

State Worker Tentative Agreement

Frequently Asked Questions

Pay Increases

Why are the cost of living adjustments (COLAs) scheduled for December?

The bargaining team's goal was to get the largest COLAs possible. By scheduling the COLAs to go into effect in December, we were able to get the highest raises possible for the amount of money that was allocated by the legislature for raises and benefits. The bargaining team tries to bargain pay increases to be effective as early as possible, while meeting the goal of having the largest COLA possible. The state usually tries to bargain smaller COLAs earlier, and we were able to push them to December, which allowed for the biggest COLAs in nearly 15 years.

Why didn't we negotiate an additional step?

Last bargaining cycle we were able to win an additional top step for all salary ranges, that took many, many bargaining cycles to win. The team made the decision that adding another top step this soon was not going to be possible, so they prioritized other areas of economic growth for all employees.

Hazard Pay

Who qualifies for hazard pay?

Workers with at least 480 hours (12 weeks) that meet the following conditions: 1) had regular close contact with others outside of their household (less than six feet); and 2) had routine (more than 15 minutes per person(s) close contact with others outside of their household; and 3) could not perform their job duties from home or another setting that limits the close or routine contact with others outside of their household.

Workers who meet the above criteria with 480 – 1039 hours will receive \$1050

Workers who meet the above criteria with 1040+ hours will receive \$1550

Workers who qualify for one of the payments above and also had 200 or more overtime hours during the same time period (March 2020 - June 2021) will receive an additional \$575.

What if I could technically perform my job at home, but due to inadequate internet access I couldn't work from home?

Our position is that employees in this situation should qualify for the hazard pay. It may be that workers in this situation have to go through an appeal process because management may not be aware which employees were working in person for this reason.

Why was March of 2020 selected to start calculating hours for COVID hazard pay?

March of 2020 was the date the Governor declared a State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 virus.

How will the hours people work be calculated for the purposes of hazard pay?

The state will determine who worked enough hours under the qualifying conditions. They know that relying solely on timesheet data/codes will not yield an accurate list of who qualifies, and will not be relying on that data alone.

What if an employee believes they should have received hazard pay, but don't receive the payment?

If someone does not get a Hazard Pay payment, but feels they should qualify to receive payment, the worker should first ask their supervisor why they didn't get the payment (either through a steward, or on their own). If that doesn't resolve the situation, a grievance can be filed.

Will employees that worked during the pandemic but left state service before this tentative agreement receive hazard pay?

No, employees who left state service before this agreement will not receive hazard pay money. This agreement does not cover workers who are not in the bargaining unit.

If someone is leaving state service before the contract is ratified or before their payment is made, do they still have a right to that money?

Employees, including returning seasonal workers, who are employed as of the date of ratification are eligible for this payment if they meet the requirements. If a qualified employee is employed upon ratification, but leaves state service prior to the payments being distributed, they still have the right to the payment and should contact their manager or HR department if they don't receive it.

If someone has moved out of the bargaining unit but was in the bargaining unit between May 2020 and June 2021, will they receive a Hazard Pay payment?

Our collective bargaining agreement does not cover management/unrepresented employees, but it is our understanding that the state intends to offer this payment to qualifying unrepresented employees as well.

When will people receive hazard pay money?

Once the contract is ratified we will work with the state to get the pay implemented. There is not a deadline for payment, but we will do our best to make sure the state gets it paid out as soon as possible after ratification. There will be a lot of work to do to make sure everyone who qualifies gets the payment.

Is there an income limit for me to receive the COVID Hazard Pay?

No. The amount is based on how many hours you were mandated to work in person.

Essential Worker Differential

How will I know if I qualify for the Essential Worker Differential?

Employees who are required to work in person when situations exist that would otherwise allow employees to utilize inclement weather/hazardous conditions leave are eligible for this differential, unless their primary job functions include responding to inclement weather or hazardous conditions or who live at their work site.

Holidays

Is adding Juneteenth as a paid holiday really a win? Didn't the legislature already grant state workers Juneteenth as a holiday?

The legislature did make Juneteenth an official state holiday, however, only holidays that are listed in Section 1 of Article 58 and days appointed as a holiday by the Governor, are guaranteed holidays for state workers. If we had been unable to win Juneteenth as a holiday in our contract, we would have risked the ability for SEIU members to get the day off or get holiday pay if required to work. Bargaining this into our contract guarantees these protections and benefits for our members.

Why did we end up with Juneteenth as a new holiday and not Indigenous Peoples' Day?

Our team feels strongly that honoring both of these holidays is important, and advocated for both of these days to be added to our contract. Unfortunately, the state was unwilling to agree to two new holidays, and the team made the decision to prioritize Juneteenth this time because of feedback they received on bargaining proposals. Our bargaining team was able to expand the use of "Special Day" (see below), and encourages use of that day to observe Indigenous Peoples Day or other important holidays not included in our contract.

What is the Special Day and what changed?

All full-time employees receive eight hours of paid leave (Part-time, seasonal, and job share employees receive a prorated amount of paid leave). This is referred to as the Special Day in the contract. It must be used between the day before Thanksgiving and January 31 in the current contract. The new language will allow employees to use that paid leave anytime during the calendar year. Employees will have access to this day as soon as the contract is ratified, and will have use of the Special Day again beginning January 1, 2022. Sometimes the Special Day is referred to as Governor's Leave.

General Bargaining Questions:

When will these changes be official?

Our bargaining team has made a tentative agreement with the state. That means the bargaining team believes they've bargained the best contract possible and are recommending members vote to ratify it. During the last week of July, all bargaining delegates met and voted to send the tentative agreement to the entire membership for a ratification vote. All members in the bargaining unit will get a chance to vote whether to approve the agreement for ratification or not. That process will conclude at the end of August. Provisions of the new agreement go into effect

once the contract is ratified. Any provisions of the agreement with a start date before ratification will be retroactive upon ratification.

How/when can I vote on the tentative agreement?

This year the ratification vote will be a virtual process. On August 9th, you will receive an email with instructions on how to vote and more details on what is included in the agreement. You will be able to follow a link to vote. If you have any issues with the process or do not receive the email, you can call for help at 1-844-503-SEIU (7348) or reach out to your organizer. Our union will ensure that every member who wants to gets the chance to vote.

Who bargains this agreement and how do members have a say?

During our Sub-local election process (which happens during the winter and spring of even numbered years), members of the union elect bargaining delegates to represent them during their next bargaining campaign. These delegates directly bargain over language that is specific to their agencies and coalitions; they also elect members of the Central Table bargaining team. So our team is made up of elected member leaders and staff assigned to support them at the bargaining table.