



**SEIU 517M**  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of  
SEIU Local 517M

## October 2021

### Staff Directory

Please contact the appropriate staff person using their phone or email (click their name) below:

**Dues & COPE Deductions:**

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**Labor Relations Questions:**

Region 1:

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Region 3:

[Dominic Barbato](#) - 313.314.6511

HSS Unit:

[Janice Cosey](#) - 313.246.1137

Scientific and Engineering Unit:

[Howard Gordon](#) - 517.267.2070

Technical Unit:

[Kevin Karpinski](#) - 517.267.2088

**Executive Director:**

[Jeremy Tripp](#) - 517.267.2065

**Information Services/PDF/**

**Member-Only Benefits:**

[Dave Corrie](#) - 517.267.2090

**Lansing Office Manager:**

[Olivia Toretta](#) - 517.267.2095

### State Employee Reauthorization Has Ended!



**Stand Together  
Stand Strong**

We would like to thank those members who have already taken the time to strengthen our union by reauthorizing their membership.

If you haven't done so already, you can still reauthorize your union dues deduction without a break in membership. Since the computer portal is down today through Wednesday, you can call the HRMN Self-Service Hotline at 877-766-6447.

The hotline is open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. State employees can use their employee identification number or social security number and be connected with a live Michigan HR specialist. Once on the phone, tell the representative you wish to Authorize Union Dues Deductions and that reauthorization will activate on Thursday when the system is back online.

Members who allow their membership to expire will lose all the benefits of membership at that time. This includes the great member-only benefits you receive as a SEIU Local 517M member such as free college, discount plans for insurance, loans, travel and more!

Also, since you will no longer be a member this will be your last newsletter and you will no longer receive the special e-mail alerts know as DYK's.

**You will also lose the right to vote on the new contract that is currently being negotiated!**

**STAND TOGETHER — STAND STRONG**

[www.seiu517m.org](http://www.seiu517m.org) [Facebook at: SEIULocal517M](#)

## Human Services Support Unit Election Results

The nomination period has ended for the SEIU Local 517M Human Services Support Unit election. All candidates who filed ran unopposed. These members have been certified the winner of those positions by acclamation. Some members have already been appointed to fill vacancies. The newly elected and appointed leaders will take office on November 1, 2021. The candidates who ran unopposed or were appointed to fill the vacancies are listed below:

### Officers:

Unit President: **Janice Cosey**

Unit Vice President: **Roland Whitelow**

### Board Positions:

Unemployment Insurance Interviewer: **Mary King**

Unemployment Insurance Analyst: **Rabia Keo**

Combined At-Large: **Kevin Benson, Ellina Simmons-Gibson**

Current vacancies exist for the following board positions: 3 Unemployment Insurance Interviewer positions, 2 Employment Services Interviewer positions, 1 Unemployment Insurance Analyst position.

### Stewards and Alternate Stewards:

Area 1 - Cadillac Place - All Departments: LEO/UIA, DHHS/DDS

Chief Steward: **Ellina Simmons Gibson**

Steward (2 positions): **Tawana Rogers**

Alt Steward (2 positions): **Maria Gilson, Raceine McDonald**

Area 4 - Grand Rapids RICC & PRO, LEO/UIA

Chief Steward: **Mary King**

Steward (2 positions): **Bethany Arnold**

Area 6 - Saginaw RICC & PRO, LEO/UIA

Chief Steward: **Rhonda Clark**

Steward: **Amy Davis-Comstock**

Area 7 - Lansing RICC & PRO, LEO/UIA

Chief Steward: **Cherese Wilkerson**

Steward: **Lisa Jackson**

Area 12 - All Other Areas

Steward: **LaTrice Huntington**

At-Large

Chief Steward: **Kevin Benson**

Steward: **Isaac Lopez**

Current vacant Steward and Alternate Steward positions are: Area 2 (LEO/WD Southern Region), Area 3 (LEO/WD Statewide), Area 5 (LEO/WD), Area 8 (LEO/WD Northern Region), Area 9 (DHHS/DDS Members -Detroit), Area 10 (DHHS/DDS Members - Kalamazoo), Area 11 (DHHS/DDS Members - Lansing/Traverse City)

**If you are interested in being appointed to one of the vacant positions, please contact Unit President Janice Cosey at [jcosey@seiu517m.org](mailto:jcosey@seiu517m.org) for consideration.**

## Technical Unit Election Results

The nomination period has ended for the SEIU Local 517M Technical Unit election. All candidates that filed ran unopposed. These members have been certified the winner for those positions by acclamation. The newly elected leaders will take office on November 1, 2021.

The candidates who ran unopposed are listed below:

### Chapter Positions (Board Members):

Chapter 1 President: **Jilaine Berquist-Ayotte**

Chapter 3 Vice President: **Nathan Maddern**

Chapter 5 President: **Kenneth Holifield**

Chapter 8 President: **Jason Jackson**

Chapter 10 President: **Channing Page**

Chapter 14 President: **Michael Hughes**

No members filed as candidates for the following positions: Chapter 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13 President, or Chapter 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 Vice President.

Current Unit Secretary/Treasurer **George Heath** has been appointed to temporarily fill the Unit Secretary/Treasurer position until a new person can be appointed.

### Chapter President and Vice President Positions, Chapters Are Defined as Follows:

Chapter 1: All of the following counties: Gogebic, Iron, Ontonogan, Houghton, Keweenaw, Baraga, Marquette, Dickinson, and Menominee.

Chapter 2: All of the following counties: Alger, Delta, Schoolcraft, Luce, Mackinac, and Chippewa.

Chapter 3: All of the following counties: Charlevoix, Antrim, Leelanau, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Manistee, Wexford, Missaukee, Mason, Lake, Osceola, and Clare.

Chapter 4: All of the following counties: Emmet, Cheboygan, Presque Isle, Otsego, Montmorency, Alpena, Crawford, Oscoda, Alcona, Roscommon, Ogemaw, and Iosco.

Chapter 5: All of the following counties: Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta, Isabella, Muskegon, Ottawa, Kent, Montcalm, Ionia, and Gratiot.

Chapter 6: All of the following counties: Gladwin, Arenac, Midland, Bay, Saginaw, Tuscola, Huron, Sanilac, Lapeer, and Genesee. Also Shiawassee county except for the communities of Perry, Morrice, Shaftsbury, and Laingsburg.

Chapter 7: All of the following counties: Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Branch.

Chapter 8: All of the following counties: Hillsdale, Lenawee, Monroe, Washtenaw, Jackson, and Livingston.

Chapter 9: All of Clinton County. Also the communities of Perry, Morrice, Shaftsbury, and Laingsburg in Shiawassee County. Also Lansing zip codes #48906 and #48912.

Chapter 10: All of Eaton county. Also Lansing zip codes #48915 and #48917.

Chapter 11: Lansing zip codes #48901, #48933, #48910 and #48911, except the portions falling into the Chapter 12 boundary description.

Chapter 12: The portion of Ingham county as follows: the easterly portion, from Coolidge/Pine Tree Roads to the East county-line and the southerly portion from Willoughby Road to the South county-line.

Chapter 13: All of the counties of Oakland, Macomb, and St. Clair.

Chapter 14: All of Wayne County.

**If you are interested in being appointed to one of the vacant positions by Technical Unit President Rod Jackson, please contact Kevin Karpinski at [kkarpinski@seiu517m.org](mailto:kkarpinski@seiu517m.org) at the SEIU office and enter your name for consideration.**

## “Demanding Dignity” at Saginaw County Community Mental Health

Last week, members at Saginaw Community Mental Health officially kicked off their “Demanding Dignity” Campaign. The membership is focused on revising outdated contract language and economic justice proposals with the hope that their hard work will lead to success at the bargaining table this winter.

Over the course of the past 19 months the unit has faced several challenges with remote working, telehealth, contaminated drinking water at the Towerline facility, and recognition of their essential work.

The unit has developed a strong campaign plan filled with local actions, organizing new members and calls to legislators in Lansing about Michigan Senate Bills 0597 and 0598. These bills are part of a package of legislation that would allow for increased privatization and reduce funding for county community mental health entities across Michigan.



(L to R) SEIU 517M Labor Relations Specialist Clint Bryant, SCCMHA Steward Jessica Huber, SCCMHA Steward Mary Beth Keenan-Reams, SCCMHA Steward Patti Colpean-Decker and Chapter President Ash Christians

“I remember nearly 20 years ago standing outside the offices of my employer holding signs calling for dignity, with my daughter on my hip. At that time, I had just picked up my kids from daycare but knew how important it was for me to be there fighting with fellow union members. Now, twenty years later we are back in the fight asking for respect and dignity and I am proud to be in this fight.”

“I am thankful to have been on our by-laws committee and now serve as the unit secretary and am on the negotiation team. Together we can make a difference and win a better contract.”

Story written by Mary Beth Keenan-Reams  
Unit Steward and Recording Secretary

## Birch Run Food Service Unit President Retires

After over 10 years of representing the membership of the food service unit at Birch Run Community Schools, Unit President Cheri Pena retires.

“I am thankful to the union for their help in negotiating better contracts, giving us a voice, and for the scholarships my daughter received while attending the University of Michigan. It has not always been easy, but it has been an honor to serve our members and I will miss everyone.” -Cheri Pena



(L to R) Felipa Ruis, Cheri Pena, Irma Malloy, Donna Roe, Tracy Pagel, and Shelly Leach.

Cheri has been a vital asset to our membership at Birch Run Community Schools. She has negotiated several contracts, rallied the membership to fight privatization, assisted in campaigning for renewed operating mileages and conducted new member orientations.

Prior to Cheri’s retirement she signed up a new member to join the union and recruited two new leaders to step up and lead the unit: Donna Roe as the Chapter President and Felipa Ruis as the Unit Steward.

Thank you Cheri for your years of strong leadership and union activism!

## **Protect Michigan Commission Update - September 30, 2021**

### **Booster doses for those who received Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine recommended for specific populations**

Following FDA approval, recommendations from the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and [additional recommendations by the CDC director](#), the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is urging certain Michiganders to get a booster shot if they received Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine. This includes people ages 65 and older; individuals 18 through 64 years of age at high risk of severe COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions; and those at high risk of COVID-19 due to occupational or institutional exposure.

CDC recommends the following groups **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least six months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series:

- People 65 years and older and residents aged 18 and older in long-term care settings.
- People aged [50 through 64 with certain underlying medical conditions](#).

CDC recommends the following groups **may** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least six months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series based on their individual benefits and risks:

- People aged 18 through 49 who are at high risk for severe COVID-19 due to [certain underlying medical conditions](#).
- People aged 18 through 64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting.
- [Per CDC, occupations at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure](#) and transmission include frontline essential workers and health care workers including:
  - First responders (health care workers, firefighters, police, congregate care staff).
  - Education staff (teachers, support staff, daycare workers).
  - Food and agriculture workers.
  - Manufacturing workers.
  - Corrections workers.
  - U.S. Postal Service workers.
  - Public transit workers.
  - Grocery store workers.

*This list could be updated in the future.*

This updated interim guidance from CDC follows the [September 22nd decision by the FDA](#), following a careful [examination of the latest data](#), and robust and deliberative discussion around booster shots. The booster recommendation only pertains to individuals who received the Pfizer vaccine. Those who received J&J or Moderna are not eligible for a booster vaccine under the current recommendations, and additional guidance is expected in the coming weeks.

Michiganders should bring their COVID-19 vaccine card or immunization record with them when getting their booster dose, which is available at any vaccine provider that have Pfizer vaccine.