



Jennifer Holstad, Barb Olafson and Andrea Ebner of Local 2829 vote on their state contract at the Minnesota DNR building. Members approved it with 95 percent of the vote.

## State Workers Ratify Contract

AFSCME Council 5 members who work for the state have approved a new two-year agreement with 95 percent of the vote.

The contract covers 15,504 craft, service, health care, clerical and technical workers who voted last week across Minnesota.

The deal includes a 2 percent raise retroactive to July 1; another 2.25 percent effective July 1, 2018; plus steps both years. The contract not only holds the line on health insurance costs for workers, it improves health and dental benefits. It also guarantees six weeks of paid parental leave to bond with newborn and adopted children.

“Bargaining involves give-and-take between labor and management,” says Tim Henderson, our chief negotiator. “The employer didn’t

get everything it wanted – and our union didn’t get everything we wanted. But this is a fair deal for hardworking state employees and Minnesota taxpayers. Union members are relieved to have a new contract, and they’re proud to do Minnesota’s work.”

Public employee unions negotiate with the executive branch of state government. Now that workers have approved the deal, the tentative agreement will be forwarded by MMB to the legislative Subcommittee on Employee Relations (SER), which will make a recommendation to the Legislature on whether to approve the contract. If the SER chooses to act, it must do so within 30 days of official filing from MMB. By majority vote, the SER can vote to approve or not approve the contract on an interim basis. If the SER doesn’t approve the contract, we will continue to

## Vote on Corrections Contract

State correctional workers will vote **Sept. 5 through 7** on their tentative agreement, following approval by their delegate assembly Tuesday.

The TA for Unit 8 includes a 2 percent increase retroactive to July 1 and another 2.25 percent raise in 2018, plus steps. The TA would: offer a strong health insurance package with no increase in co-pays, deductibles or maximum out-of-pocket costs; limit premium increases to \$1.50 per month for workers and \$8.71 for dependents, which is far outweighed by pay raises; and offer a pilot program to lower the cost of diabetes treatment. It would increase the annual dental maximum from \$1,500 to \$2,000 and allow adults to get orthodontia, too. The dental premium for workers would increase from \$5 to \$13.50 per month. Other key parts of the TA include:

- Easier shift exchanges, with more time to request an exchange and swaps allowed on cancelled vacation days. Doing an exchange would no longer make a worker ineligible for overtime.
- Six weeks of paid parental leave.
- Vacation for new workers with less than six months on the job.

The Unit 8 negotiating team and delegates have recommended passage of the contract. Find your voting site and contract details at [www.afscmemn.org/unit-8](http://www.afscmemn.org/unit-8).

operate under the terms of the 2015-2017 contracts until the Legislature acts next year.

## Join AFSCME at the State Fair

Coming to the Great Minnesota Get Together next week? Don't forget to stop by the AFSCME kiosk to say hello. We're in the Labor Pavilion at Dan Patch and Cooper.

## Unit 25 Reaches TA

The negotiating team for state radio communication operators has reached a tentative agreement and recommends ratification. Members will vote **Aug. 28**.

The TA includes a wage equity adjustment, which would increase the base pay of every member by two full steps. Members would also get general wage increases of 2 percent the first year and 2.25 percent the second year, plus steps. The TA includes the same great health and dental plan the multi-unit won, along with six weeks of paid parental leave. Other key elements:

- A correction in reporting pay language to reflect current practices.
- Members can put 100 percent of their comp time into a Health Savings Plan upon retirement and up to 240 hours of vacation time.
- Open enrollment for short-term and long-term disability.
- More credit allowed for previous public sector and 911 experience.
- A differential of \$1 more an hour for training new employees.

Vote **Aug. 28** in the metro area from 5:30 to 8:30 a.m. and 6:30 to 8 p.m. at RTMC (Waters

Edge) incident management room, 1500 West County Rd B2, Roseville.

Vote in southern Minnesota from 1 to 3 p.m. and 8 to 9 p.m. at the JB Conference Room, 2900 48th St. NW, Rochester.

## New AFSCME center aids and empowers members

A new Member Action Center at Council 5 is designed to provide a strong resource for all members.

The Member Action Center, or MAC, is staffed by field representatives who are streamlining the grievance arbitration process, finding the answer to all sorts of questions for members, and freeing up local field representatives to spend more time representing members and organizing with leaders to build power and prepare us for a post-*Janus* world.

"There should never, ever be a time in our union where a member or fee payer can't get a hold of someone in our union," says Council 5 state field arbitration director Tim Henderson.

All phone calls made to the main Council 5 number now go to the MAC. Members can call to track their grievance, learn details of their contract or local constitution, find out who their local leaders are and much more. If you have a question the field representative can't answer, they know who to ask and will forward your query to

that person. The MAC won't close a case until the question has been answered.

The Member Action Center is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday so members get a live voice over the phone at 651-450-4990, 218-722-0577, 320-235-2344 or 800-652-9791. Watch Action Update and *Stepping Up* for more details.

## AFSCME Picnic Sunday

Members, retirees and families will join the fun at the AFSCME Family Picnic **Sunday**, 1 to 5 p.m., at the Battle Creek Regional Park in Maplewood. AFSCME provides burgers, hotdogs and soft drinks, plus free water park tickets to the first 100 kids. Members are encouraged to bring a potluck item.

## Local Ratifies Contract

**Local 1949** (food service workers at Bemidji State) approved a two-year contract with Aramark Educational Services. It includes an 80 cents an hour raise (about 5.5 percent), allows workers to take part in flex spending and direct deposit, and expands upon anti-discrimination protections.

## Get in on the Action

Action Update publishes twice a month for locals and activists in AFSCME Council 5. Download a copy at [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org) or share news by emailing [Lynette.Kalsnes@afscmemn.org](mailto:Lynette.Kalsnes@afscmemn.org).

### Mark Your Calendars

Event	Date	Place/details
AFSCME Family Picnic	Aug. 20, 1 to 5 p.m.	Battle Creek Regional Park, Maplewood
AFSCME at the Minnesota State Fair	Aug. 24 through Sept. 4	Labor Pavilion, State Fairgrounds
Labor Day Picnic	Sept. 4, Noon to 3 p.m.	Riverside Park, St. Cloud
Labor Day Parade at State Fair	Sept. 4, 2 p.m.	RSVP to Vicki, 651-222-3787, x120
AFSCME Council 5 Annual Convention	Oct. 5 to 7	Duluth Entertainment Convention Center