

***We protect our right to earn a living by standing up for one another.
Professional musicians always carry a union card.***

When a freelance musician joins an AFM local, they immediately gain ...

- (1) ... access to our pension fund. AFM contracts permit a musician to designate a small portion of gig pay as a pension contribution, which has allowed countless freelance musicians to retire with security. Many locals also offer death, liability, and/or health insurance.
- (2) ... access to form-fillable gig contracts. These easy-to-use contracts were developed to protect musicians' live gigs as well as their streaming/recording products.
- (3) ... the security of knowing the full weight of the membership has their back if an employer tries to take advantage of them. When members file signed copies of contracts with the local, the local can help enforce the contract if anything goes wrong. Our time-tested contracts hold up in court.
- (4) ... the right to know who the predatory employers are in the area via local and international unfair listings. Union musicians swear an oath not to work with employers on these lists. An employer who messes with one of us messes with all of us.
- (5) ... a voice in the establishment of minimum scale and working conditions for their scene. If the member also works in an orchestra, theatre pit, or other unionized ensemble, they also have voice in contract negotiations with that employer. They also get a vote on whether to ratify proposed contracts.
- (6) ... access to a suite of discounted web hosting and website templates with dedicated support.
- (7) ... access to instrument and equipment insurance.
- (8) ... access to www.AFM.org, a subscription to *International Musician*, and access to years of back issues.
- (9) ... a connection to unions in other fields of work, labor advocacy groups, government authorities, and access to political candidates.
- (10)... a voice in membership meetings and a vote in internal elections and legislative matters.
- (11)... pride in belonging to an organization that fights for the fair treatment of all people.

I know I should join the union, but I'm worried about dues. How much are they?

The members of each local establish their own dues rates via democratic process, so it varies from local to local. Members contribute dues so that we can take on local fights together. In turn, a portion of local dues income is shared with the international organization so we can take on the biggest of fights.

There are three streams via which members fund their local and the AFM: (1) a one-time initiation fee, (2) periodic dues, which is the same for all members in a particular classification (i.e., life member, regular member, student or youth member), and (3) work dues. Not all locals collect work dues, but in locals where they've elected to do so, members contribute a small percentage of minimum scale for each job they work (regardless of how much more than scale they were actually paid). Therefore, work dues vary depending on how much the member works. Most locals use a mixture of periodic dues and work dues to ensure members' support of their local is distributed as equitably as possible.