

# The Fund Office Report

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## 2023 Tax Forms

The Form 1099-R will be mailed by January 31, 2024 as required by law. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888, option 9.

## Lifetime Health Coverage!

We are proud to announce that the Trustees of the Metal Trades Branch Local 638 Welfare Fund have unanimously agreed to offer Lifetime Health Care to Retired Members of Local 638!

This is a historic and monumental decision that will provide peace of mind for members and their spouses for decades to come! A Summary of Material Modifications "SMM" was mailed to all participants on December 20, 2023.

Eligibility requirements include all of the following:

- 25 years of credited service in the Metal Trades Branch Local 638 Pension Fund,
- coverage in the Welfare Fund for at least 48 out of 60 months prior to your Retirement Date,
- and coverage in the Welfare Fund the day before you retire.



Please read the SMM for more details. For more information, please contact the Welfare Department at (212) 465-8888, option 4.



## 2023 Retirement Seminar



The Retirement Seminar was held at the LaGuardia Airport Marriott on Saturday, November 18, 2023. Fund Office representatives gave presentations regarding your benefit funds in retirement. In addition, there were speakers on Social Security, Estate Planning, Asbestosis and the Steamfitters' Industry Assistance Program. Over 300 members and spouses attended this event and the day was a great success. The Seminar is scheduled to be held again in the Fall of 2025.

## Disability Pension Benefits

If you applied for and received a Social Security Administration Award Certificate, also known as a “**Notice of Award,**” you may meet the eligibility requirements for a Disability Pension. You must have at least ten (10) years of service credits, and not yet be age 65. If you are eligible, your Disability Pension will be calculated as though you are age 65. The effective date of your pension will be the date of your entitlement to disability benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA) indicated on your Notice of Award. If you apply for your pension benefit from the Metal Trades Pension Plan within **90 days** of the receipt of your SSA Award Certificate, your pension benefits will be paid retroactively to the date you became entitled to Social Security disability benefits, as indicated on the certificate. **If your application is not made within 90 days of the receipt of your certificate, Disability Pension payments will begin on the first of the month following the receipt of a valid application.** If you have applied, or plan to apply for Social Security Disability Insurance Benefits, please contact the Pension Department at the Fund Office, (212) 465-8888, menu option 3.

## Empire BlueCross BlueShield Name Change



Beginning January 1, 2024, Empire BlueCross BlueShield will change its name to Anthem BlueCross BlueShield. You will maintain access to the same network of hospitals and doctors. If you use the web to access Empire, the URL you currently use will automatically redirect you to the new site.

## New York State Paid Family Leave



**New York State Paid Family Leave (NY PFL) Rate and Benefit Updates for 2024.** The employee contributions to pay for the Paid Family Leave (PFL) benefit coverage will continue through payroll deductions at a rate based on your salary. The following chart represents the updated employee contribution rate and benefit provisions for the upcoming 2024 calendar year, which will be effective January 1, 2024. For more information, please contact your Employer directly or feel free to contact the Fund Office at (212) 465-8888 option 4 on the main menu.

NY PFL:	2024	2023
Maximum Employee Annual Contribution	\$333.25	\$399.43
Maximum Length of Paid Leave	12 weeks	12 weeks
Maximum Weekly Benefit	\$1,151.16	\$1,131.08

## Social Security Administration

### Retirement, Survivors & Disability Insurance – Notice of Award

#### ***Have you, your spouse or any eligible dependents been awarded Disability Benefits from the Social Security Administration?***

Being approved for Social Security Disability Insurance Benefits means that your entitlement to health coverage through Medicare would begin earlier than age 65. There are Federal Medicare guideline rules that need to be followed once someone is eligible for Medicare. The Welfare Fund would help you determine when to enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B and what plan you would need to be enrolled in due to your Disability. Not informing us of your Medicare eligibility when you are eligible to enroll, may cost the Welfare Fund unnecessary costs, may affect your enrollment into the correct plan and could cause you to have to reimburse the Welfare Fund for any medical, hospital and prescription claims that you may have incurred during the time period. If you or your dependents are receiving social security disability benefits, please contact the Welfare Fund at (212) 465-8888, menu option 4 for help and clarification.

