



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, August 25, 2015

afscmemn.org

Members Ratify State Master Contract

State employees ratified their master contract, with 84 percent support from voting members. The two-year deal will cover 15,500 AFSCME members who work for the Executive Branch in Unit 2 (craft and maintenance), Unit 3 (service), Unit 4 (health care), Unit 6 (clerical), and Unit 7 (technical).

Highlights include a pay raise of 2.5 percent, retroactive to July 1; another 2.5 percent raise on July 1, 2016; plus step pay increases in both years. Employees eligible for annual steps could see their pay rise 10 percent by the time the contract expires on June 30, 2017.

The contract includes modest increases in health-insurance costs. But the combined pay raises more than offset additional insurance costs; members come out ahead even if they pay the maximum out-of-pocket costs. The new contract also improves dental coverage, with no additional cost to employees.

The contract now goes to the Legislature's Subcommittee on Employee Relations. The committee's vote will determine when the contract legally takes effect.

Retroactive raises usually show up on paychecks in November.

Questions? Contact AFSCME's chief negotiator, Jo Pels, at jo.pels@afscmemn.org or 651-287-0539.

Corrections Unit Rejects Contract

A similar contract proposal for Unit 8, which includes 1,900 state correctional officers, was rejected by 56 percent of members who voted. Workers in this "essential" unit cannot strike. Council 5 now will pursue interest arbitration to resolve the dispute.

Questions? Contact Unit 8's negotiator, Tim Henderson, at tim.henderson@afscmemn.org or 651-262-7092.

Unit 25 Members Vote Sept. 2

The 65 members in Radio Communications Unit 25 will vote on their tentative agreement on Wednesday Sept. 2 in Rochester and Roseville. Their tentative agreement is similar to the state master contract.

Details: Go to afscmemn.org/unit-25.

Lock in Your Plans for Convention
Locals now have the official call to Council 5's 2015 convention, "Stronger Together." Here's a rundown of key information:

- The convention is Oct. 1-3 at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center. The general session **opens** at 1:45 p.m. Thursday Oct. 1. It **closes** at noon Saturday Oct. 3.
- New delegate **orientation** is Wednesday Sept. 30 at 6:30 p.m.
- **Workshops** run the morning of Thursday Oct. 1.
- **Resolutions** are due by Friday Sept. 11.
- **Delegate credentials** from locals must be postmarked no later than Monday Sept. 21.
- Requests for child care, interpreters, dietary needs, or other **special accommodations** must be submitted by Monday Sept. 21.
- **Housing:** Call the Radisson Harborview at 1-800-333-3333 by Monday Aug. 31. Rates begin at \$139/night plus tax. (Rooms at the downtown Holiday Inn are sold out.)

E Board Recruits for Vacancies

Friday Sept. 4 is the deadline to submit nominations for two vacancies on Council 5's Executive Board. The terms run through fall 2016.

- **District 1 (Northeast):** Nominees must live in Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, or St. Louis County (or work in one of the counties if they do not live in Minnesota). The member would fill the seat held previously by Sue Urness.
- **District 5 (East Metro):** Nominees must live in Dakota, Goodhue, Ramsey, or Washington County (or work in one of the counties if they do not live in Minnesota). The member would fill the seat held previously by Melinda Pearson.

Submit names to: AFSCME Council 5 Elections Committee, 300 Hardman Ave. S, South St. Paul, MN 55075.

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Get the Good News at the State Fair

More than 90 AFSCME volunteers will be at the Minnesota State Fair talking about the good things unions mean for workers, their families, and their communities. Volunteers are handing out 16 separate cards – a different card each day – that highlight union advantages in wages, benefits, paid time off, job security, power and protection at work, and more.

Details: The Council 5 kiosk is part of the Minnesota AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion, at the corner of Dan Patch and Cooper on the east end of the Fairgrounds. Volunteers will be there from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. every day – and until 7:30 p.m. on weekends. The Fair runs Thursday Aug. 27 until Labor Day, Monday Sept. 7.

Register for Presidential Town Halls

AFSCME members can watch exclusive town-hall meetings that 2016 presidential candidates will hold with AFSCME members and retirees in Iowa on Saturday Sept. 5 and Sunday Sept. 6.

The events will stream live on the Internet. To sign up to watch any or all of them, go to <https://actionnetwork.org/forms/2015-democratic-livestream-registration>.

Enter your AFSCME ID number; you can find this on your membership card, on the address label of *AFSCME Works* magazine, or by calling 1-855-237-2631 toll-free between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays.

You must register by Tuesday Sept. 1.

Labor Ball Kicks Up Its Heels Sept. 12

The third annual Labor Ball, co-sponsored by Council 5's Next Wave, takes place Saturday Sept. 12 at a new location – the electricians' hall in St. Paul.

This year's Labor Ball, "Speakeasy 15," continues the tradition of being "a party for the working class to celebrate our victories and toast to our future." The evening includes food, drink, live music, and dancing.

Details: Labor Ball is Sept. 12, from 7 p.m.-1 a.m., at the IBEW Local 110 hall, 1330 Conway, St. Paul. Admission is free, but a donation of \$5-\$10 is suggested to support the East Side Freedom Library.

Handle Dues Money the Right Way

Financial Responsibility Training for local officers takes place on Thursday Sept. 24, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at Council 5's South St. Paul office. The specialized training makes sure locals handle dues and expenses legally and transparently.

The training is recommended for any officer who signs checks or conducts audits. Cost is \$20 per person, which covers lunch and materials.

To register: Contact Council 5's Melinda Pearson at 651-287-0524; toll-free at 1-800-652-9791 x 524; or by email at melinda.pearson@afscmemn.org.

LES Launches New Skills Courses

Labor skills courses from the University of Minnesota's Labor Education Service start in September. The classes run on Saturdays from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on the Twin Cities' West Bank campus. Tuition for the noncredit classes is \$50. This fall's schedule:

- "Addressing Workplace Bullying and Sexual Harassment," Sept. 19. Register by Sept. 11.
- "Introduction to the Labor Movement," Oct. 24. Register by Oct. 16.
- "Social Media for Organizing and Mobilizing," Nov. 7. Register by Oct. 30.

To register: Call 612-624-5020 or email les@umn.edu. For complete class descriptions, see the article on www.workdayminnesota.org

Stop the Assaults at Work

As part of Council 5's "Safe Staffing" campaign, members are planning a safety conference to create real solutions to the number of assaults by violent patients in human services and health care. You can share your concerns at an open meeting the day before Council 5's annual convention.

Details: Join us on Wednesday Sept. 30 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Holiday Inn in downtown Duluth. Learn more on Facebook at "Safe Staffing MN." Questions? Contact JoAnn Holton at 651-287-0506 or joann.holton@afscmemn.org.