

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BEFORE THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD  
REGION 1 - SUBREGION 34**

**HEARST MEDIA SERVICES CONNECTICUT  
LLC D/B/A HEARST CONNECTICUT MEDIA  
GROUP**

**Employer**

**and**

**Case 01-RC-347857**

**THE NEWSGUILD -CWA, COMMUNICATION  
WORKERS OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO**

**Petitioner**

**DECISION AND DIRECTION OF ELECTION<sup>1</sup>**

Hearst Media Services Connecticut LLC d/b/a Hearst Connecticut Media Group (the Employer) publishes newspapers, magazines, and websites covering local and regional news. The NewsGuild-- CWA, Communication Workers of America, AFL-CIO (the Petitioner or the Union) has filed a petition seeking to represent a bargaining unit comprised of approximately 110 editorial employees who work out of the Employer's five Connecticut locations: Meriden, Bridgeport, Danbury, Norwalk, and Stamford.

The Employer takes the position that the petitioned-for statewide unit lacks an internal community of interest because employees at different locations have different job duties and reporting structures. However, the Employer failed to raise this contention in a timely served Statement of Position. While the Statement of Position form was e-filed at 11:58a.m. on August 15, the Employer did not file the required lists of employees until 1:52 p.m. on August 15. The lists are part of the Statement of Position requirement, which was due at 12:00 p.m., therefore, the Statement of Position was not timely. Further, the Employer did not serve the Statement of Position and required attachments on the Petitioner until 2:28 p.m. on August 15.

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<sup>1</sup> The petition in this case was filed under Section 9(c) of the Act. Except where precluded, the parties were provided opportunity to present evidence on the issues raised by the petition at a hearing held before a hearing officer of the National Labor Relations Board (the Board) on August 19, 2024. I have the authority to hear and decide these matters on behalf of the Board under Section 3(b) of the Act. I find that the hearing officer's rulings are free from prejudicial error and are affirmed. The Employer does not contest jurisdiction, I find, that it is engaged in commerce within the meaning of the Act, and t it will effectuate the purposes of the Act to assert jurisdiction in this matter. Based upon evidence accrued at the hearing, I find that that the Petitioner is a labor organization within the meaning of the Act; that the Petitioner claims to represent certain employees of the Employer; that there is no contract bar or other bar to election in this matter; and that a question affecting commerce exists concerning the representation of certain employees of the Employer within the meaning of Section 9(c)(1) and Section 2(6) and (7) of the Act.

Section 102.66(d) of the Board's Rules and Regulations precludes a party from raising any issue, presenting any evidence relating to any issue, cross-examining any witness concerning any issue, and presenting argument concerning any issue where the party fails to raise the issue in its Statement of Position or where the party specifically contests the appropriateness of the unit in its Statement of Position but fails to specify the classifications, locations, or other employee groupings that must be added to the proposed unit to make an appropriate unit. See also *Williams-Sonoma Direct, Inc.*, 365 NLRB No. 13 (2017) (adopting Regional Director's decision to reject employer's statement of position and preclude litigation of issues raised therein based solely on the employer's failure to timely serve its statement of position on the petitioner); *Brunswick Bowling Products, LLC*, 364 NLRB No. 96 (2016) (overturning Regional Director's decision to accept statement of position that was timely filed, but served 3 hours and 20 minutes late, and allow union to litigate issues raised therein).

Where the Statement of Position was served 2 hours and 28 minutes late, I determined that the same conclusion was warranted here and enforced preclusion. The Employer filed a Motion for Reconsideration with the Regional Director on August 16, prior to the opening of the hearing.<sup>2</sup> The Motion did not raise any issues not previously considered, and I instructed the Hearing Officer to deny the Motion. The Employer requested to file a brief at the hearing, and the Hearing Officer denied that request. I reaffirm that ruling here.

Prior to the opening of the hearing, the Petitioner filed a Motion with the Regional Director asserting that the petitioned-for unit is presumptively appropriate and, therefore, the Petitioner should not be required to present any evidence in support of its petitioned-for unit.<sup>3</sup>

However, Section 9 of the Act obligates the Board to make a determination as to whether the petitioned-for unit is appropriate for collective bargaining when the parties refuse to stipulate to the appropriateness of the unit. *Allen Healthcare Services*, 332 NLRB 1308, (2000); *Williams-Sonoma Direct, Inc.*, supra. Accordingly, I instructed the hearing officer to solicit evidence from the Petitioner to establish that the petitioned-for unit is an appropriate unit.

Having considered the parties' positions, the evidence, and the entire record, I find that the petitioned-for unit is appropriate, and I shall direct an election in that unit.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Employer's Motion for Reconsideration was not a part of the record; however, the Hearing Officer discussed the contents of the Motion with the parties prior to ruling on the Motion.

<sup>3</sup> The Petitioner's Motion was not a part of the record; however, the Hearing Officer discussed the contents of the Motion with the parties prior to ruling on the motion.

<sup>4</sup> The Employer takes the position that fourteen Assistant Managing Editors, Assistant Editors, Assistant Sports Editors, Associate Editors, Communities Editors, Night Editors, and News Data Analysts are supervisors pursuant to Section 2(11) of the Act and should be excluded from the bargaining unit on that ground. The Petitioner takes the position that these individuals are not statutory supervisors and should be included in the bargaining unit. I deferred litigation of whether these categories of employees are supervisors until after the election because the issue relates to the eligibility of a portion of the unit which does not significantly impact the overall unit. Since I have deferred this issue, the Assistant Managing

## **FACTS**

### *The Employer's Structure and Business*

The Employer publishes newspapers, magazines, and websites covering local and regional news. It has five locations in Connecticut: Meriden, Bridgeport, Danbury, Norwalk, and Stamford. In total, the Employer publishes nine daily publications (referred to as 'dailies'), 21 weekly publications (referred to as 'weeklies'), and 16 websites. The dailies include the Connecticut Post, the New Haven Register, the Norwalk Hour, the Danbury News Times, the Stamford Advocate, Greenwich Time, the Middletown Press, the Hartford Journal Inquirer, and the Record Journal.<sup>5</sup> Each publication has a group of assigned reporters.

The CT Insider, the Employer's statewide website, focuses on stories expected to draw statewide interest, but some sections feature local content developed in the Employer's local newsrooms. Some dailies and weeklies have their own websites, while others have subsections of CT Insider. A story may run in print, online, or both. Some stories which generate broad interest run in all of the Employer's publications.

Mike Deluca is the Employer's President and Publisher. Deluca holds twice-yearly town hall meetings for all Connecticut employees, including the entire editorial staff.

The Employer's editor in chief is Wendy Metcalfe. She reports directly to Deluca. As editor in chief, Metcalfe is responsible for all editorial structuring and content in Connecticut. Metcalfe holds monthly "ask me anything" meetings for the entire editorial staff, including those who work in all offices and those who work remotely. At a June 2024 meeting, Metcalfe discussed the importance of collaborating across newsrooms and making sure that no one feels isolated. At a November 2023 meeting, Metcalfe reminded the editorial staff that they were all welcome to join a writing group.<sup>6</sup>

Sarah Dunne is the Employer's Director of Human Resources. She works out of the Norwalk office but handles pay and benefits for all employees regardless of work location. She also occasionally sends emails to all employees about events open to all, such as a holiday cookie swap.

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Editors, Assistant Editors, Assistant Sports Editors, Associate Editors, Communities Editors, Night Editors, and News Data Analysts may vote subject to challenge.

<sup>5</sup> Two of the Employer's dailies employee groups were previously organized as distinct bargaining units represented by different unions, however, none of the employees sought by this petition are currently represented by a union.

<sup>6</sup> The writing workshop was voluntary and open to anyone on staff who was interested in elevating their work, regardless of their work location.

A single company newsletter is distributed to employees at all locations. A single employee handbook applies to all employees at all locations. The handbook covers topics such as hours of work, meal breaks, time records, overtime, attendance, outside employment, dress code, holidays, medical insurance, and anti-harassment policies. It appears that all petitioned-for employees are paid at an hourly rate and that educational requirements are flexible, in that at least one reporter does not have a college degree.

A single standards and practices policy applies to all editorial employees regardless of work location. The policy includes practices regarding plagiarism, fact checking, identification as a journalist, sourcing, recording, video usage, and copyrighted material.

The editorial employees the Petitioner seeks to represent include reporters, editors, producers, photographers, and graphic designers.

*Local Teams, Statewide Teams, and the Audience Team*

Editorial employees may be part of a “local team” tied to a specific print publication such as the Connecticut Post or part of a “statewide team” covering an area such as business, state/politics, or sports. An article written by a member of a statewide team—for example, a business article—will appear on all websites and most or all print publications. Alex Putterman, a member of the state/politics team, testified “I tend to introduce myself to working for CT Insider or Hearst Connecticut Media, but my work appears in all Hearst Connecticut publications.”<sup>7</sup> Putterman also testified that daily team meetings are held virtually, and team members attend from their homes and from various offices.

Dan Brechlin, who usually works in the Meriden office, supervises the state/politics team, most of whom are remote employees. Brechlin also supervises the business team, which works remotely. In addition, Brechlin is the overall supervisor for the sports team, which also includes two other supervisors (one for the “UConn group” and one for the “high school group”). The sports team works remotely.

Mike Pignataro, who usually works in the Norwalk office, supervises the breaking news team. Most of the eight members of the breaking news team work remotely, but one or two work from the Norwalk office. Pignataro also supervises photographers, who sometimes go into offices although this is not a requirement. The photographers’ work appears in all of the Employer’s publications.<sup>8</sup> Finally, Pignataro supervises the managing editors of local papers (such as the Danbury News Times and the Stanford Advocate).

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<sup>7</sup> Tr. 58.

<sup>8</sup> There are currently eight staff photographers. Putterman testified that photographs taken by all eight have accompanied his stories; that he works with a photographer on at least a monthly basis; and that he has worked personally with at least five of the photographers.

Matt Rocheleau manages the three members of the investigations team. The entire team, including Rocheleau, work remotely. This team is responsible for long-term investigations, such as an investigation into wrongdoing by a public official. Their work appears on all of the Employer's websites and in all of the Employer's publications.

In addition to local teams and statewide teams, there is also an "audience team," which oversees websites, social media accounts, and the Employer's app. There are approximately fifteen employees on the audience team. Most work out of the Norwalk office, but four work out of the Meriden office. Lydia Ryan supervises the part of the audience team that handles content, such as trending features. Several different supervisors oversee the members of the audience team who handle websites, and Mandy Hofmockel is the supervisor for the audience team in its entirety.

Alex Putterman, the state/politics reporter, testified that while he sometimes creates graphics for his stories, more complex graphics require the services of members of the audience team, including Audience Producer Derek Turner. Putterman also testified that when he was working on a story about ventilation in schools, his editor Dan Brechlin sent an email to editors across Connecticut requesting that their local reporters contribute to Putterman's research. When Putterman's article was published, eight other individuals, including editors and local reporters, were credited as having contributed to the report.<sup>9</sup> Putterman's testimony described multiple other occasions when he collaborated with other editors, reporters, and photographers from various teams while reporting on a story.

Kaleen Ozanic, a local reporter who works out of the Employer's Norwalk office, testified that she was hired to report for the Norwalk Hour in May 2023, but that in recent weeks she has covered stories about Wilton, Connecticut for the Wilton Bulletin (a weekly) and stories about Westport, Connecticut for the Connecticut Post. Ozanic testified that because there are no dedicated Wilton reporters, any reporters can be asked to cover Wilton news. Ozanic also testified that she has worked jointly on multiple stories with various members of the breaking news team who are based remotely or in different offices. Ozanic's supervisor, Julia Perkins, is also the managing editor of the Danbury News Times. Perkins spends most days working out of the Employer's Danbury office, but tries to visit the Norwalk office weekly.

Employees can transfer from one team to another and from one location to another. They do so on both a permanent basis and on a temporary basis. In 2024, an assistant managing editor named Katrina Koerting moved from the Bridgeport to the Meriden office, where she oversaw different teams. Also in 2024, Jordan Fenster, a reporter on the state politics team, temporarily filled in on the understaffed features and trending team for six to eight weeks. Reporters from all the local newsrooms fill in on the breaking team on a weekly basis because the Employer must be ready to report breaking news at all times.

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<sup>9</sup> Petitioner Ex. 12.

*Duties Common to All Teams*

Viktoria Sundqvist, a member of the audience team, is a newsroom data analyst working out of the Employer's Meriden facility. Sundqvist testified that she is responsible for pulling metrics reports and reviewing them with editors and reporters so they understand which articles are most-viewed on the Employer's websites. Sundqvist shares metrics with all reporters regardless of whether the reporters work remotely or in any of the Employer's physical locations. She also shares data with anyone who supervises a reporter regardless of where the supervisor or the reporter works.

A representative from each of the Employer's publications attends a daily metric meeting; all offices are represented at the meeting. Typical attendees include Connecticut Post Editor Don Yang, who works from the Bridgeport office; News Times and Norwalk Hour Managing Editor Julie Perkins, who works from the Danbury office; and Hartford Journal Inquirer, Record Journal and New Haven Register Regional Managing Editor John Ferraro, who works from the Meriden office. The group discusses what visitors to the websites read the previous day, what visitors to the websites read that morning, what the top story should be for the day, what the reporters are already working on, and whether the reporters should be redirected to other stories. The discussion covers the focus of all publications and the work of all reporters.

In addition to her other duties, Sundqvist trains employees on the Employer's various digital systems. These systems include an online system for websites called the WCM, a photo archive system called Merlin, a system called Tracks used for photo assignments, and an organizing platform called Air Table. Sundqvist trains employees in groups when a change is imminent; the groups include employees assigned to all locations as well as remote employees. Sundqvist has also offered one-on-one training to employees who work in various offices and to remote employees.

Further, Sundqvist performs onboarding work for employees working at any of the Employer's locations. Sundqvist also helps implement the Employer's "takedown" policy at all of its various websites. Generally, Mike Pignataro determines whether a request to remove content from the Employer's websites should be honored, but Sundqvist manages communication and tracks requests. In addition, Sundqvist updates author profiles (biographies for each person on staff who writes stories) for all of the Employer's websites.

**ANALYSIS**

It is well-established that the unit sought for collective bargaining need only be *an* appropriate unit, rather than ultimate, or the only, or even the most appropriate unit. It is also well settled that there is more than one way in which employees of a given employer may appropriately be grouped for purposes of collective bargaining. *Overnite Transportation Co.*, 322 NLRB 723, 723 (1996). A petitioner's desire as to unit is always a relevant consideration but cannot be dispositive. *International Bedding Co.*, 356 NLRB 1336 (2011); see also *Marks Oxygen Co.*, 147 NLRB 228, 230 (1964); *Airco, Inc.*, 273 NLRB 348 (1984). Obviously, a proposed bargaining unit

based on an arbitrary, heterogeneous, or artificial grouping of employees is inappropriate. *Turner Industries Group, LLC*, 349 NLRB 428, 430 (2007). But the fact that two or more groups of petitioned-for employees engage in different processes does not by itself render a combined unit inappropriate if there is a sufficient community of interest among all these employees. *Berea Publishing Co.*, 140 NLRB 516, 518 (1963).

Here, the Employer asserts that five smaller units—a Meriden unit, a Bridgeport unit, a Danbury unit, a Norwalk unit, and a Stamford unit—are the only appropriate units in this matter. I note that when a union seeks a multifacility unit, the single-facility presumption is inapplicable. *NLRB v. Carson Cable TV*, 795 F.2d 879, 887 (9th Cir. 1986); see also *Capital Coors Co.*, 309 NLRB 322 (1992).

When presented with a petitioned-for multifacility unit, the Board will determine whether the unit is appropriate based on a variant of the community of interest test, examining the following factors: employees' skills, duties, and working conditions; functional integration of business operations, including employee interchange; geographic proximity; centralized control of management and supervision; bargaining history; and extent of union organizing and employee choice. *Exemplar, Inc.*, 363 NLRB No. 157, slip op. at 2 (2016); see also *Laboratory Corp. of America Holdings*, 341 NLRB 1079, 1081–1082 (2004); *Bashas', Inc.*, 337 NLRB 710 (2002); *Alamo Rent-A-Car*, 330 NLRB 897 (2000).

- Employees' Skills, Duties, and Working Conditions

The petitioned-for unit includes all editorial employees employed by the Employer in Connecticut. Regardless of the city to which they are assigned, or the team to which they are assigned, reporters are responsible for gathering information and filing stories. These stories may appear in any or all of the Employer's publications. Regardless of the city to which they are assigned, or the team to which they are assigned, photographers are responsible for taking photographs which may appear in any or all of the Employer's publications. Sundqvist offers training on the Employer's various digital systems to all petitioned-for employees; other members of the audience team also work with various employees and various publications.

This factor weighs in favor of including all editorial employees in the same bargaining unit.

- Functional Integration of Business Operations, Including Employee Interchange

Functional integration exists when "employees must work together and depend on one another to accomplish their tasks." *WideOpenWest Illinois, LLC*, 371 NLRB No. 107, slip op. at fn. 16 (2022).

Here, employees with different job titles who work out of different locations consistently collaborate to ensure that stories are investigated, written, and published. Much investigative work is done collectively. Further, the audience team would have no content to manage or enhance were it not for the work done by reporters and editors.

There is also significant evidence of interchange between employees assigned to different offices. Reporters from all the local newsrooms fill in on the breaking team on a weekly basis because the Employer must be ready to report breaking news at all times. Katrina Koerting moved from the Bridgeport to the Meriden office. Jordan Fenster, a reporter on the state politics team, temporarily filled in on the understaffed features and trending team for six to eight weeks. Kaleen Ozanic was hired to report for the Norwalk Hour but covers stories for the Wilton Bulletin; as there are no dedicated Wilton reporters, any reporters can be asked to cover Wilton news. Ozanic has also reported about Westport, Connecticut for the Connecticut Post.

I find that this factor weighs heavily in favor of including all editorial employees in the same bargaining unit.

- Geographic Proximity

The Employer's five Connecticut locations are separated by distances ranging from about ten miles (between Stamford and Norwalk) to about sixty miles (between Stamford and Meriden).

While significant geographic distance between locations is normally a factor in favor of a single-facility unit, it is less of a factor when there is evidence of regular interchange between the locations, and when there is evidence of centralized control over daily operations and labor relations, particularly when employees at the facilities otherwise share skills, duties, and other terms and conditions of employment, as well as being in contact with one another. *Trane*, 339 NLRB 866 (2003).

Here, there is significant interchange between the petitioned-for employees, who share identical skills, duties, and other terms and conditions of employment. In some cases, petitioned-for employees report to the same direct supervisor whose team includes employees assigned to multiple locations as well as fully remote employees. All petitioned-for employees are in regular contact with one another.

Indeed, the Board has not hesitated to approve multilocation units of facilities located further apart than those at issue here. In *Stormont-Vail Healthcare, Inc.*, 340 NLRB 1205 (2003), outlying facilities were as far as 70 miles from the main facility; in *Capital Coors Co.*, 309 NLRB 322 (1992) there was a distance of 90 miles between facilities.

Thus, I find that this factor weighs slightly in favor of including the petitioned-for employees in the same bargaining unit.

- Centralized Control of Management and Supervision

All petitioned-for employees ultimately fall under the authority of Editor in Chief Wendy Metcalfe, who is responsible for all editorial structuring and content in Connecticut. At meetings for all editorial staff, Metcalfe has emphasized the importance of collaborating across newsrooms.

The Employer has a single Director of Human Resources who is responsible for pay and benefits for all employees regardless of work location.

A single newsletter is distributed to employees at all locations. A single employee handbook applies to all employees at all locations and covers topics such as hours of work, meal breaks, time records, overtime, attendance, outside employment, dress code, holidays, medical insurance, and anti-harassment policies. Further, a single standards and practices policy applies to all petitioned-for employees regardless of work location. The policy includes practices regarding plagiarism, fact checking, identification as a journalist, sourcing, recording, video usage, and copyrighted material.

The petitioned-for employees report to a variety of direct supervisors, as is to be expected where the Petitioner seeks a company-wide unit across multiple locations. However, some supervisors oversee employees who work in multiple locations as well as employees who are entirely remote.

This factor is at most neutral in my analysis

- Bargaining History

Two of the Employer's dailies were previously organized as distinct bargaining units represented by different unions. The majority of the employees at issue here have never been represented by a labor organization for purposes of collective bargaining. The record does not reveal the extent to which the previous collective bargaining relationships were settled or established.<sup>10</sup>

I find that any previous collective bargaining history is insufficient to establish that there should be five separate bargaining units in light of the overwhelming evidence in support of the petitioned-for unit, particularly where the previous bargaining units were based not on the locations where the employees work, as the Employer now seeks, but on publications for which the employees worked.

- Extent of Organization

The Petitioner has chosen to organize employees at all of the Employer's locations, and those employees have expressed an interest in being represented in a statewide unit. Accordingly, this factor favors including all editorial employees in the same unit.

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<sup>10</sup> See, for example *Dezcon, Inc.*, 295 NLRB 109, 112 (1989) (finding that expired jurisdiction-wide collective-bargaining agreement was inconclusive because the parties' bargaining relationship was "insufficiently settled or established"); *Capital Coors Co.*, supra (declining to rely on bargaining history where there was an intervening period during which employees were not represented).

Conclusion

In sum, I find that the employees' virtually identical skills, duties, and working conditions; the complete functional integration of the proposed unit; and the consistent interchange between employees assigned to different teams and different locations establish that the petitioned-for unit is an appropriate unit.

Accordingly, I shall direct an election in the following appropriate unit:

Included: All full-time and regular part-time editorial employees employed by the Employer at or out of its Connecticut facilities including 500 South Broad Street, 2nd Floor, Meriden, CT 06450; 1057 Broad St. Bridgeport, CT 06604; 345 Main St, Danbury, CT 06810; 301 Merritt 7, Norwalk, CT 06851; and 1055 Washington Blvd., Lobby Level, Stamford, CT 06901

Excluded: All managers, guards, and supervisors as defined in the Act.

The eligibility of about fourteen Assistant Managing Editors, Assistant Editors, Assistant Sports Editors, Associate Editors, Communities Editors, Night Editors, and News Data Analysts has not been resolved. These employees shall be permitted to vote subject to challenge.

**DIRECTION OF ELECTION**

The National Labor Relations Board will conduct a secret ballot election among the employees in the unit found appropriate above. Employees will vote whether or not they wish to be represented for purposes of collective bargaining by The NewsGuild -CWA, Communication Workers of America, AFL-CIO.

**A. Election Details**

The election will be conducted by United States mail.<sup>11</sup> The mail ballots will be mailed to employees employed in the appropriate collective-bargaining unit. On May 1, 2025, ballots will be mailed to voters by National Labor Relations Board, Subregion 34. Voters must sign the outside

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<sup>11</sup> The Employer would prefer a manual election. However, because the bargaining unit includes five locations and dozens of eligible voters work remotely, I have determined that a manual election is not practical and have directed the mail ballot election suggested by the Petitioner. Regional Directors are entitled to broad discretion in determining the method by which an election is held. *San Diego Gas & Electric*, 325 NLRB 1143 (1998); *Ceva Logistics U.S.*, 357 NLRB 628 (2011). Under the guidelines set forth in *San Diego Gas*, a mail ballot election may be appropriate where eligible voters are "scattered" by geography, so that all employees cannot be present at a common location at common times to vote manually.

of the envelope in which the ballot is returned. Any ballot received in an envelope that is not signed will be automatically void.

Voters must return their mail ballots so that they will be received in the National Labor Relations Board, Subregion 34 office by close of business on May 21, 2025.

Those employees who believe that they are eligible to vote and did not receive a ballot in the mail by May 9, 2025, should communicate immediately with the National Labor Relations Board by either calling the Subregion 34 Office at (860) 240-3522 or our national toll-free line at 1-844-762-NLRB (1-844-762-6572).

The mail ballots will be counted at Subregion 34's office, located at A.A. Ribicoff Federal Building, 450 Main Street, Suite 410, Hartford, CT 06103 at 2:00 p.m. on May 22, 2025.

## **B. Voting Eligibility**

Eligible to vote are those in the unit who were employed during the payroll period ending **Saturday, April 12, 2025**, including employees who did not work during that period because they were ill, on vacation, or temporarily laid off. In a mail ballot election, employees are eligible to vote if they are in the unit on both the payroll period ending date and on the date they mail in their ballots to the Board's designated office.

Employees engaged in an economic strike, who have retained their status as strikers and who have not been permanently replaced, are also eligible to vote. In addition, in an economic strike that commenced less than 12 months before the election date, employees engaged in such strike who have retained their status as strikers but who have been permanently replaced, as well as their replacements, are eligible to vote. Unit employees in the military services of the United States may vote if they appear in person at the polls.

Ineligible to vote are (1) employees who have quit or been discharged for cause since the designated payroll period, and, in a mail ballot election, before they mail in their ballots to the Board's designated office; (2) striking employees who have been discharged for cause since the strike began and who have not been rehired or reinstated before the election date; and (3) employees who are engaged in an economic strike that began more than 12 months before the election date and who have been permanently replaced.

Assistant Managing Editors; Assistant Editors; Assistant Sports Editors; Associate Editors; Communities Editors; Night Editors; and News Data Analysts may vote in the election, but their ballots will be challenged since their eligibility has not been resolved. No decision has been made regarding whether the individuals in this classification or group are included in or excluded from the bargaining unit. The eligibility or inclusion of these individuals, if any, will be resolved, if necessary, following the election.

### **C. Voter List**

As required by Section 102.67(1) of the Board's Rules and Regulations, the Employer must provide the Regional Director and parties named in this decision a list of the full names, work locations, shifts, job classifications, and contact information (including home addresses, available personal email addresses, and available home and personal cell telephone numbers) of all eligible voters.

To be timely filed and served, the list must be *received* by the regional director and the parties by April 17, 2025. The list must be accompanied by a certificate of service showing service on all parties. **The region will no longer serve the voter list.**

Unless the Employer certifies that it does not possess the capacity to produce the list in the required form, the list must be provided in a table in a Microsoft Word file (.doc or docx) or a file that is compatible with Microsoft Word (.doc or docx). The first column of the list must begin with each employee's last name and the list must be alphabetized (overall or by department) by last name. Because the list will be used during the election, the font size of the list must be the equivalent of Times New Roman 10 or larger. That font does not need to be used but the font must be that size or larger. A sample, optional form for the list is provided on the NLRB website at [www.nlr.gov/what-we-do/conduct-elections/representation-case-rules-effective-april-14-2015](http://www.nlr.gov/what-we-do/conduct-elections/representation-case-rules-effective-april-14-2015).

When feasible, the list shall be filed electronically with the Region and served electronically on the other parties named in this decision. The list may be electronically filed with the Region by using the E-filing system on the Agency's website at [www.nlr.gov](http://www.nlr.gov). Once the website is accessed, click on **E-File Documents**, enter the NLRB Case Number, and follow the detailed instructions.

Failure to comply with the above requirements will be grounds for setting aside the election whenever proper and timely objections are filed. However, the Employer may not object to the failure to file or serve the list within the specified time or in the proper format if it is responsible for the failure.

No party shall use the voter list for purposes other than the representation proceeding, Board proceedings arising from it, and related matters

### **D. Posting of Notices of Election**

Pursuant to Section 102.67(k) of the Board's Rules, the Employer must post copies of the Notice of Election accompanying this Decision in conspicuous places, including all places where notices to employees in the unit found appropriate are customarily posted. The Notice must be posted so all pages of the Notice are simultaneously visible. In addition, if the Employer customarily communicates electronically with some or all of the employees in the unit found appropriate, the Employer must also distribute the Notice of Election electronically to those employees. The Employer must post copies of the Notice at least 3 full working days prior to

12:01 a.m. of the day of the election and copies must remain posted until the end of the election. For purposes of posting, working day means an entire 24-hour period excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. However, a party shall be estopped from objecting to the nonposting of notices if it is responsible for the nonposting, and likewise shall be estopped from objecting to the nondistribution of notices if it is responsible for the nondistribution.

Failure to follow the posting requirements set forth above will be grounds for setting aside the election if proper and timely objections are filed.

### **RIGHT TO REQUEST REVIEW**

Pursuant to Section 102.67 of the Board's Rules and Regulations, a request for review may be filed with the Board at any time following the issuance of this Decision until 10 business days after a final disposition of the proceeding by the Regional Director. Accordingly, a party is not precluded from filing a request for review of this decision after the election on the grounds that it did not file a request for review of this Decision prior to the election. The request for review must conform to the requirements of Section 102.67 of the Board's Rules and Regulations.

A request for review must be E-Filed through the Agency's website and may not be filed by facsimile. To E-File the request for review, go to [www.nlr.gov](http://www.nlr.gov), select E-File Documents, enter the NLRB Case Number, and follow the detailed instructions. If not E-Filed, the request for review should be addressed to the Executive Secretary, National Labor Relations Board, 1015 Half Street SE, Washington, DC 20570-0001, and must be accompanied by a statement explaining the circumstances concerning not having access to the Agency's E-Filing system or why filing electronically would impose an undue burden. A party filing a request for review must serve a copy of the request on the other parties and file a copy with the Regional Director. A certificate of service must be filed with the Board together with the request for review. Neither the filing of a request for review nor the Board's granting a request for review will stay the election in this matter unless specifically ordered by the Board.

Dated: April 15, 2025



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LAURA A. SACKS  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
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United States of America  
National Labor Relations Board  
**NOTICE OF ELECTION**



**PURPOSE OF ELECTION:** This election is to determine the representative, if any, desired by the eligible employees for purposes of collective bargaining with their employer. (See VOTING UNIT in this Notice of Election for description of eligible employees.) A majority of the valid ballots cast will determine the results of the election. Only one valid representation election may be held in a 12-month period.

**SECRET BALLOT:** The election will be by secret ballot carried out through the U.S. mail under the supervision of the Regional Director of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). A sample of the official ballot is shown on the next page of this Notice. Voters will be allowed to vote without interference, restraint, or coercion. Employees eligible to vote will receive in the mail *Instructions to Employees Voting by United States Mail*, a ballot, a blue envelope, and a yellow self-addressed envelope needing no postage.

**ELIGIBILITY RULES:** Employees eligible to vote are those described under the VOTING UNIT on the next page and include employees who did not work during the designated payroll period because they were ill or on vacation or temporarily laid off. In a mail ballot election, employees are eligible if they are in the VOTING UNIT during both the designated payroll period and on the date they mail in their ballots. Employees who have quit or been discharged for cause since the designated payroll period and who have not been rehired or reinstated prior to the date of this election, or, in a mail ballot election, before the date they mail in their ballots, are not eligible to vote.

**CHALLENGE OF VOTERS:** An agent of the Board or an authorized observer may question the eligibility of a voter. Such challenge must be made at the time the ballots are counted.

**AUTHORIZED OBSERVERS:** Each party may designate an equal number of observers, this number to be determined by the NLRB. These observers (a) act as checkers at the counting of ballots; (b) assist in identifying voters; (c) challenge voters and ballots; and (d) otherwise assist the NLRB.

**METHOD AND DATE OF ELECTION**

The election will be conducted by United States mail. The mail ballots will be mailed to employees employed in the appropriate collective-bargaining unit. At 5 PM on Thursday, May 1, 2025, ballots will be mailed to voters from the National Labor Relations Board, Subregion 34, A.A. Ribicoff Federal Building, 450 Main Street, Suite 410, Hartford, Connecticut. Voters must sign the outside of the envelope in which the ballot is returned. **Any ballot received in an envelope that is not signed will be automatically void.**

Those employees who believe that they are eligible to vote and did not receive a ballot in the mail by Friday, May 9, 2025, should communicate immediately with the National Labor Relations Board by either calling the Subregion 34 office at (860)240-3522 or our national toll-free line at 1-844-762-NLRB (1-844-762-6572).

All ballots will be commingled and counted at the Subregion 34 office, by videoconference, on Thursday, May 22, 2025, at 2 PM. In order to be valid and counted, the returned ballots must be received in the Subregion 34 office prior to the counting of the ballots.



United States of America  
National Labor Relations Board  
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**VOTING UNIT**

**EMPLOYEES ELIGIBLE TO VOTE:**

Those eligible to vote are: All full-time and regular part-time editorial employees employed by the Employer at or out of its Connecticut facilities including 500 South Broad Street, 2nd Floor, Meriden, CT 06450; 1057 Broad St. Bridgeport, CT 06604; 345 Main St, Danbury, CT 06810; 301 Merritt 7, Norwalk, CT 06851; and 1055 Washington Blvd., Lobby Level, Stamford, CT 06901; who were employed during the payroll period ending April 12, 2025.

**EMPLOYEES NOT ELIGIBLE TO VOTE:**

Those not eligible to vote are: All managers, guards, and supervisors as defined in the Act.

	<p><b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b> National Labor Relations Board 01-RC-347857</p>	
<p><b>OFFICIAL SECRET BALLOT</b> For certain employees of <del>HEARST MEDIA SERVICES CONNECTICUT, LLC</del> <del>DBA HEARST CONNECTICUT MEDIA GROUP</del></p>		
<p>Do you wish to be represented for purposes of collective bargaining by <b>THE NEWSGUILD -CWA, COMMUNICATION WORKERS OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO?</b></p>		
<p><b>MARK AN "X" IN THE SQUARE OF YOUR CHOICE</b></p>		
<p><b>YES</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	<p><b>NO</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	
<p><b>DO NOT SIGN OR WRITE YOUR NAME OR INCLUDE OTHER MARKINGS THAT WOULD REVEAL YOUR IDENTITY. MARK AN "X" IN THE SQUARE OF YOUR CHOICE ONLY. If you make markings inside, or anywhere around, more than one square, you may request a new ballot by referring to the enclosed instructions. If you submit a ballot with markings inside, or anywhere around, more than one square, your ballot will not be counted.</b></p>		
<p><small>The National Labor Relations Board does not endorse any choice in this election. Any markings that you may see on any sample ballot have not been put there by the National Labor Relations Board.</small></p>		



United States of America  
National Labor Relations Board  
**NOTICE OF ELECTION**



**RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES - FEDERAL LAW GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO:**

- Form, join, or assist a union
- Choose representatives to bargain with your employer on your behalf
- Act together with other employees for your benefit and protection
- Choose not to engage in any of these protected activities
- In a State where such agreements are permitted, the Union and Employer may enter into a lawful union-security agreement requiring employees to pay periodic dues and initiation fees. Nonmembers who inform the Union that they object to the use of their payments for nonrepresentational purposes may be required to pay only their share of the Union's costs of representational activities (such as collective bargaining, contract administration, and grievance adjustment).

**It is the responsibility of the National Labor Relations Board to protect employees in the exercise of these rights.**

The Board wants all eligible voters to be fully informed about their rights under Federal law and wants both Employers and Unions to know what is expected of them when it holds an election.

If agents of either Unions or Employers interfere with your right to a free, fair, and honest election the election can be set aside by the Board. When appropriate, the Board provides other remedies, such as reinstatement for employees fired for exercising their rights, including backpay from the party responsible for their discharge.

**The following are examples of conduct that interfere with the rights of employees and may result in setting aside of the election:**

- Threatening loss of jobs or benefits by an Employer or a Union
- Promising or granting promotions, pay raises, or other benefits, to influence an employee's vote by a party capable of carrying out such promises
- An Employer firing employees to discourage or encourage union activity or a Union causing them to be fired to encourage union activity
- Making campaign speeches to assembled groups of employees on company time where attendance is mandatory, within the 24-hour period before the mail ballots are dispatched
- Incitement by either an Employer or a Union of racial or religious prejudice by inflammatory appeals
- Threatening physical force or violence to employees by a Union or an Employer to influence their votes

**The National Labor Relations Board protects your right to a free choice.**

Improper conduct will not be permitted. All parties are expected to cooperate fully with this Agency in maintaining basic principles of a fair election as required by law.

Anyone with a question about the election may contact the NLRB Office at (860)240-3522 or visit the NLRB website [www.nlrb.gov](http://www.nlrb.gov) for assistance.

United States of America  
National Labor Relations Board

**Instructions to Eligible Employees Voting  
By United States Mail**



**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. MARK YOUR BALLOT IN SECRET BY PLACING AN X IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX. DO NOT SIGN OR WRITE YOUR NAME OR INCLUDE OTHER MARKINGS THAT WOULD REVEAL YOUR IDENTITY.
2. IF YOU SUBMIT A BALLOT WITH MARKINGS INSIDE, OR ANYWHERE AROUND, MORE THAN ONE SQUARE, YOUR BALLOT WILL NOT BE COUNTED. YOU MAY REQUEST A NEW BALLOT BY CALLING THE REGIONAL OFFICE AT THE NUMBER BELOW.
3. IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN THE SECRECY OF YOUR BALLOT. DO NOT SHOW YOUR BALLOT TO ANYONE AFTER YOU HAVE MARKED IT.
4. PUT YOUR BALLOT IN THE BLUE ENVELOPE AND SEAL THE ENVELOPE.
5. PUT THE BLUE ENVELOPE CONTAINING THE BALLOT INTO THE YELLOW ADDRESSED RETURN ENVELOPE.
6. SIGN THE BACK OF THE YELLOW RETURN ENVELOPE IN THE SPACE PROVIDED. TO BE COUNTED, THE YELLOW RETURN ENVELOPE MUST BE SIGNED.
7. DO NOT PERMIT ANY PARTY – THE EMPLOYER, THE UNION(S), OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES, OR AN EMPLOYEE-PETITIONER – TO HANDLE, COLLECT, OR MAIL YOUR BALLOT.
8. MAIL THE BALLOT IMMEDIATELY. NO POSTAGE IS NECESSARY. For further information, call the Subregional Office at:

**860-240-3522**

**TO BE COUNTED, YOUR BALLOT MUST REACH THE SUBREGIONAL OFFICE**

**BY Wednesday, May 21, 2025**

# RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES

**Under the National Labor Relations Act, employees have the right:**

- To self-organization
- To form, join, or assist labor organizations
- To bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing
- To act together for the purposes of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection
- To refuse to do any or all of these things unless the union and employer, in a state where such agreements are permitted, enter into a lawful union-security agreement requiring employees to pay periodic dues and initiation fees. Nonmembers who inform the union that they object to the use of their payments for non representational purposes may be required to pay only their share of the union's costs of representational activities (such as collective bargaining, contract administration, and grievance adjustment).

**It is the responsibility of the National Labor Relations Board to protect employees in the exercise of these rights.**

The Board wants all eligible voters to be fully informed about their rights under Federal law and wants both employers and unions to know what is expected of them when it holds an election.

If agents of either unions or employers interfere with your right to a free, fair, and honest election, the election can be set aside by the Board. Where appropriate, the Board provides other remedies, such as reinstatement for employees fired for exercising their rights, including backpay from the party responsible for their discharge.

**The following are examples of conduct that interfere with the rights of employees and may result in the setting aside of the election:**

- Threatening loss of jobs or benefits by an employer or a union
- Promising or granting promotions, pay raises, or other benefits to influence an employee's vote by a party capable of carrying out such promises
- An employer firing employees to discourage or encourage union activity or a union causing them to be fired to encourage union activity
- Incitement by either an employer or a union of racial or religious prejudice by inflammatory appeals
- Threatening physical force or violence to employees by a union or an employer to influence their votes.

**The National Labor Relations Board protects your right to a free choice**

Improper conduct will not be permitted. All parties are expected to cooperate fully with this Agency in maintaining basic principles of a fair election as required by law. The National Labor Relations Board as an agency of the United States Government does not endorse any choice in the election.



**NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD**  
*an agency of the*  
**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT**