



SAG·AFTRA®

**TV/THEATRICAL
STRIKE
AUTHORIZATION
2023**

REFERENDUM BOOKLET

MAY 18, 2023

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The SAG-AFTRA National Board unanimously recommends members **VOTE YES** for the 2023 SAG-AFTRA TV/Theatrical Strike Authorization.

**VOTE
YES
TODAY**

All eligible members were mailed a postcard on Thursday, May 18, 2023, with instructions and a PIN number on how to vote online or how to request a paper ballot. If necessary, you can retrieve your PIN number at the voting website by clicking "Find My PIN."

Ballots — whether submitted online or by mail — must be received by 5 p.m. PDT on Monday, June 5, 2023.

For questions, call (323) 634-8171 or email strike.authorization@sagaftra.org

VOTE NOW AT
vote.ivsballot.com/sagaftra2023





May 18, 2023

RE: Strike Authorization — Maximum Bargaining Leverage

Dear Member,

On June 7, SAG-AFTRA will enter into negotiations with the trade association representing major studios, streamers and production companies — the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) — on SAG-AFTRA’s Codified Basic Agreement and Television Agreement (“TV/Theatrical Contracts”).

Our goal in this negotiation is to ensure our members working in film, television and streaming/new media can continue to earn a professional living with a contract that honors our contributions.

We need a contract that will increase contributions to our benefit plans and protect members from erosion of income due to inflation and reduced residuals, unregulated use of generative AI, and demanding self-taped auditions.

Your negotiating committee, National Board and leadership are 100% in support of entering negotiations with a strike authorization in hand.

Why? Because they appreciate that timing is EVERYTHING! We simply can’t wait to start scrambling on the backend of this contract to obtain a strike authorization.

It’s important to understand that voting yes to give the negotiators a strike authorization is not voting to call a strike. Voting yes on a strike authorization means that you, as the member, give the National Board the power to call a strike if the AMPTP does not agree to essential contract improvements.

A strike is never a first option, but a last resort. Yet, it’s better to have and not need than to need and not have.

The business model of our industry has changed significantly. We have fully entered a digital and streaming entertainment industry, and that demands a contract that is relevant to the new business model and must be contemporary to meet the financial needs of our members today.

Our members are governed by contracts that reflect the business of 30 years ago. And too much has changed since then for those contracts to serve us well. The rise of streaming, artificial intelligence (AI), and the impacts of other technology advances on entertainment, coupled with a steep increase in the

cost of living — all while studio profits and executive pay rise meteorically — means that we need to seek new and imaginative ways to move forward. And believe us when we say, we have!

If ever there was a time to take action and demand seminal change it is NOW!

SAG-AFTRA is entering into these negotiations in good faith and demanding a fair deal for our members from the AMPTP. We hope and expect they will respond in good faith. While the union's leadership, National Board and negotiating committee members regard a strike as a last resort, we believe we must be ready for any eventuality, and have all of the leverage possible in order to secure the best deal.

We need you to vote **YES** to authorize a strike if push comes to shove.

If we don't stand our ground now and show them we mean business, we will always be chasing something just out of our grasp.

Do not let that happen!

Please know that this request is not one we take lightly, and if you vote to authorize a strike, SAG-AFTRA cannot enter a work stoppage before our contract expires on June 30, 2023.

We implore you to vote **YES** and give your negotiators the tools they need to get the best deal for you that they possibly can.

Postcards were sent to eligible members on Thursday, May 18, with instructions on how to vote at vote.ivsballot.com/sagaftra2023. Voting will close at 5 p.m. PT on Monday, June 5.

More information is available at sagaftra.org/contracts2023.

We are one in solidarity against a very strong opposition; let's show 'em what we're made of!



Fran Drescher
President & Chair
TV/Theatrical Contracts Negotiating Committee



Duncan Crabtree-Ireland
National Executive Director & Chief Negotiator

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS A STRIKE AUTHORIZATION?

A strike authorization is a powerful tool that gives your negotiating committee added leverage at the bargaining table by demonstrating to the studios and streaming companies that SAG-AFTRA members support their committee and are willing to fight for a fair deal. It does not automatically mean there will be a strike.

If 75% or more of eligible members casting ballots vote YES, a strike authorization passes and gives your National Board the authority to call a strike after the contract expires. In the case of SAG-AFTRA's Codified Basic Agreement and Television Agreement ("TV/Theatrical Contracts"), assuming a strike authorization is approved by members, that means the National Board can call a strike anytime after June 30, 2023.

WHY IS SAG-AFTRA REQUESTING A STRIKE AUTHORIZATION?

The upcoming TV/Theatrical Contracts negotiations will determine whether our members working in film, television and streaming can continue earning a professional living doing the job they love. Compensation has been undercut by inflation and by a streaming ecosystem through which producers pay less residual income than traditional exhibition models. Unregulated use of artificial intelligence threatens the very voices and likenesses that form the basis of professional acting careers. The benefit plans that members rely upon for health care and a dignified retirement are under stress. And the shift to burdensome and unreasonably demanding self-taped auditions means that our members are working harder than ever, forced to take on audition costs that have always been the responsibility of casting and production. Without transformative change in the TV/Theatrical Contracts, it will soon be unsustainable to pursue a career working under these conditions.

The time for change is now and we must be prepared to fight if management will not address our concerns. To maximize our leverage, we are asking members to vote to authorize a TV/Theatrical strike should discussions at the bargaining table prove unproductive.

A strike authorization vote doesn't guarantee a strike will occur; rather, it's a tool we can use to help our negotiating team secure the best deal possible.

WHAT DOES A YES VOTE MEAN?

With a YES vote in hand, the National Board will have the ability to declare a strike if bargaining fails to produce a deal our members will accept. A YES vote is a strong show of solidarity with your fellow working actors on the TV/Theatrical Contracts Negotiating Committee, giving them the backing they can leverage to reach a deal and fight for the contract we deserve.

WHAT DOES A NO VOTE MEAN?

A no vote tells management that they do not have to make a fair deal in order to keep our members working. Without the threat of a work stoppage, management has little incentive to change archaic contract provisions that advantage them and exploit our members.

HOW MANY VOTES ARE NEEDED IN ORDER FOR A STRIKE AUTHORIZATION VOTE TO PASS?

The vote requires at least 75% of eligible members casting ballots to vote YES to authorize the National Board to declare a strike once SAG-AFTRA's contract expires. While 75% is the required threshold, we want as close to a 100% YES vote as possible. This shows management we are united in our resolve for a fair contract.

DOES THE PASSAGE OF A STRIKE AUTHORIZATION VOTE MEAN SAG-AFTRA WILL GO ON STRIKE?

No. Instead, the strike authorization vote permits the National Board to declare a strike if the studios and streaming companies fail to protect and uphold the basic working conditions of our members — the professional performers who make this one of the most successful industries in the world. Your negotiating committee and National Board will do everything they can to reach an agreement without a strike, and the leverage of a successful strike authorization vote will strengthen us to push for the best deal possible.

WHO IS SAG-AFTRA NEGOTIATING WITH?

SAG-AFTRA negotiates with the major studios and streamers, including Amazon/MGM, Apple, NBCUniversal, Disney/ABC/Fox, Netflix, Paramount/CBS, Sony and Warner Bros., who are represented at the bargaining table by the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP).

WHO REPRESENTS SAG-AFTRA DURING NEGOTIATIONS?

Members are the driving force during negotiations. SAG-AFTRA President Fran Drescher chairs the TV/Theatrical Contracts Negotiating Committee, comprised of a diverse and inclusive group of members from around the country representing the various work categories covered by the TV/Theatrical Contracts. The committee advises and works in partnership with Chief Negotiator Duncan Crabtree-Ireland and a staff team of contract experts and seasoned negotiators.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MAJOR ISSUES ON THE TABLE IN THE UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS?

Key issues include economic fairness, residuals, regulating the use of artificial intelligence and alleviating the burdens of the industry-wide shift to self-taping.

Economic Fairness: Outdated contract terms, coupled with the evolution of the media business, including shorter season orders and longer hiatuses between seasons makes it increasingly difficult for our members to achieve and maintain a middle class lifestyle working as a performer. In sharp contrast to the diminishing compensation paid to our members, the studios are posting immense profits with a bullish outlook as demonstrated by lavish corporate executive compensation.

SAG-AFTRA is committed to ensuring our members are able to make a living performing in scripted dramatic live action entertainment. This means ensuring increased compensation when our members work, shoring up the funding of our Health, Retirement, and Pension Plans, and providing our members a meaningful share of the economic value created by their performances.

Residuals: Residuals supplement session payments and are an integral element of any performer's compensation. While new business models mean that more and more SAG-AFTRA content is monetized around the globe, residuals payments are failing to reflect the economic value of this exhibition. SAG-AFTRA is committed to ensuring residual payments both reflect the economic value of our members' contribution, and serve as a meaningful source of performer earnings.

AI: Technology has advanced at a rapid pace. Artificial intelligence has already proven to be a real and immediate threat to the work of our members and can mimic members' voices, likenesses and performances. We must get agreement around acceptable uses, bargain protections against misuse, and ensure consent and fair compensation for the use of your work to train AI systems and create new performances. In their public statements and policy work, the companies have not shown a desire to take our members' basic rights to our own voices and likenesses seriously.

Self-Tapes: Self-taped auditions are unregulated and out of control: too many pages, too little time and unreasonable requirements have made self-taping auditions a massive, daily, uncompensated burden on the lives of performers.

Reasonable rules and limitations, and access to other casting formats, are sorely needed to ensure fair access to work opportunities and protect performers against exploitation.

Many other important issues, including those specific to particular careers and categories, will be on the table as well.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING NEGOTIATIONS?

Negotiations open with proposals from both sides. SAG-AFTRA brings forth a package of proposals that addresses the concerns of members and, throughout the negotiations, fights for you and the issues you told us were important. The AMPTP will often make proposals designed to cut costs at member expense in order to pad corporate profits and fund lavish executive compensation. Away from the bargaining table, the negotiating committee deliberates on bargaining decisions and debates tactics and strategies. Proposals may then be amended, countered, or dropped, by either side until an agreement is reached or negotiations reach a stalemate.

WHAT HAPPENS IF SAG-AFTRA GOES ON STRIKE?

SAG-AFTRA leadership (National Board) must wait until the current TV/Theatrical Contracts expire on June 30, 2023, and must have a successful strike authorization vote before a strike can be called. If a strike is called, members will withhold their labor and not perform any services for struck companies. SAG-AFTRA members will then engage in collective actions such as picketing to put pressure on the AMPTP.

WILL I CONTINUE TO GET RESIDUALS DURING A STRIKE?

Yes. There will be no change in the residuals owed to you for existing work product, and your residuals payments will continue to be sent to you.



SAG·AFTRA.