Transportation Communications Union/IAM

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

Arthur P. Maratea
National President

September 12, 2025

TO ALL LONG ISLAND RAILROAD MEMBERS

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Benefits available under the Railroad Retirement Unemployment Insurance Act (RUIA) for eligible Long Island Railroad members

The below outlines benefits available under the Railroad Retirement Unemployment Insurance Act (RUIA) for eligible Long Island Railroad members impacted by the upcoming potential strike.

To qualify for unemployment benefits for the current benefit year beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, a member must have railroad earnings and creditable service months in the base calendar year 2024. To qualify during the benefit year beginning July 1, 2025, you must have base year earnings of at least $4,962.50 in calendar year 2024, counting no more than $1,985 per month. If 2024 was your first year of railroad service, you must also have worked in 5 months of that year.

Qualified members on an authorized strike are eligible for daily unemployment benefits after meeting a 14-day waiting period. After the initial 14-day waiting period, daily benefits are $99 or $990 every 10 days in each subsequent 14-day period as long as you claim every day in a benefit period.

Benefits may be reduced for any day in which other benefits you may receive such as governmental benefits which include but are not limited to social security benefits, a pension, annuity, or other retirement pay under a Federal, State, or local law (such as a railroad retirement annuity, military retirement pay, a policeman's or fireman's pension, etc.), certain workers' compensation payments, or any other social insurance payment under any law. Additionally, benefits may also be reduced for any day on which you work or otherwise earn wages, holiday pay, vacation pay, or other pay. This includes pay from full-time and part-time work in either railroad or non-railroad employment, and from self-employment. The RRB will determine benefits payable after reviewing each 14-day claim, so it is important to file benefits for each claim period.

If a member is receiving any of the above-mentioned benefits, they should discuss their unemployment benefits with the local Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) office 877-772-5772.

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It is imperative that you don't delay – **REGISTER FOR ONLINE ACCESS RIGHT NOW - TODAY**. The RRB accepts unemployment applications online or by mail. To file an application and subsequent unemployment claim forms online, a member must establish an online account. If a member is not already registered at the **www.RRB.gov** website, they should create an account as soon as possible. Members who already have an RRB online account, please check to make sure your account is active. Once you are signed in, go to "Apply for Unemployment Benefits".

Members wishing to mail an application can obtain copies either by contacting the RRB's customer service number 877-772-5772 or downloading a copy from the RRB website.

Completed unemployment applications should be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days from the date on which the member goes on strike, otherwise, benefits may be lost if the application is filed late. After the initial application is filed, biweekly claims will be issued which must be completed and returned either online or by mail on or after the last day of the claim period. The RRB must receive the claim within 15 days of the end of the claim period.

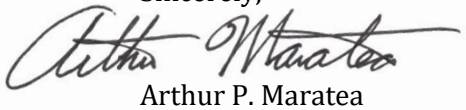
Unemployment benefits paid under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (RUIA) are considered income for Federal income tax purposes. Each year, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) sends railroad employees Form 1099-G showing the total amount of unemployment benefits paid during the preceding calendar year. These benefits must be reported on the Federal income tax return.

A member may file Form W-4v with the nearest RRB office if he/she wants the RRB to withhold Federal income tax from his/her benefits. Unemployment benefits are exempt from State income taxes.

Further, all LIRR members in good standing will receive strike benefits from the Strike Fund. Strike benefits paid by the organization will not impact unemployment benefits payable under RUIA and do not need to be claimed. More detailed information will be forthcoming.

Should you or your members have any questions on how to file for unemployment benefits or how to register for the RRB online services, they may contact Jessica Cullop, Director, in the TCU/IAM Social Services Department, at LIRRSTRIKE@TCUnion.org or by contacting a local U.S. Railroad Retirement Board office at 877-772-5772.

Sincerely,



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