

Your Guide to Local 4 Benefits

Summer 2021



THE GAUGE

TAKE THE MEASURE OF YOUR BENEFITS



Dear Plan Participants,

This summer, it seems there are cranes up at every corner and new sites being excavated and graded from Plymouth to Portland. As in every season, our Operating Engineers are hard at work. It's a pleasure to hear from members about the job sites they're on and to see those projects come to life as they just did at Polar Park, featured on this issue's cover.

When you are able to take some time to relax this summer, I encourage you to think about your future. In this issue of *The Gauge*, we're focusing on your retirement benefits. That's because planning now can make a big difference down the road.

If you have not already, one of the best things you can do to fully enjoy this summer is to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The sooner we can all do that, the sooner we can be back enjoying our favorite summer activities. I hope to see you all soon – perhaps at Polar Park!

William D. McLaughlin

Operating Engineers Local 4 Business Manager and Chairman of the Health & Welfare, Pension, and Annuity & Savings Funds



Dear Plan Participants,

I'm guessing the beautiful photo of Worcester's brand-new Polar Park on the cover of this issue caught your eye! Business Agent David Dobson and some Local 4 members had the opportunity to visit the park just a few days before Opening Day when it was buzzing with excitement. We couldn't be more proud of Local 4 members' work there.

Many of us are anxious to get "back to normal" after the pandemic. We've been through a long ball game, and we're now leading at the top of the ninth. That means it's not yet time to lose sight of our goal: keeping our communities safe from this deadly virus. Please get your vaccine if you haven't already, and continue to follow all public health guidance.

On page 7, you'll find tips for how you can travel safely and have plenty of fun this summer. As a reminder, all COVID-19 care continues to be covered in full by your Local 4 Health and Welfare benefits.

We hope you enjoy this second issue of *The Gauge*! Please be in touch with any questions or comments. We love to hear from you.

Gregory A. Geiman, Esq.

Operating Engineers Local 4 Benefit Funds Administrator

Planning for a secure future with Local 4 and Empower Retirement

Saving for retirement through the IUOE Local 4 Annuity and Savings Plan is a smart, simple way to work toward a more rewarding future. How it works:

- ◆ Sign up for the Local 4 401 (k) program by visiting the “Annuity and Savings” page on Local4Funds.org
 - There, you can download and complete the 401 (k) Election Form, or request one to be mailed to you by contacting the Funds Office. Plan to send one copy to the Funds Office, one copy to your employer, and keep one copy for your records.
- ◆ You’ll decide how much money to contribute to the 401 (k) from each paycheck. The money will be deducted from your pay before taxes, so you’ll also reduce your taxable income each pay period.

Top tips:

- ◆ **Start saving early:** Time is your best friend! Your contributions earn interest, and you will also earn interest on your interest. The money you save today could double in just ten years.
- ◆ **Gradually increase contributions:** Make small increases in the amount you contribute when you can. It will all add up that much quicker.
- ◆ **Reach out for help:** Experts from Empower Retirement are ready to answer your questions and help you plan for your future. Call **1-800-743-5274** weekdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST.
- ◆ **Explore more online:** Make an account on RetireSmart.com to take advantage of Empower Retirement’s interactive tools and resources to help you determine the savings approach that’s right for you.

Pension Plan News

Quick Facts: How do I apply for my Pension?

Ready to retire, but not sure how to get started? The Local 4 Pension Plan is designed to make your retirement easy and worry-free.

You are eligible to retire on a Regular Pension if you have reached the age of 62 (or age 52 for an Early Pension) and have earned the appropriate number of Pension Credits.

Contact our Pension Department within 60 days of your desired retirement date at **508-533-1400, option 5**. Together, we’ll walk through the necessary paperwork to begin your Pension benefit. We’ll help you make an informed decision about when to begin receiving your pension and what form of payment you may wish to choose.

Health and Welfare Plan News

Changes to Telehealth Benefit – Effective July 1, 2021

Due to COVID-19, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) temporarily waived member cost share for non-COVID-related telehealth services to ensure participants could continue to access healthcare.

Please note that BCBSMA is ending the waiver of the \$15 copay for non-COVID telehealth services on July 1, 2021. You will still be able to access COVID-related telehealth services at no out-of-pocket cost.



Learn more about your Annuity and Savings Plan on our website!
Just scan the QR code with your smartphone’s camera:

Plan Participant Spotlight



Scituate, Massachusetts

LIVING THE EASY LIFE:

Local 4 Retiree Bill Gallagher

For Bill Gallagher, being an Operating Engineer was always part of the plan. “When I was nine years old, my father said to me, ‘You’re going to be a crane operator!’” says Bill.

After serving in the Army, Bill followed in his father’s footsteps and worked on big projects all over Eastern Massachusetts and offshore. Bill found a rewarding, lifelong career with Local 4, driving piles for Carter Construction. “I loved every day of the work,” says Bill. “It was always interesting.”

The next part of Bill’s plan? A well-deserved retirement. Bill and his late wife, Mary Ellen, planned for years, steadily saving the money they’d need to live comfortably in retirement. And in 2018, after 25 years in the crane operator’s seat, Bill officially retired.

“We did what we were supposed to do,” says Bill. “We saved up, lived within our means, and when the time was right, I worked with the Funds Office to set up my retirement payments. It wasn’t that hard – without kids, anyways!”

With his retirement savings, Bill, now 63, is able to live comfortably in his hometown of Scituate, Massachusetts, right off the coast. He’s able to provide and care for his brother and elderly mother. And in his downtime, he enjoys watching TV and taking trips to the New England Aquarium.

Bill feels fortunate to have a pension to rely on in retirement. “You know, most people don’t have a pension in America anymore,” he says. And he’s right; today, just 21 percent of workers contribute towards a pension plan.¹

For Bill, that makes retirement all the more valuable, and he encourages younger members to start planning early. “Many non-union guys my age are still working, and not by choice,” Bill shares. “Keep your nose to the grindstone. With some hard work, smart saving, and the Local 4 Funds, I’m all set,” Bill says. “Everything’s turned out all right.”

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019 National Compensation Survey

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



CAPTRUST is a trusted partner of the Local 4 Annuity and Savings Plan. They are one of the largest registered investment advisors in the U.S. We work with a dedicated team of advisors at CAPTRUST who is available to our Plan Participants to give advice on your retirement plans. One of the advisors, John Buckley, sat down with us to answer some questions.

Why should a member plan for retirement now, especially if they're young?

There are many benefits to retirement planning, but one of the biggest ones is peace of mind. Planning ahead not only reduces your stress during retirement but also in the years leading up to it. John told us, "Start off early and get on the right track, so you can see the light at the end of the tunnel – and eventually stop working."

How does a member work with CAPTRUST?

Because of the pandemic, CAPTRUST moved their in-person appointments to the phone. Right now, they offer phone meetings two Thursdays a month. During your appointment, you'll speak one-on-one with one of the CAPTRUST advisors for 45 minutes.

They'll review your IUOE Local 4 Annuity and Savings Plan account balance, and they'll help you think through the two most important questions:

- ◆ How much do you need to live comfortably?
- ◆ How much do you need to meet your goals?

Does CAPTRUST only help with retirement?

John shared that CAPTRUST advisors may also speak with you about other financial aspects of your life like mortgages, credit card debt, or car loans in order to help them better assess your overall retirement goals and objectives. This gives you a fuller picture of your current position in your planning.

What happens after the meeting?

After the meeting, if the advisor recommends making changes to your investments, they will offer to assist with making the transaction(s) online. The advisor can help you make the changes through the Empower website, although you have to be the one to make your own changes. They can also send you their recommendations by email.

John reports that one silver lining of going virtual this past year is that the phone meetings have given Plan Participants the opportunity to include their spouses in meetings more often. Spouses are always welcome to join these sessions.

A wise person once wrote, "Retirement is wonderful if you have two essentials: much to live on and much to live for." Retirement planning is a good way to ensure that when the time comes, you are prepared with much to live on. It's never too early to start. Make a call today!



Call 1-800-293-2291 to schedule an appointment.

Upcoming sessions will be held on **June 17**, **July 1**, and **July 15** and beyond.

If possible, plan to have with you for your phone call:

- ◆ Your quarterly Empower Annuity and Savings Plan retirement statement
- ◆ Your IUOE Local 4 pension statement
- ◆ Your Social Security statements



PREVENTION CENTRAL Prioritizing Your Health



Don't Brush Off Your Dental Health

Did you know that dental health can provide insights into your overall health? As part of our efforts to support Plan Participants during COVID-19, Dental Blue relaxed limits on preventative dental benefits, including routine cleanings, periodic exams, and fluoride treatment. The changes allow members to access these treatments **twice in a calendar year** rather than once every six months.

Members and providers responded with overwhelming satisfaction and as a result, beginning April 1, 2021, these changes are now standard benefits.

In addition, bitewing X-rays and certain benefits included in our Total Health Solution (for Dental Blue members with coronary artery disease, diabetes, oral cancer, stroke, and Sjogren's Syndrome, or are pregnant) will be updated, including:

- ✓ Bitewing X-rays twice per calendar year
- ✓ Routine and/or periodontal maintenance cleanings four times per calendar year**
- ✓ Oral cancer screening twice per calendar year**
- ✓ Fluoride treatment four times per calendar year**

**For Total Health Solution Dental Blue Members



What You Need to Know: Colorectal Exams

Colorectal cancer is the third most common form of cancer in the United States and younger patients are being diagnosed each year. On May 18, 2021, the recommended screening age was lowered to 45.¹

Regular screenings can find and remove precancerous polyps, or abnormal growth in the colon or rectum, before they become cancerous.²

Ask your health provider about your risk factor and to learn more about your screening options, which can include an exam at your doctor's office, stool tests, flexible sigmoidoscopy, or a colonoscopy, which is the most definitive test.

If you choose to receive a colonoscopy, any preparation laxatives will be fully covered. Effective March 1, 2021, CVS Caremark® will cover Sutab laxative tablets at zero cost share for members beginning at age 50 and continuing until age 75.

¹ U.S. Preventive Services Task Force

² Cancer.gov

Ready for Summer Vacation? Be Prepared.



Sunscreen? Check. Bathing suit? Check. Mask?

Read on. As more of us are vaccinated against COVID-19, it's becoming safer to travel and enjoy time with family and friends. But this summer will be different than any other. Get ready for a summer of fun with our safety and planning tips.

Figure out what feels safe to you

COVID-19 risk is different for everyone based on their vaccine status and health conditions. Each of your family members may feel comfortable taking different levels of risk. You can plan travel and gatherings accordingly:

- ◆ Fully vaccinated people may consider traveling on planes, trains, or buses and staying in hotels or resorts at a vacation destination.
- ◆ Unvaccinated or partially-vaccinated people may consider traveling by car rather than mass transportation. Getaways that limit exposure may include day trips, camping trips, outdoor activities, or staying at a rental house.

Be aware of your traveling companions' vaccine status

- ◆ As of May 12, the Pfizer vaccine has been approved for children ages 12-17.
- ◆ In Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine, ALL people 12 years and older are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Schedule a shot in your state by visiting [IUOELocal4.org/Covid-19-Resource-Center](https://www.IUOELocal4.org/Covid-19-Resource-Center)
- ◆ The CDC and state health officials now recommend that fully-vaccinated people can safely gather unmasked indoors and outdoors.

Take the time to visit loved ones

- ◆ Many of us haven't been able to see loved ones, especially those who are farther-flung, in quite a long time. It's good for our mental health to reconnect safely and in person with close family and friends. According to the CDC, grandparents who are fully vaccinated can spend time with unvaccinated grandchildren with low risk of spreading the virus. Go ahead and give Grandma and Grandpa a hug this summer!

Take precautions as necessary for yourself and those around you while traveling

- ◆ While traveling, make sure that everyone in your group aged 2 and older wears a mask, stays six feet from people outside your household, avoids crowds, and washes or sanitizes their hands frequently.
- ◆ The CDC recommends that all unvaccinated people get a coronavirus test one to three days before any trip and again three to five days after the trip is over.



On-the-go telehealth options for Plan Participants

Even if you're away from home this summer, you and your family can access telehealth services through your Health and Welfare benefit.

Call **1-800-262-BLUE (2583)** to connect with our WellConnection telehealth options.

IUOE Local 4 Benefit Funds

P.O. Box 680

Medway, MA 02053-0680



Stay in touch with your Local 4 Benefit Funds!

Main office: 508-533-1400

office@local4funds.org

Local4Funds.org/Contact

Please note that general inquiries on Operating Engineers
Local 4 should be directed to the Union Hall.

Visit Us At

Local4Funds.org

At the Local4Funds.org, you'll find:

- ◆ Plan details and important updates
- ◆ Essential documents
- ◆ Your Member Self Service (MSS) Portal