



Service Employees International Union Local 503

72,000 care providers, public services workers and non-profit employees in Oregon.

Homecare Council
SEIU Local 503
1730 Commercial St. SE
Salem, OR 97302

Director Fariborz Pakseresht
Oregon Department of Human Services
500 Summer St. NE E-15
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Director Pakseresht,

We are elected members of our union from across the state and represent the 35,000 homecare and personal support workers that work under your agency. Today we are writing to make you aware of several serious issues in the Aging and People with Disabilities program within ODHS. We are deeply invested in the success of the APD program and delivering quality care to our consumers, but it feels more and more like ODHS is not invested in us.

We are in a crisis. In recent weeks we have been appalled to see a series of preventable errors that have significantly harmed thousands of essential homecare workers and their consumers.

1. **The roll out of the new Provider Time Capture program has been a failure.** There is widespread confusion among homecare workers and ODHS office staff as to how to use the program, indicative of a rushed and under-resourced rollout. We warned ODHS multiple times to prepare for the problems that have occurred. In recent weeks, leadership at APD has made public statements referencing a “successful rollout” that are not in line with the experiences of our members, and we are concerned that APD does not understand the situation they are currently in with providers.
2. **Homecare workers are reporting a significant uptick in late or partial payments,** indicating problems with the software or administration of the system that go beyond user error. We have been working for years to make sure workers are paid on time. The fumbled implementation of PTC has been a major step backward.
3. **Our bargaining team was misled about how hazard payments would be taxed.** We had numerous conversations with ODHS leadership about implementation of the hazard payments negotiated in the latest contract. Your bargaining team confirmed with us in writing that taxes would be withheld based on an individual provider's W-4. Unfortunately, APD made a change in how they were going to calculate withholding without communicating the change to us or the providers. This resulted in workers feeling as though they got less hazard pay than they were promised.

We believe that Oregon's long-term care sector only stands to benefit from ODHS and SEIU 503 working together to correct these errors and improve the APD and ODDS systems. We have gone above and beyond to be patient and partner with APD leadership to fix these problems, but it isn't working. We are hearing from workers on a regular basis that persistent problems with payroll are so discouraging they are considering leaving the field altogether.

We are asking that you step in and address this crisis in a meaningful and immediate way so that the thousands of homecare workers that we represent can be treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Sandoval (Homecare Council President)
Joy'e Willman (Homecare Council Vice President)
Holly Garland (Homecare Council Secretary-Treasurer)
Nanette Carter-Jafri (Chief Steward, Homecare)
Patty Falkenstein (Chief Steward, Personal Support)

In addition to members of the SEIU 503 Sub-Local 99 Homecare Council:

Carolynn Kohout
Cristal DeJarnac
LaMara Thrasher
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Andrea Clark
Barbara Evans
Avery Horton
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