiate collective bargaining agreements and MOUs, we represent you during investigatory meetings or disciplinary hearings, and we file grievances on your behalf when we disagree with the discipline which has been imposed.

Another important function of the union is when we file grievances over the fact that the administration or specific managers are not following the contract. In order to do this, we need your help. Sometimes we are aware of actions by admin or management that we feel are contract violations, such as the imposition of the mandatory in-service day or the changes to attendance policy resulting in the points system. But there are other instances where a manager is not following the contract which we are not aware of, and therefore we do not complain about them or file a grievance. Then, when we try to file a complaint after we do become aware of the situation, admin's response is that this has been going on for months or years and you have never complained about it before.

We need you to let us know when these situations occur, so that we can complain about them at the time and get a resolution. A few examples which fall into this category:

- staff being denied their paid morning or afternoon breaks, due to low staff coverage or to the fact that they are scheduled back-to-back desk shifts without breaks being built into the schedule
- staff being denied the ability to take paid days off when needed, as vacation, floating holiday, or sick days
- staff being told that they are required to remain after clocking out at the end of the day until the last person has clocked out, so that they can all go to the parking lot together for safety reasons
- staff applying for FMLA or ADA accommodations and being denied due to the library being "unable" to make that accommodation

When things like this occur, whether you are being told this by your manager, a PSD, or someone in HR, please get in touch with us right away. We will not be able to get all of these types of situations resolved in ways that we think are fair and equitable, but if you do not let us know about them, then none of them will be resolved in our favor, and they will continue using the same tactics on other staff. Also, if there are things which are happening in multiple locations, we may be able to get contract language strengthened during the next negotiations, so that the same type of behavior does not continue in the future.

Please reach out and let us know what is going on, so that we can better defend all of our member's rights.

-Lori Rotterman,
DMLSA President

www.dmlsa.org

2026 Changes in Labor Law

Ohio Law:

- Relative to Ohio labor law, the non-tipped minimum wage was raised to $11.00/hour (up from $10.70). Tipped employees wage raised to $5.50/hour (up from $5.35) It applies to businesses with annual gross receipts over $405,000. Smaller businesses and 14- to 15-year-old workers remain at the federal $7.25 rate.
- WARN Act: Businesses with 100+ employees must provide 60 days of written notice for large-scale site closures or mass layoffs impacting over 50 workers.

Nationwide:

- At least 19 US states have raised in their minimum wages. In a handful of these states, the minimum wage is now set at or above $15 USD per hour for the first time. In certain states, such as California and Connecticut, the new wages are close to $17 USD per hour.
- Several US states are introducing laws that pertain to the use of AI in hiring and employment decisions:
- Illinois: As of January 1, 2026, new rules in Illinois require employers to notify job applicants and workers if they use AI for hiring, discipline, discharge, or other work-related purposes.
- Colorado: Passed an AI Act (SB 24-205) that requires the following relative to employers: that they implement risk management policies; conduct annual assessments that examine the impact of AI in hiring, firing, and promotion decisions; and issue public notices to avoid algorithmic bias. Employers with fewer than 50 employees that do not use their own data to train their AI systems are exempt.
- Texas: The Responsible Artificial Intelligence Governance Act (HB 149) took effect on January 1, 2026 and requires that AI systems cannot be developed or used with an intent to infringe, restrict, or impair an individual's rights or unlawfully discriminate against a protected class in violation of state or federal law.

Federal law:

- The EEOC has moved closer to removing reporting requirements. For nearly sixty years, covered employers and certain federal contractors have been required to maintain records and submit annual workforce demographic reports reflecting the gender, racial, and ethnic makeup of their workforces to the EEOC, including employers that have never faced a discrimination charge or a Title VII investigation. In May 2026, the EEOC announced that there was a proposal in the works that would rescind the regulations that mandate and structure workforce demographic recordkeeping and reporting, which, if finalized, would eliminate EEO reporting and related reporting requirements.

-Martha Ballinger,
DMLSA Secretary

Are Unions Gaining Support Again?

Union membership has declined for decades—by 2024, fewer than 6% of private-sector workers and 32% of public-sector workers belonged to a union. A mix of factors, including right-to-work laws and weak penalties for labor-law violations, has made it harder for unions to maintain influence. “Fewer than 6% of private-sector workers belonged to a union…”

Still, signs point to renewed interest. Cornell labor scholar Kate Bronfenbrenner found union support reached a 60-year high in 2022, with 71% of surveyed workers viewing unions favorably and nearly half saying they would join one. Highly visible organizing at Amazon and Starbucks has further highlighted workers’ desire for collective bargaining. “71% of workers surveyed had a favorable view of unions…”

Growing support may stem from rising workplace stress. Trends such as noncompete agreements, unstable schedules, and increased reliance on contractors make it harder for workers to secure steady wages, benefits, and predictable lives. Research by Erin Kelly and Phyllis Moen shows that escalating job demands are harming workers’ health and stability, making unions appear more appealing as a source of workplace voice and protection.

Recent organizing has delivered real gains. MIT graduate students won improvements in pay, childcare support, and dental benefits, while Whitney Museum employees secured wage increases. Worker centers have also spotlighted issues like harassment, hazardous conditions, and wage theft, pushing employers and policymakers toward reforms.

Whether this moment signals lasting change is unclear. Policy shifts—such as cuts affecting federal contractors and weakened bargaining rights for some federal employees—could hinder organizing. Still, conversations about fairness, worker voice, and collective action are becoming more prominent, suggesting this trend is worth watching.

Paraphrased from an article published by Forbes 6/16/25 and written by Aida Harvey Wingfield

-Christy Trent,
DMLSA Treasurer

Vote for the Next DMLSA T-Shirt!

Don’t Work Off the Clock!

A reminder to all bargaining unit staff to never work off the clock. There was a case earlier in the year of a bargaining unit member being disciplined for working off the clock in front of their manager. Since bargaining unit staff are not exempt-staff under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Library can be fined by the US Department Labor for violations (up to $10,000 per occurrence) for staff working off the clock. You are also not covered under Workman’s Comp if you are injured while working off the clock.

-Jared Baldwin, DMLSA Vice President/Chief Steward

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Call Off Procedures

A reminder to all bargaining unit staff to notify your manager at least two hours in advance of your start time if you will not be able to make it to work. Previously, only one-hour advance notice was needed for calling off work. The change to two hours advance notice is from the attendance policy that was negotiated earlier this year and took effect on June 14th. Admin had proposed disciplining a bargaining unit member in July for not giving a two hour advance notice of not being able to make it into work, but the Union was able to get the discipline dropped. Please be sure to get a doctor's note if calling off three or more consecutive days.

-Jared Baldwin, DMLSA Vice President/Chief Steward

2026 Negotiations Committee

Matt Stokely - DMLSA Attorney

Lori Rotterman - DMLSA President, Information Services Librarian in Special Collections

Jared Baldwin - DMLSA Vice President, Information Services Librarian at Huber Heights

Ariya Arnold - Information Services Assistant in Information Services

Jacobee Buchanan - Information Services Assistant at Miami Township

Linda Lewis - Children Services Librarian at New Lebanon

Kristina Richey - Information Services Librarian at Miami Township

Treasurer's Report

YTD 01/01/2026 to 08/12/2026
Checking account: $3135
Savings account: $274,090
YTD Income Jan-July: $55,300
YTD Expenses Jan – July (Negotiation Year): $66,726
Net Income: -$11,426

Labor Movement Trivia

On July 5, 1935, FDR signed the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) into law. The NLRA was upheld by the Supreme Court it 1937 and it contributed to a dramatic surge in union membership in the late 1930s and 1940s.

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