



## 2024 Learning Lab – West Region

Las Vegas, NV – The Flamingo Resort  
May 14-16, 2024

### FAQ and Information Guide

#### 1. Where is the West Region 2024 Learning Lab being held?

- The West Region 2024 Learning Lab will take place at the Flamingo Resort's Corporate Convention Center. BMWED will have a general session room where we will have our meals and conduct most of our training. This will be the Virginia City II room, near the elevators on the third floor of the Flamingo's Corporate Convention Center. A map is attached to this FAQ.
- The address for the Flamingo is 3555 Las Vegas Blvd South, Las Vegas, NV, 89109.

#### 2. Who is attending the West Region Learning Lab?

- Lodge Officers from the Unified System Division and the Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe Frisco System Federation will attend this Learning Lab. We will also have National Division officers and staff as instructors and guest speakers, as well as visiting speakers from healthcare benefits providers and our BMWED Designated Legal Counsel.

#### 3. When is the West Region Learning Lab?

- The West Region Learning Lab will take place on May 14, 15, and 16, 2024. Breakfast for participants will begin in the Virginia City II room from 6:30 to 7:30 AM those days, with the training agenda commencing each day at 7:30 AM.
- Monday, May 13 and Friday, May 16 will be travel days for those attending this Learning Lab.

#### 4. Why Las Vegas?

- After looking at several options for potential venues in the West Region that were 1) accessible, 2) affordable, 3) union-operated, and 4) suitable to support this sort of training, Las Vegas is consistently one of the best option in the west. Travel and lodging in Las Vegas are consistently more affordable than other cities, while catered meal costs are competitive.

## **5. What will attendees do at this Learning Lab?**

- Participants will be assigned to one of six workgroups with their fellow sisters and brothers. Each workgroup will have members from both USD and ATSFF and will have at least one of each type of Lodge officer attending (President, VP, Local Chairperson, S-T, etc.).
- Each workgroup will work together on activities, much as they would work with their fellow Lodge officer from their own Local Lodge. Since many of our Lodge officers support one another in their work or perform more than a single job, this training will “cross-train” our participants on work and roles performed by each officer. For instance, instead of a Secretary-Treasurer only learning how to do their own tasks, they will participate in helping the President build a meeting agenda or assist the Vice President in coordinating an organizing action. As part of their workgroup, each participant will:
  - Learn how to use parliamentary procedure and Robert’s Rules or Order to accomplish a task through the use of parliamentary motions in regular order.
  - Use simulated materials to complete a Quarterly Audit Report.
  - Be part of a group presentation their workgroup provides to the rest of the Lab on an assigned topic.
- Each participant will also receive coaching and guidance from National Division officers and staff on current issues facing our union or key concepts in their roles as union officers. They will also receive presentations from healthcare benefits representatives and others on information they can take back to their Lodges and members to educate and empower our union.

**Bottom line, our participants will gather and sharpen the tools they can use to create more impactful and effective Local Lodge meetings. They will gain experience in presenting information to others, to empower them to do the same for the Lodge sisters and brothers, and they will practice the tasks vital to successfully conducting business at the Local Lodge level.**

**Find out more by viewing the Learning Lab Agenda at [bmwe.org/training](https://bmwe.org/training).**

**6. What about the Local Chairperson's work?**

- On Day 2 of each Learning Lab, the afternoon is set up in “breakout sessions” when our System Division and Federation General Chairpersons will be able to provide training, guidance, or set expectations for their members regarding the conduct of business within their System Division or Federation, including the handling of claims and grievances or other on-property matters. These breakout sessions are scheduled for four hours on Day 2, with the exact agenda or schedule for this time determined by each General Chairperson or their designated officers.

**7. How did participants get selected for this Learning Lab?**

- For each System Division or Federation participating in this year's Lodge Officer Learning Labs, their General Chairperson assigned or selected participants from among their Lodge officers. Each General Chairperson was encouraged to select newly elected officers, or those who had not yet had the opportunity to receive training in their roles. Interested members are encouraged to reach out to their General Chairperson if they wished to join this year's Learning Labs.

**8. What should I bring to the Learning Lab?**

- Most materials will be provided for our participants. However, if you have reference materials or items you regularly use to perform your work as a Lodge officer, you are encouraged to bring these items. This can include a copy of your BMWED or System/Federation Bylaws, a copy of any Local Lodge rules or bylaws you may have, a Lodge-provided laptop, or other materials.
- Secretary-Treasurers may choose to bring items relevant to their Lodge's business, if they seek guidance from our National Division staff on questions or issues. However, we will not use any single Lodge's information to inform or train others within the Learning Lab. Where we use financial or other Lodge information, this will be simulated.
- A notebook, pens or pencils, and a folder or binder are recommended, but not required, for this Learning Lab.
- For any questions regarding suitable materials to bring (or leave home), contact Ash Anderson at [education@bmwe.org](mailto:education@bmwe.org).

**9. Is there a dress code for the Learning Lab?**

- Participants to our Learning Labs represent their fellow members, as well as our union. Participants should dress appropriately, in a manner that reflects their role as leaders and representatives of our Brotherhood.
- That being said, jeans and casual shirts are acceptable if they are clean and serviceable. Collared shirts are encouraged, but we're not kicking folks out of the room for wearing a t-shirt. Union t-shirts are definitely encouraged, if you want to represent your Lodge, System Division, or Federation.
- Please refrain from wearing apparel given to you by your employers.
- Bottom line here is, does what I'm wearing now reflect well on myself, my Lodge, and my union? Is what I'm wearing now what I'd expect a leader of my union to wear when representing me?

**10. How are we getting fed at these Learning Labs?**

- The National Division will provide breakfast and lunch for each attendee for each training day. National Division is also working with partners to host dinners on the evening of each training day.
- For travel days, meals are the responsibility of each individual. Reimbursement for these meals may be provided by their System Division, Federation, or Lodge, subject to local policies.
- If you have specific dietary preferences or restrictions, you should contact Ash Anderson at [education@bmwe.org](mailto:education@bmwe.org).

**11. How are we getting rooms at these Learning Labs?**

- National Division has set up a room block for participants and will book rooms for each participant once their name is submitted by their General Chairperson. For our Learning Lab in Las Vegas, this process is complete. Participant rooms have already been booked.
- Within the limits of the room block and venue policies, Learning Lab participants with any room preferences should contact Ash Anderson at [education@bmwe.org](mailto:education@bmwe.org).
- Full time officers or staff may be required to book their rooms separately from Learning Lab participants, subject to the conditions of the room block and venue policies and availability.

**12. How are we getting paid while at these Learning Labs?**

- Wage reimbursement will be handled by the System Division, Federation, or Lodge. Participants should be prepared to complete appropriate forms (ES-1, F-5, etc.) and, if they have not received compensation or reimbursement from the BMWED before, also complete appropriate IRS forms to ensure the correct withholding of necessary taxes.

**13. How is travel being handled for these Learning Labs?**

- While the National Division has a set \$500 reimbursement for each participant, the booking of travel arrangements will be handled by each member, Lodge, System Division, or Federation on a case-by-case basis, subject to the policies of their Lodge or General Chairperson.
- For those participants who intend to drive to the Learning Lab, they should retain any eligible fuel or parking receipts. For members who fly to the event, receipts for flight arrangements and any necessary ground transportation should be kept and copies submitted for reimbursement.
- Any travel costs exceeding the \$500 available for reimbursement by National Division should be handled at the Lodge, System Division, or Federation level. The \$500 amount set by National Division was required to allocate resources and work to ensure we could maximize the number of participants we could invite to these Learning Labs.
- If flights are booked by your General Chairperson, your Vice Chair, or your Sys/Fed staff, your System Division or Federation will be reimbursed up to \$500 by the National Division for that expense.

**14. How should I prepare to attend this Learning Lab?**

- Once you know you're going to attend the Learning Lab, take a look at the resources available for our officers and members at:  
<https://www.bmwe.org/lodgeofficers>  
<https://www.bmwe.org/library>
- You can find updates to this specific Learning Lab, or other training opportunities, by visiting:  
<https://www.bmwe.org/training>

## **15. How much free time will we have to see the sights?**

- Each training day is scheduled to begin at 7:30 AM (0730) local time and run until roughly 4:30 PM (1630). There will be a roughly 1-hour lunch break at 11:30 AM (1130). No other breaks are scheduled, but members can use their discretion if they need to leave their workgroup to take a call or step out of the Lab.
- Each evening during the Lab (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) we will hold a dinner at 6:30 PM (1830) local time. These dinners will include guest speakers and will offer our participants additional information they can bring back to their Lodge members.
- On Wednesday (May 15) our dinner sponsors are also hosting a brief social hour prior to the dinner. More information about this event will be available when participants arrive in Las Vegas.
- Each workgroup will be assigned a topic they are responsible for presenting to the Learning Lab as a whole on the afternoon of Day 3 (Thursday). Little time will be offered during the training day to prepare for this presentation as a group, so workgroup members will be challenged to work together in preparing and developing this presentation on their own. Participants should plan accordingly for some group work outside the scheduled training day.
- Learning Lab participants will also have some brief “homework” assigned each training day that builds on skills learned that day or prepares them for other topics. While these assignments are pretty short, they will require roughly 30 minutes to complete each day outside the scheduled training day.

**Bottom line here, the Learning Lab will be a very busy three days, packed with material and work. While we want our participants to have a great experience, we are also going to ensure we get the most from the time we have together and put our members' investment to work in building our skills and strengthening our union!**

## 16. Who should I ask if I have more questions?

- If you have questions or issues about:
  - The Learning Lab's general sessions or content
  - Lodging arrangements
  - Training material and resources
  - Meals during the Learning Lab

**Contact Ash Anderson, your Director of Education, at [education@bmwe.org](mailto:education@bmwe.org)**

- If you have questions or issues about:
  - Enrolling in a Learning Lab
  - Wage reimbursements
  - Travel arrangements
  - The Day 2 afternoon breakout session (1230-1630)

**Contact your General Chairperson or your Vice Chair.** Some reimbursements may also be handled by your Local Lodge. You can find contact information for your General Chairperson or other System Division or Federation officers, as well as your National Division officers and staff, at <https://www.bmwe.org/directory>.

**KEEP AN EYE ON <https://www.bmwe.org/training> for updates to the 2024 Lodge Officer Learning Labs, as well as other training opportunities!**

**CHECK OUT <https://www.bmwe.org/library> for more educational materials, resources, or links to information you can use to sharpen your own skills or add content to your Local Lodge meetings!**

