

NEWS RELEASE



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers®
AFL-CIO-CLC

900 Seventh St. N.W.
Washington DC 20001

www.ibew.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Mark Brueggenjohann 202-728-6014

Verizon Workers Announce Strike Deadline of Wednesday, April 13

Telecom giant makes \$1.8 billion a month in profit, but seeks to destroy good jobs for nearly 40,000 East Coast working families

After trying for ten months to reach a fair contract, nearly 40,000 Verizon workers from Massachusetts to Virginia plan to go on strike at 6 a.m. on Wednesday, April 13 if a fair agreement is not reached by then. With strikes in multiple states, the Verizon strike will be by far the largest work stoppage in the country in recent years.

Even though Verizon made \$39 billion in profits over the last three years — and \$1.8 billion a month in profits over the first three months of 2016 — the company wants to gut job security protections, contract out more work, offshore jobs to Mexico, the Philippines and other locations and require technicians to work away from home for as long as two months without seeing their families. Verizon is also refusing to negotiate a fair first contract for Verizon Wireless retail workers who formed a union in 2014.

“We’re standing up for working families and standing up to Verizon’s corporate greed,” said CWA District 1 Vice President Dennis Trainor. “If a hugely profitable corporation like Verizon can destroy the good family-supporting jobs of highly skilled workers, then no worker in America will be safe from this corporate race to the bottom.”

With negotiations at a standstill even as workers have offered hundreds of millions of dollars in healthcare cost savings, support for a fair contract is growing. Last month, 20 U.S. Senators sent a letter to Verizon CEO Lowell McAdam calling on him to “act as a responsible corporate citizen and negotiate a fair contract with the employees who make your company’s success possible.” And the working families of Verizon are reaching out to the public about the threat the corporation is posing to communities up and down the East Coast, including a new 30-second ad about the company’s efforts to offshore and relocate jobs.

“Verizon is already turning people’s lives upside down by sending us hundreds of miles from home for weeks at a time, and now they want to make it even worse,” said Dan Hylton, a technician and CWA member in Roanoke, Va., who’s been with Verizon for 20 years. “Technicians on our team have always been happy to volunteer after natural disasters when our customers needed help, but if I was forced away from home for two months, I have no idea what my wife would do. She had back surgery last year, and she needs my help. I just want to do a good job, be there for my family, and have a decent life.”

The Verizon negotiations began in June 2015, and the workers’ contract expired on August 1. At the same time, Verizon’s CEO is making 200 times more than the average Verizon employee, and the company’s top five executives made \$233 million over the last five years.

“For months and months, we’ve made every effort to reach a fair agreement at the bargaining table,” said Myles Calvey, IBEW Local 2222 Business Manager. “We’ve offered Verizon hundreds of millions of dollars in cost savings and yet they still refuse to provide basic job security for workers. We have to take a stand now for our families and every American worker.”

Even after significant worker concessions on healthcare, Verizon is attempting to make devastating cutbacks, including:

- Offshoring and contracting out even more customer service work to Mexico, the Philippines and other locations.
- Cutting job security for all workers.
- Requiring technicians to work away from home for as long as four months, without seeing their families. For anyone trying to balance work and family life, this is impossible.
- Refusing to negotiate a fair first contract for Verizon Wireless workers, who formed a union with CWA in 2014.
- Forcing retirees to pay extremely high health care costs.
- Slashing benefits for workers injured on the job.

Verizon’s corporate greed isn’t just harming workers’ families, it’s hurting customers as well. Service quality has deteriorated to the point that New York State’s Public Service Commission has convened a formal hearing to investigate problems across the Empire State. In the last few weeks, regulators in Pennsylvania and New Jersey have launched similar inquiries into Verizon’s operations.

For years, Verizon has been cutting vital staff — it has nearly 40 percent fewer workers now than a decade ago. Verizon has failed to hire the personnel necessary to properly roll out FiOS, the high-speed broadband service that is still

unavailable to many of its customers. In cities like Philadelphia and New York, Verizon has failed to meet the buildout obligations under their citywide cable franchise agreements.

“Verizon wants to force through changes that would make it easier to uproot workers and hurt our communities,” said Betsy Derr, a customer service representative and CWA member in Bloomsburg, Pa., who’s worked at Verizon for over 16 years. “My job could be relocated about 70 miles away. With three more hours of time commuting every day, I’ll be gone before my stepsons get up and maybe home for an hour before they go to bed. “Verizon’s corporate greed isn’t just harming workers’ families, it’s hurting customers as well. Service quality has deteriorated to the point that New York State’s Public Service Commission has convened a formal hearing to investigate problems across the Empire State. In the last few weeks, regulators in Pennsylvania and New Jersey have launched similar inquiries into Verizon’s operations.

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The [International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers](#) (IBEW) represents approximately 725,000 members who work in a wide variety of fields, including construction, utilities, manufacturing, telecommunications, broadcasting, railroads and government.