



# ACTION UPDATE

**One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers**

Tuesday, July 9, 2013

[www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org)

## State Workers Reach TA

AFSCME members in state executive branch agencies will vote the week of Aug. 5 on a tentative contract agreement. The proposal covers 16,200 workers in Units 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7.

Highlights include across-the-board pay raises of 3 percent retroactive to July 1, 2013, and 3 percent on July 1, 2014; anniversary steps in each year; expanded use of sick leave; a \$25 increase in the safety shoe allowance; and inequity adjustments for nearly a dozen job classifications.

Beginning in 2015, individuals will have to pay 5 percent toward health-insurance premiums; those with family coverage will continue to pay 15 percent. However, dental benefits increase by \$500 a year (beginning in 2014) and a new program will give workers access to online medical consultation. That access could eliminate the costs and need of going to a doctor's office, clinic, or emergency room.

More-complete fact sheets on the tentative agreement are being posted at worksites. Download your own at [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org); click "Bargaining Updates," then "State of Minnesota 2013-15."

## What's Next on State Contracts

- The AFSCME bargaining team unanimously recommends ratification of the tentative agreement, which would run through June 30, 2015. Their recommendation goes to the Delegate Assembly, which meets July 26 in Bloomington.
- Information sessions will be held throughout the state in August, where voting takes place.
- Negotiations continue on contracts for an additional 2,000 workers in Corrections Unit 8 and Radio Communications Unit 25.

## Save the Dates

**AFSCME Women's Conference:** Sept. 20-22, Denver (Hyatt Regency)

**AFSCME Council 5 Convention:** Oct. 3-5, Duluth

**AFSCME Councils 5 and 65 Day on the Hill:** March 25, 2014, St. Paul

We Want to Hear about Great Work  
Council 5 is seeking nominations for our annual Achievement Awards, which honor outstanding activism by individuals and locals. Awards are given for political activism, organizing, local union development, and communications. For full details on each award and how to submit nominations, see the story at [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org). The application deadline is Aug. 16.

## Movie Night Features Double Bill

Labor Movie Night in Minneapolis returns July 19 with documentaries featuring heroic women.

- **"With Babies and Banners"** tells the story of the ground-breaking 1936 sit-down strike at General Motors' Flint assembly plant. The takeover launched the United Auto Workers as a union to be reckoned with. But this documentary tells the story of the women *outside* the plant who made it possible for the men *inside* to accomplish what they did.
- **"Willmar 8"** documents the two-year strike by eight bank employees in Willmar, Minn., in the late 1970s. The women lost the strike, but became international symbols in the fight for equal pay and to end discriminatory treatment on the job.

The movies begin at 6 p.m. in Room 467 of the Minneapolis United Labor Centre, 312 Central Ave. SE. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated.

## Join Us at the Fair

With the Fourth of July behind us, the countdown to the State Fair has started. You can join other AFSCME members and retirees by volunteering for a shift at the Council 5 kiosk. Volunteers get free admission.

The Fair runs Aug. 22-Sept. 2. We still have openings most evenings (4-7:30 p.m.). If you want to sign up for a shift, contact Michael Kuchta at 651-287-0537 or [michael.kuchta@afscmemn.org](mailto:michael.kuchta@afscmemn.org).

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## Welcome to AFSCME

Two new groups of workers organized to join Council 5:

- About 20 workers at Crisis Connection joined AFSCME through an NLRB election. Crisis Connection is a non-profit mental health agency based in Richfield. Staff provides telephone crisis counseling through hotlines that function statewide.
- About a dozen medical examiner inspectors joined Local 2864 through a voluntary recognition agreement with Hennepin County. The inspectors process evidence and other information gathered at crime scenes and other sites where there is a death. (Technicians and assistants in the medical examiner's office already are part of Local 34.)

## Three Chances to Give and Go

Three upcoming events give union members a chance to support solidarity – and have a good time doing so:

**Labor Sing.** The Twin Cities Labor Chorus and musician Charlie McGuire lead an informal sing-along of labor songs and chants on July 30, at 7 p.m., at the AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion on the State Fairgrounds.

The free event is an excuse to raise money for locked-out musicians from the Minnesota Orchestra and workers from Laborers Local 563, who are on strike at Certex. Checks can be made payable to: Twin Cities Labor Chorus, PO Box 40095, St. Paul, MN 55104-8095.

**AFSCME Family Picnic.** The annual picnic is scheduled for Aug. 4 at Battle Creek Park in Maplewood. But the picnic occurs only because of contributions from locals and AFSCME volunteers. To help make the 2013 picnic possible, contact Local 2829's Duane Gatzke at 651-472-2787 or [kkirk77dg@comcast.net](mailto:kkirk77dg@comcast.net).

**Labor Ball.** Council 5's Next Wave is organizing this free night of music, dancing, food, and fun Sept. 6 at the Wabasha Street Caves in St. Paul. Locals that want to pitch in to the soiree can make a donation to offset costs. Make checks payable to AFSCME Local 2822 (write Labor Ball in the tagline). Send your check to: AFSCME Local 3800, 312 Central Ave SE, Suite 356, Minneapolis, MN 55414. Questions? Contact organizers at [minnesotalaborball@gmail.com](mailto:minnesotalaborball@gmail.com).

## Locals Ratify Contracts

**City of Duluth.** Members of Local 66 ratified a three-year contract through 2015. The deal includes annual pay raises: 60 cents an hour this year (retroactive to Jan. 1), 2 percent in 2014, and 2 percent in 2015.

There also are increases in shift differential; in some uniform allowances; and in eligibility for holidays, sick leave, and funeral leave.

The wide scope of language changes includes leaves of absence, assignments, probation, and other areas. For the first time, individuals will pay a percentage of monthly insurance premiums. The contract also caps unused vacation at 7 weeks, though employees can transfer amounts over the cap into a health-care savings plan.

**Inver Grove Heights:** Members of Local 1065 ratified a two-year contract through Dec. 31, 2014. It includes a 2 percent pay raise (retroactive to Jan. 1) and another 2 percent raise in 2014.

The contract also increases the uniform allowance, expands eligibility for the boot allowance, and modifies holiday eligibility language.

**St. Paul Public Housing:** Members of Local 1854 ratified a three-year agreement through May 31, 2015.

For 2012 and 2013, steps increased by 1.8 percent, and maximums in each wage range increased by 1 percent, for total annual increases of 2.8 percent. On June 1, 2014, members will receive a 2.5 percent raise on their base pay.

On July 1 of each year, the employer health-insurance contribution increases by 3.5 percent. This year, full-time workers get up to \$100 more per month toward health insurance; part-time workers get \$75 per month. Unused portions will be paid out next May.

## Get in on the Action

Action Update publishes twice a month for locals and activists in AFSCME Council 5. If you have an event people should know about, email information to: [michael.kuchta@afscmemn.org](mailto:michael.kuchta@afscmemn.org).

For the most current AFSCME news and events, visit the Council 5's website: [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org).