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Show Flipping Process

Below is an overview of the “Show Flipping Process” which explains how the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (“IATSE International”) and its Local Unions (i.e. IATSE Local 728) can convert (or “Flip”) a production, and have it covered under the IATSE Basic Agreement. To this end, when a production is not signatory to an IATSE International Agreement, such production can be unionized, or “flipped,” by doing the following:

Upon notice of a non-union production, any employee on the production (member or not) should contact the appropriate IATSE Local Union, in this case IATSE Local 728, either directly (i.e. via phone call, text message, or email) or indirectly, through the IATSE 728 website: www.iatse728.org. (Please see the “Report Your Show/Non-Union Show” tab). At that time, the crew should also deliver to their IATSE contact any relevant information about the production, including, but not limited to - call sheets (including CLT), Key Grip’s names and numbers, and the DP’s names and numbers. This information will then be forwarded to the IATSE International.

Once the relevant materials have been delivered, and if the IATSE International believes the production to be a possible candidate, the IATSE International will then reach out to the appropriate IATSE Local Unions and have them contact departments under their respective jurisdictions.

The IATSE International will also create electronic “Authorization Cards” to send to each member of the crew. The Authorization Cards require the prospective bargaining unit member to affirmatively agree to have the IATSE represent them and negotiate with the production on their behalf.

For IATSE to begin the representation and bargaining process, more than half the crew members must ask for union representation, which is accomplished by signing and returning the authorization cards, either physically or a digital version.

At this point, the IATSE local unions are only involved to facilitate information dissemination and, if possible, visit the location to answer questions for the member of their respective departments.

If a producer agrees to sign a contract, the IATSE International will handle the entire process, including the finalization and signature of the agreement. The individual IATSE Local Unions do not sign these agreements.



If the producers decides not to sign, the IATSE, including both the Local Unions and the IATSE International, will ask the crew members to remain off the job until such time as the producers decide to negotiate.

FAQs - Below are some frequently asked questions and answers:

- Q: Who signs the agreement once it has been negotiated?
- A: It is not the IATSE Local Unions that sign a contract for a show, it is the IATSE International that signs the Agreement.

- Q: Is it possible for another union, such as the Teamsters, SAG, and/or DGA to be entered into an agreement on an otherwise non-IATSE production?
- A: It is possible for Teamsters, SAG, or DGA to have an agreement with a production that does not have an IATSE contract.

- Q: Will I get an increase in pay when the IATSE signs an agreement with my production?
- A: More than likely your pay rate will not increase after the show flips but cannot be reduced either.

- Q: Can I get credits for my previous days of work on a newly covered production?
- A: Yes. On your initial start date, as you are filling out your start packets, make sure your job title is listed in the department you would like to have your permitted days count towards. If your packet says PA as the job title (or you are placed in a department which is not under IATSE Local 728's jurisdiction) those days would not count towards Local 728.

- Q: Does the IATSE International have to "flip" each department of a production individually?
- A: No. If any IATSE Local Union sanctions a labor action to flip your show, all IATSE covered departments would be covered by an agreement.

- Q: What happens if a labor action is called due to a production refusing to sign an agreement?
- A: If a labor action is called, you may be asked to walk out and join the labor action outside of the set/stage. ***IATSE Local 728 recommends you bring all personal items with you in the event of a walk off.***

- Q: Can a producer shut down a production due to a unionization effort?
- A: It is possible that in the process of seeking union representation on a non-union project, the producers may decide to either shut down filming and/or replace the crew.

- Q: If a labor action is called and I am already an IATSE member, do I need to engage in the labor action?
- A: Yes. If you are currently a Union member and a labor action is called, you are required to walk out.
- Q: Do productions sign agreements with IATSE often?
- A: It depends. Many productions have agreed to enter into an IATSE Agreement shortly after being contacted by the IATSE International. However, other productions have hesitated or never signed an agreement.
- Q: Do I need to fill out paperwork once my production flips?
- A: Yes. If/When the show signs an IATSE contract, most likely you will be asked to sign new start paperwork indicating the show/depts new union status.

Reminder: If your production does agree to a union contract, every day you have worked on the show counts as a “permitted day” with regard to your IATSE membership. Further, an employee who is a non-member may stay on the show until the following occurs:

- Until a there is a break in service (i.e. hiatus, etc.); or
- Until the productions manpower is reduced, as, per the IATSE Agreement, non-members are released before union members.

Reminder: Once the show signs an IATSE agreement, all terms and conditions of that agreement apply to your employment, and even as a non-member, you will be entitled to the protection and support of the union representatives from which department you are working.

If this becomes your first permit day, it is imperative you contact your union local and give them your contact information.