



REMOTE WORK



What is the “geofence,” and what does it mean when it comes to TAG’s Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)?

The scope of the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) is written so that only people who are hired in Los Angeles County are covered by the contract terms, creating what some people call a “geofence.” As a general practice, the CBA was also applied to people living in adjacent counties as long as they physically worked in LA County. However, the pandemic impacted the way we work as an industry and made remote work an option for many animation workers. When faced with an opportunity to move out of state and work remotely, animation workers were told that it was outside the scope of the agreement, and they would no longer be considered Union employees.

Addressing this issue in the 2022 contract negotiations was not a mandatory subject of bargaining, and as such the employers originally said they did not want to discuss the matter during negotiations. However, the Negotiations Committee stood firm in order to create a pathway to Union-covered remote work outside of LA County. Under the new [unpublished sideletter](#), we confirmed that anyone who is hired in Los Angeles can work outside of the county and state if the employer agrees to allow remote work.



How do the new terms negotiated in 2022 impact the scope outlined in the CBA?

During the negotiations, we were able to get the employers to confirm that anyone who is hired in Los Angeles can work outside of the county and state, if the employer agrees to allow remote work. Why is this important? Previously, the Motion Picture Industry Health Plans were cited as the reason employers could not classify someone out of LA County as a Union employee, and that the plans would not cover workers outside of LA County. This barrier does not exist, and members can use their individual leverage to negotiate with the employer for Union coverage out of state. Furthermore, the employers agreed that people who have been working remotely outside the state can continue to do so and be covered by the agreement under specific circumstances.



Is there anything stopping a studio from allowing me to work remotely?

No, nothing in our agreement prevents a signatory employer from classifying you as a Union employee. TAG members can work remotely outside of LA County and retain their TAG membership and benefits. Studios may choose not to classify remote workers as TAG members, but this is based on their internal policy and not any rules from TAG or language in the agreement. If you would like to retain your TAG membership when working remotely, you could consider making this a condition of your employment with the studio. Keep in mind, TAG members can use their individual leverage to negotiate Union coverage out of state. If you feel you don't have the individual leverage to negotiate such an agreement, you can reach out to TAG organizers at organize@tag839.org to help collect the leverage of all remote non-Union workers.



I heard I need to travel to Los Angeles to sign my personal employment contract?

The language in the CBA says that you must be “hired in Los Angeles County” in order for the agreement to apply to your work. It will be up to the discretion of the studio to determine whether or not you need to be physically present in LA County to sign your personal services contract, so make sure to discuss this matter with your employer. Be prepared to travel if this becomes a necessary factor to secure your Union coverage.



Is there anything I can do if the signatory studio won't let me work remotely?

Unfortunately, if the signatory studio refuses to classify you as a Union employee, you have no grievance rights under the terms of the TAG/AMPTP contract in LA. The most sustainable way to ensure that you and other remote animation workers have a voice on the job, like your LA co-workers, is to organize as remote workers at a TAG signatory studio. Right now, the Guild is organizing permanent remote animation artists and production workers outside of LA County in order to expand the scope of the Animation Guild agreement. If you are working remotely outside LA County and would like to support this effort, email a TAG organizer at organize@tag839.org.



Does TAG want workers to stay in LA for any reason?

No, but the employers do! That's why they have fought so hard to keep the scope of the agreement focused on LA County.



If I am working remotely and my studio is classifying me as a Union employee, which health plan should I choose, HMO or PPO?

You should select the PPO option. The PPO includes healthcare providers nationwide. The HMO plans' coverage is limited to Southern California.



What happens if my project ends and I have moved out of state? How can I make sure the next studio will let me work remotely?

Once you move out of state, there are no guarantees that the next studio will allow you to work as a Union employee. But keep in mind you can use your leverage to negotiate continued Union coverage. Plus, your designation on the previous project is proof that you can work out-of-state and still be covered under the Union, and strengthens your argument to continue to be classified as a Union-covered employee. Also, you may need to travel back to Los Angeles in order to sign your contract in LA County before returning to your permanent residence. This will be up to the studio's discretion.



Will working remotely outside of LA County affect my pension contribution?

If the studio classifies you as a Union-covered employee, your pension contributions will continue as usual. If you are not working under the terms of our agreement, you will not have contributions made to MPI, which means you will not be contributing to your MPI pension accounts.



What is TAG doing to support workers who want to work remotely out of LA and adjacent counties?

Firstly, the TAG Negotiations Committee fought hard to create a pathway towards working remotely outside of LA and adjacent counties when it was not a mandatory subject of bargaining, which means that legally the employers did not have to discuss the issue during negotiations. You can read the complete [unpublished sideletter here](#). This move was a first step toward establishing Union-covered work across the United States. TAG leadership has also devoted significant time and resources to organizing efforts outside of LA County and California in order to ensure all animation workers can one day be protected by a collective bargaining agreement. If you are interested in helping out with organizing efforts email organize@tag839.org.

Remember we are all TAG members. The stronger and more engaged we are as a membership (remote and local), the more power we can take into negotiations. We need to support all of our kin, near and far, so we can all grow stronger.