



SEIU 517M
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of
SEIU Local 517M

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Membership Matters at the Bargaining Table

By Christine Stressman, Senior Labor Relations Specialist

The City of Muskegon, Department of Public Works bargaining team came fully prepared for the job of bargaining a new contract.

Each bargaining team member placed a “Membership Matters” poker chip in front of them for each bargaining session to show unity.



“Membership and unity matter” says Unit President Elton Williams, “that’s what these chips represent and what they are representing here at the bargaining table.”

The results of all the hard work, time and dedication at the bargaining table showed in the tentative agreement that the unit ratified on December 1, 2021.

With information from a wage and benefit compensation study they were able to secure for the bargaining unit a 15% to 20% wage increase over the next four years, improvements on sick leave payout, boot and work-related clothing allowance, increase in license certificate pay, increase in vacation, and Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) language. Plus, a \$700 signing bonus!

Congratulations to the City of Muskegon DPW unit for a job well done on a new 4-year Collective Bargaining Agreement!



L-R: Tony McCleary (bargaining team member), Elton Williams (Unit President), Matt Gillette (Chief Steward), Jacob Mouw (Vice President), (not pictured) Josh Langlois (bargaining team member)

STAND TOGETHER — STAND STRONG

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

Demanding Dignity in Saginaw County

By Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist

SEIU Local 517M Members at Saginaw County Community Mental Health Agency (SCCMHA) are demanding dignity and fighting for economic justice from their employer. The “Dignity” campaign at SCCMHA began in June, 2021. During that time, the membership has been active in recruiting new members, attending board of directors’ meetings, and sharing their stories of concern from failing to follow federal health and safety guidelines to contaminated drinking water at the Towerline facility.



At the December 13th SCCMHA Board of Directors meeting, unit members at SCCMHA were joined on the sidewalk outside the facility with posters and signs from fellow 517M members from Saginaw Schools and the City of Saginaw to encourage their brothers and sisters.

“Normally at this time during the holidays, our members are spending time with their families or wrapping up their holiday shopping. Not here at Saginaw County, we are out here joining our brothers and sisters in their fight for a fair contract, keep fighting for fairness”. – Leticia Trevino, SEIU Local 517M Region 1 Divisional Vice President.



The meeting was very well attended. A Zoom overflow room (pictured left) to handle the increased attendance was setup in the basement to comply with the Open Meetings Act.

The agency CEO touted reaching agreements with the two other labor organizations, but later stated: “We’ve made progress with every group, but SEIU continues on. We are prepared to go well past the holiday if we have to.”

Negotiations between SEIU 517M and SCCMHA are currently in mediation. We hope to reach a fair deal by the end of Winter, 2022.

Technicians Avoid Impasse - State Contracts Ratified by Commission

On Friday, December 10, 2021, the Technical unit contract ratification ballots were counted by members of the SEIU Local 517M Election Tally Committee. The results showed overwhelming support for the new three-year agreement with a **90.2% approval margin**. Total returned ballots equaled 27.8% of the bargaining unit voting membership.

Originally set to go to Impasse, the bargaining team continued working and was able to reach a tentative agreement before the Civil Service Commission meeting. This allowed for a ratification vote of the membership and avoid Impasse. The negotiated Tentative Agreement was substituted for the Impasse Panel recommendations at the meeting.

The Civil Service Commission voted to approve all three SEIU Local 517M tentative agreements (Human Services Support, Scientific and Engineering, and Technical) at their December 15th meeting. The new agreements are effective beginning January 1, 2022, and will end on December 31, 2024.

The new Contracts are currently being proofed for accuracy and will be available on-line when completed.

Protect Michigan Commission Update - One year. Three vaccines. Millions protected against COVID-19



The COVID-19 vaccines made history one year ago as Michigan began administering the first authorized vaccine, produced by Michigan-based Pfizer, at hospitals across the state. The vaccines were first administered to health care professionals and, since December 14, 2020, more than 6 million Michiganders ages 5 and older have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

"To vaccinate more than 6 million residents in the span of one year is an incredible feat, and one that brings much promise to a future beyond this pandemic," said Elizabeth Hertel, director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

Michigan residents who have yet to be vaccinated and boosted are urged to get vaccinated as soon as possible. The vaccine has protected more than 6 million Michiganders, 200 million Americans, and led to the easing of restrictions and recovery of the economy.

Michigan reached the goal of vaccinating 70% of the population over age 16 on Nov. 15. Since then, Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine authorization has expanded to ages 5 and up, and Michiganders over age 16 are eligible for a booster dose six months after their primary series. However, those who are unvaccinated remain disproportionately affected by COVID-19. In the last 30 days of complete data (Oct 21 - Nov 19), 97,310 (71%) of 137,472 cases, 1,134 (72%) of 1,584 hospitalized cases, and 588 (76%) of 772 deaths were among individuals not fully vaccinated.

[Recent data](#) has shown that three out of four COVID patients are unvaccinated (76%), 87% of COVID ICU patients are unvaccinated and 88% of COVID ventilator patients are unvaccinated. Further, the ongoing weight of COVID-related hospitalizations is stretching Michigan's health care system beyond its limits. Support from the U.S. Department of Defense has become necessary to support the critical health care staffing crisis facing our hospitals.

"The data is clear; vaccines are safe and effective at preventing severe illness and is our most powerful tool in protecting our health and reducing the strain on our healthcare system," said Brian Peters, CEO of the Michigan Hospital Association. "Our hospitals encourage everyone to get vaccinated, have your children vaccinated and receive your booster dose when eligible. The pandemic is clearly not over, and our healthcare workers need your help and support now more than ever."

The longer the pandemic exists and the virus spreads - primarily in the unvaccinated population - the higher the risk of virus mutations. The COVID-19 Omicron variant is now in Michigan and [preliminary information indicates that this variant is highly transmissible](#) -- posing a serious threat to Michigan's overburdened health care system.

Residents are advised to get vaccinated, particularly before gathering for the holidays, including getting the booster dose to increase protection, and wear masks particularly indoors and in crowded areas. Other things people can do to protect themselves and their loved ones include:

- Getting tested for COVID-19, especially before gatherings.
- Physically distancing from others and avoiding crowds.
- Washing hands frequently with soap and water, and cleaning hands with alcohol-based hand rub.
- Covering your mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Self-isolating until you recover if you develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.

MDHHS has issued [a public health advisory](#) that all Michiganders, regardless of vaccination status, should wear a mask in indoor public settings and those who are not fully vaccinated or who are immunocompromised should avoid large crowds or gatherings.

2022 SEIU Local 517M Calendars Are Here!



Click on the link to download the state employee or school and local government 2022 calendars.

[State Employee Calendar](#)

[School and Local Government Calendar](#)

New Member Only Discount Ticket Program



Through SEIU Member Benefits, you now have access to the SEIU Discount Tickets Program for discounts, exclusive deals and limited-time offers not available to the general public on incredible travel and entertainment experiences across the country. Take advantage of savings up to 40% on theme parks, attractions, Broadway shows, holiday events, concerts, sports, ski resorts and more with no additional ticket fees!

[SEIU Discount Tickets Program](#) offers you a convenient and reliable service to also save you time and money on your entertainment needs through one website.

Some attractions that are available include:

- Walt Disney World theme parks and Disney Springs
- Disneyland® park and Disney California Adventure®
- Universal Orlando Resort
- Universal Studios Hollywood
- Cedar Fair Parks
- SeaWorld Parks, including SeaWorld, Busch Gardens, Aquatica, Water Country, Adventure Island and Sesame Place
- Live entertainment (Broadway, sports, concerts, etc.)
- Cinemas, including AMC, Regal, Showcase



Customer Service Representatives are available daily from 8:00am -10:00pm to assist with your entertainment and travel questions by calling (855) 469-7348. You may also access [Frequently Asked Questions here](#).

