

Judicial Branch Employees Fight for Paid Family Leave

AFSCME members in the Judicial Branch are state employees, but unlike their counterparts in the Executive Branch, they do not have Paid Family Leave benefits.

In 2016, we won a big victory when then-Governor Mark Dayton announced a plan to provide up to six weeks of paid parental leave to all state employees. But somehow in this process, Judicial Branch employees – the vast majority of whom are women – were left out.

The lack of Paid Family Leave is only part of the problem. In general, employees in the Judicial Branch have less generous compensation plans and benefit packages than similar roles in the Executive Branch. Their contracts are administered by a small group of appointees called the Judicial



Dawn DeCock, a five-year employee with the Wright Country Judicial System, is pregnant with her third child, due in September. If the Judicial Branch doesn't get Paid Parental Leave this year, her family will have to make sacrifices to get by - without a benefit that all other state employees can count on.

Council and implemented by a Court Administrator through an opaque process. This lack of transparency provides cover for bureaucrats to deny paid leave benefits.

That's why we're calling out the unfairness of Judicial Branch employees being denied a benefit that was promised to them nearly three years ago. All Minnesotans deserve paid time to care for themselves and their families – and these workers can get it, as soon as bureaucrats allow the process to move forward.

The next round of negotiations will begin in early July. We hope to encourage management to engage in a good faith effort to keep the State of Minnesota's promise to all state employees.

Here's what you can do to help:

- **Show your solidarity on social media** by sharing stories of the Judicial Branch employees who are fighting for paid leave on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- **Share your story.** If you have access to paid family or medical leave, how has it impacted you? If you don't, how would it change your life? Email communications@afscmemn.org to get going.
- **Stay tuned.** We'll have more action steps soon – keep an eye out for emails, and follow AFSCME Council 5 on social media!

Local 607 Members Fighting Layoffs

Members of Local 607 who work at the Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and Blind are standing up to their employer's plan to lay off seven AFSCME members and hire two new managers. Local 607 stood in solidarity with the five Residential Program Leads and two Human Service Technicians facing layoffs at the last MSA Board of

Stand with Striking Amazon Workers on #PrimeDay

Amazon workers in Minnesota will be going on strike on Prime Day (that's next **Monday, July 15**). The workers have been fighting for safe and reliable jobs, better working conditions, and the right to organize. They've made progress, but recent wins came with a cost. Now Minnesota Amazon workers are striking to put an end to the giant online retailer's consistent retaliation against their organizing efforts.

Here's how you can help:

- Learn more about the Minnesota Amazon workers' fight at bit.ly/PrimeDayStrike.
- RSVP to join the strike next Monday at [facebook.com/AwoodCenter](https://www.facebook.com/AwoodCenter).
- Share our posts about the Amazon strike on Facebook and Twitter.

Directors meeting. Together, the workers were able to stop the Board from voting on the plan. Instead, the Board sent the proposal back to the finance committee for further review. Watch our website for updates as Local 607 members continue their fight.



AFSCME Local 607 members gather outside a Minnesota State Academies Board of Directors meeting to fight layoffs.

Knock Doors in Duluth

With the primary election quickly approaching on August 13, AFSCME members are ramping up efforts to elect our endorsed pro-worker candidates.

AFSCME members in Duluth are invited to join us for weekly door knocking events throughout the summer. Door knocks will take place weekly at the following times:

- Mondays: 5 – 8:30 p.m.
- Wednesdays: 5 - 8:30 p.m.
- Saturdays: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Sundays: 2 – 5 p.m.

Volunteers will meet at the AFSCME Council 5 office in Duluth for these events.

You can find a list of our endorsed candidates at afscmemn.org.

Contact Zach Sias with questions at **218-341-9117** or at Zach.Sias@afscmemn.org. Watch our Facebook events page for updates.

Local 753 Food Service Workers Ratify Contract

Local 753 Chartwells food service workers at St. Cloud State University overwhelmingly voted to ratify their new contract last week.

The contract includes wage increases across the board, an agreement to meet and confer with the employer on issues

that arise during the life of the contract, and improved vacation, sick leave and bereavement language. The team also fought to fix the previous contract's wage grid to give a clear description of starting wages for each year.

Congratulations to the Chartwells members of Local 753 on the great progress made during this round of bargaining!

Local 722 Regions Service Workers Reach Tentative Agreement

Regions Hospital service workers at Local 722 reached a tentative agreement on a new contract last week. Local 722 members will hold a ratification vote on **Friday, July 12**.

The TA includes a general wage increase: members will receive a 2.25% raise starting July 1, 2019 and a 2% raise on July 1, 2020.

The salary range minimum and maximums will increase by the same percentages as the general increase for both years. The TA also includes increased evening and overnight shift differentials, a boosted merit matrix, and better language overall.

Congratulations to the Local 722 bargaining team on securing a strong TA! Local 722 Regions service workers: get ready to vote **Friday, July 12**.

It's Almost Picnic Time

The AFSCME Family Picnic is put on each summer by rank-and-file union members, and it's one of our most popular events of the year.

AFSCME members, families and neighbors are invited to join us on **Sunday, August 18** for great food, fellowship and lots of fun.

We'll enjoy a performance by the Minnesota Labor Chorus, face painting will be available, and the first 100 kids to arrive will get a free ticket to the on-site water park.

Volunteers and cash donations are still needed in order to make the annual AFSCME Family Picnic happen.

To get involved, call Duane Gatzke at **651-472-2787** or by email at kkirk77dg@comcast.com. Don't forget to RSVP and invite your friends and family at [facebook.com/afscmemn5/](https://www.facebook.com/afscmemn5/) **events**.

Get in on the Action

Action Update comes out every two weeks for locals and activists. Download a copy at afscmemn.org. Email communications@afscmemn.org with news and events you'd like shared in our next update.

Mark Your Calendars

Event	Date	Place/details
MN Union Leadership Program deadline	July 12, 2019	carlsonschool.umn.edu
Amazon #PrimeDay Strike	July 15, 2019	bit.ly/PrimeDayStrike
Labor Movie Night: "Labor's Turning Point"	July 19, 2019	East Side Freedom Library, St. Paul
AFSCME at Rondo Days	July 20, 2019	St. Peter Claver Church, St. Paul
AFSCME Family Picnic	August 18, 2019	Battle Creek Regional Park, Maplewood
Financial Responsibility Training	September 26, 2019	AFSCME Duluth Office (211 W. 2nd St.)
AFSCME Council 5 Convention	October 3-5, 2019	DECC, Duluth