U.S. Department of Labor

Office of Labor-Management Standards
Dallas-New Orleans District Office
600 S. Maestri Place, Suite 604
New Orleans, LA 70130
(504) 589-6174 Fax: (504) 589-7174

March 21, 2025

Mr. Ben Banchs, Secretary Treasurer
Laborers (LIUNA) Local 1776
P.O. Box 1794
Abita Springs, Louisiana 70420

Case Number: 420-6030089(77)
LM Number: 544423

Dear Mr. Banchs:

This office has recently completed an audit of LIUNA Local 1776 under the Compliance Audit Program (CAP) to determine your organization's compliance with the provisions of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA). As discussed during the exit interview with you and President Brian Lawson on March 19, 2025, the following problems were disclosed during the CAP. The matters listed below are not an exhaustive list of all possible problem areas since the audit conducted was limited in scope.

Recordkeeping Violations

Title II of the LMRDA establishes certain reporting and recordkeeping requirements. Section 206 requires, among other things, that labor organizations maintain adequate records for at least five years by which each receipt and disbursement of funds, as well as all account balances, can be verified, explained, and clarified. As a general rule, labor organizations must maintain all records used or received in the course of union business.

For disbursements, this includes not only original bills, invoices, receipts, vouchers, and applicable resolutions, but also documentation showing the nature of the union business requiring the disbursement, the goods or services received, and the identity of the recipient(s) of the goods or services. In most instances, this documentation requirement can be satisfied with a sufficiently descriptive expense receipt or invoice. If an expense receipt is not sufficiently descriptive, a union officer or employee should write a note on it providing the additional information. For money it receives, the labor organization must keep at least one record showing the date, amount, purpose, and source of that money. The labor organization must also retain bank records for all accounts.

The audit of Local 1776's 2023 records revealed the following recordkeeping violations:

General Reimbursed and Credit Card Expenses

Local 1776 did not retain adequate documentation for credit card expenses incurred by Secretary Treasurer Ben Banchs, Recording Secretary Ja'net Vallotton, and Consultant Leo Gannon totaling at least $49,405.

As noted above, labor organizations must retain original receipts, bills, and vouchers for all disbursements. The president and treasurer (or corresponding principal officers) of your union, who are required to sign your union's LM report, are responsible for properly maintaining union records.

Other Issues

Gross Dollar Amount of Salaries Not Recorded

Local 1776 did not record the gross dollar amount for Banchs', Vallotton's, or Admin Rhonda Banchs' salaries. The union must record the gross amount of all union officers and employees.

I want to extend my personal appreciation to LIUNA 1776 for the cooperation and courtesy extended during this compliance audit. I strongly recommend that you make sure this letter and the compliance assistance materials provided to you are passed on to future officers. If we can provide any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Gabrielle A. Connally
Investigator