



AFSCME Legislative Agenda 2017 Staffing Up for Safe Workplaces

Protect Public Workers Who Protect the Public

Clocking in should never mean putting your life on the line. That's why AFSCME members who work with violent patients and inmates are standing up for safe staffing. We all deserve to work a safe shift and return home to our families who count on us.

AFSCME members who work in mental health facilities are taking a beating. Patients kick, scratch, bite and choke us. They spit on us, chase us with weapons, and hit us with furniture. Concussions, memory loss, open wounds, and broken bones are common. Our injury photos and stories are posted on Facebook at "Safe Staffing MN."

Violent patients are assaulting staff in record numbers at state-run security hospitals, psychiatric facilities and group homes. There also has been an alarming increase in violence toward mental health workers at hospitals like Fairview, Regions, HCMC and HealthEast. The number of inmates in state prisons and county jails is also rising as corrections staff has been cut by the budget ax. Those trends should prompt lawmakers to protect the public workers who protect the public.

Mandated overtime is also a dangerous consequence of the staffing crisis. Workers are frequently forced to work double shifts with little notice. That creates fatigue and stress and it puts staff and patients at risk.

AFSCME is asking the Legislature to increase funding to ensure safe staffing and predictable schedules. Keeping workers and the public safe is a core responsibility of government and it should be a funding priority.

Action – Ask your legislators to:

- **Invest in safe staffing:** \$25 million for St. Peter Security Hospital, \$10 million for MSOCS group homes, \$5 million for the Sex Offender Program, and funding for Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Services.
- **Support Governor Dayton's bonding proposal,** which includes \$70 million to expand the Security Hospital in St. Peter; \$27 million to improve Sex Offender Treatment facilities in Moose Lake and St. Peter; \$7.5 million for a new Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Services facility in Willmar; \$5 million for Direct Care and Treatment to upgrade security systems and electronic monitoring; and \$2.25 million for safety renovations at Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center.