

# The Glazier's Career Journey



There are both district council numbers and local union numbers for each of our five unionized locations. (Arizona, #6, is not unionized).

Good information can be found here, at the national level: <https://www.iupat.org/>

- **Los Angeles/OC/SB:** Local 636, DC #36: <https://www.dc36.org>
- **Fresno:** Local 294, DC #16: <https://www.dc16iupat.org/unions/glaziers-arch-metal-glass-workers/>
- **Las Vegas:** Local 2001, DC #16: <https://www.dc16iupat.org/unions/local-union-2001/>

## To Join a Local:

A potential glazier candidate can go to the physical location of a local's office to inquire about getting a list of local union companies looking to hire apprentices. The candidate would next go to one of the listed companies to obtain a letter saying that the company intends to hire that person as an apprentice. (That's called a "letter of intent.")

The union will then reply to the candidate with one of a few potential responses:

- They may say that they can bring the candidate in as an apprentice, that they're busy, there's a lot of local work going on, and there's a big demand for new apprentices.
- Alternately, they may say that it won't happen, because they already have enough apprentices signed up waiting to be sent out to companies, and they'll send one of those existing names on the list to that company before considering additional candidates.

Once the letter of intent is obtained, the candidates take an exam. Passing it means the candidate gets accepted into the apprenticeship program.

## Requirements to Apply:

- Minimum 18 years of age
- High school diploma, GED or DD-214
- Valid driver's license or ID card
- Social security card
- Pass a mathematical evaluation
- Mental and physical ability to perform the required duties of an apprentice

# The Apprenticeship Program

Candidates are expected to learn all they can while on the job, both practically and also academically. While working full-time, and for a period of three years, it's required that each apprentice take off a week, unpaid, once every quarter, to attend apprenticeship school. (They can file for unemployment for that one week each quarter.)

## Pay

This is a potentially lucrative career for anyone interested in construction who is eager to start working immediately after completing high school and reaches the age of 18.

In Los Angeles at the time of this write up, for example, at the start of their initial three-year period, apprentices earn the industry standard, which is 40% of journeyworker wages. At Giroux Glass, we usually start our apprentices off at 50% of a journeyworker's wages.

The wage schedule is subject to change, and [can be found here for LA](#) and [here for Fresno and Las Vegas.](#) The process is that apprentices receive increases of 5% every six months, based on approval by their superintendents who confirm that they're doing the work and also attending the quarterly classes.

That means that a candidate will start at 40% of a journeyworker's wages, increase to 45% after six months. He will start his second year at 50% of a journeyworker's wages, and increase to 60% halfway through his second year. He will start his third year at 65% of a journeyworker's wages, and increase to 70% halfway through his third year. At Giroux Glass, typically this whole scale would kick off a bit higher.

On the fourth year, it is no longer required to attend the quarterly school program, and apprentices continue to work while earning incremental 5% increases every six months, until they ultimately reach a maximum of 90% of journeyworker's wages.

Once they reach their fourth year, (no matter where they place on the rising pay scale), they also qualify to take their test to obtain their journeyworker card, or credential, to earn full journeyworker wages. If they don't take the test, their pay will max out at 90%. Right now, journeymen make \$46/hour for regular time, along with benefits that include paid vacation time, a pension plan, a 410-K plan, and health benefits.

<https://www.dc36.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/636Glaziers.Employer-Wage-Schedule.20210601.pdf>

The information about applying for an apprenticeship can be found at:

<http://www.socalglaziers.org/applications.html>

## Roles

Opportunities for glaziers start with apprenticeship, then progress to journeymen. Journeymen who demonstrate the ability to visualize the end result, show strong mechanical skills, are skilled with laying out materials and coordinating labor teams, and have great people skills may be promoted to foremen.

Good foremen can become superintendents. If a foreman manages a team of up to nine glaziers, they receive a boost in pay worth 10% above the most highly-paid member of their crew. Managing more than nine glaziers reaps an extra 15% above the most highly-paid member of their crew.

At Giroux Glass, in addition to glaziers who have been with the company a long time, we have multiple cases of glaziers who have crossed over to working in other roles. We have working for us now a good number of project managers and project estimators who started as glaziers working in the field.

## Giroux Glass' Program

Typically apprentices start at Giroux Glass as a glass truck driver. During this time, they learn to handle and manipulate glass, become familiar with wearing personal protective equipment, ("PPE"), learn how to complete some aspects of fabrication in our shops, become familiar with aluminum and hardware, and gain a lot of knowledge about and exposure to projects and the industry. They may be asked to help out, working as part

of a crew on a project site. Throughout this period, they're evaluated for their attitude and aptitude, along with their general skills and work ethic.

Apprentices are usually paired up to work alongside a team or with a journeyworker, to learn how we handle materials, conduct water tests, lay out materials at the jobsite, etc. "Our program has enabled some of the most qualified glaziers in the industry, and many of them are still with us as foremen, years after they started," says Kelly Edwards, director of CA facilities and field operations, who worked in the field himself for since 1980. "We really invest in our people, and like our people to invest in us." Edwards explains that we never leave apprentices on their own without someone experienced to show them the trade. "The more that apprentices learn about the different facets of what we do, the more valuable an asset they become to us and to the rest of their field teams."



**Kelly Edwards,**  
Director of CA Facilities  
and Field Operations

At Giroux Glass, the glaziers who perform well and become experts at their trade tend to show the company loyalty. We have held multiple retirement parties for glaziers who have worked exclusively for Giroux for over 20 years. The average amount of time that glaziers work for Giroux Glass is 16 years, a statistic that few other companies can claim. At Giroux Glass, a company known for the high quality of our work, we consider our glaziers to be equal team members, an integral part of our workforce and our culture. We work hard and party hard, and look forward to the fun events that we can all get together for fun, like company picnics and holiday parties.

## Rewards

Tangible benefits include things like paid vacation time, a pension plan, a 401-K plan, and medical plans. But other factors also play in to what our field teams consider to be gratifying. Kelly Edwards says, "After so many years working in Los Angeles, I love that on every street I drive, it shows off work we have done. My part in it is visible for years and years. The pride instilled in me from the last job feeds into the pride I'll get at the next job, it's fulfilling and also heart-warming."