



SEIU 517M
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of
SEIU Local 517M

September 2022

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Click on the map to find out which Region your unit is in.



Join Us for a Labor Day Picnic in Detroit

Join members and staff from all four SEIU Michigan Unions as we celebrate our power and unity on Labor Day, Monday, September 5th. Be sure to wear your purple shirts!



The picnic will be from Noon - 4:00 pm at Lafayette Plaisance Park located at 1592 Antietam Ave., Detroit. Onsite parking is limited at this location.

Register at: <https://bit.ly/seiulaborday>

A History of Labor Day

Observed the first Monday in September, Labor Day is an annual celebration of the social and economic achievements of American workers. The holiday is rooted in the late nineteenth century, when labor activists pushed for a federal holiday to recognize the many contributions workers have made to America's strength, prosperity, and well-being.

Before it was a federal holiday, Labor Day was recognized by labor activists and individual states. After municipal ordinances were passed in 1885 and 1886, a movement developed to secure state legislation. New York was the first state to introduce a bill, but Oregon was the first to pass a law recognizing Labor Day, on February 21, 1887.



Members of SEIU Local 1 marching in a Chicago Labor Day parade in the 1940s.

During 1887, four more states – Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York – passed laws creating a Labor Day holiday. By the end of the decade Connecticut, Nebraska and Pennsylvania had followed suit. By 1894, 23 more states had adopted the holiday, and on June 28, 1894, Congress passed an act making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday.

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STAND TOGETHER — STAND STRONG

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

“No Surprises Act” Health Protections

Submitted by the Office of the State Employer

In October 2020, the federal government issued the "transparency in coverage" final rule under the Federal No Surprises Act. The rule provides protection against balance or “surprise” billing under certain circumstances such as when you seek emergency care, and phases in new transparency requirements on most group health plans and health insurers.

Health insurance carriers that provide coverage to state employees began publicly posting two machine-readable files (MRFs) on their websites in July. In 2023, federal laws will require all health plans to offer price comparison tools to help you see what health care services will cost before you receive care. The MRFs are a step towards ensuring health plans and insurers will meet the upcoming requirements.

The MRFs include data related to the following:

- *In-Network File*: All negotiated rates with in-network (INN) providers for all covered items and services.
- *Allowed-Amount File*: Billed charges and allowed amounts for covered items and services provided by out-of-network (OON) providers.

More information about the No Surprises Act protections for state employees is accessible via the Employee Benefits Division website (www.michigan.gov/mdcs/employeebenefits), and employees should visit their insurance carrier’s website or contact their customer service center for their specific

Technical Unit President Nomination Period is Closing

Nominations are currently being sought for the office of Technical Bargaining Unit President. Members running for this office must be bargaining unit members in good standing and have a dues authorization that expires after October 14, 2022. The nomination period began August 1, 2022 and ends September 9, 2022.

The voting period will be from September 16th through September 30th at 4:00 p.m. Ballots will be counted on Monday, October 3, 2022. The successful candidate will take office on November 1, 2022.

If you are interested in being placed on the ballot for this position, please use the link below and complete the Candidate Petition Form and review SEIU Local 517M Board Policy #7 which specifies the election process and the services offered to candidates. If you have any questions on the elections, please contact Dave Corrie at (517) 267-2090 or corried@seiu517m.org.

[Candidate Petition Form](#) | [SEIU Local 517M Board Policy #7](#)

What Does Student Debt Relief Mean?

With the recent passage of the Student Debt Relief Plan, we thought it would be good to cover some highlights of the Debt Relief Plan, as well as the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program which our members may be eligible for.

Debt Relief Plan

- There will be a **final extension of the pause** on student loan repayment, interest, and collections **through December 31, 2022**. Borrowers should plan to resume payments in January 2023.

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- **Borrowers with annual income during the pandemic of under \$125,000 (for individuals) or under \$250,000 (for married couples or heads of households) who received a Pell Grant in college will be eligible for up to \$20,000 in debt cancellation. Borrowers who met those income standards but did not receive a Pell Grant will be eligible for up to \$10,000 in relief.** The Education Department will be announcing further details on how borrowers can claim this relief in the weeks ahead. **Nearly 8 million borrowers may be eligible to receive relief automatically because relevant income data is already available to the Department.**

- The Education Department is also proposing a **rule to create a new income-driven repayment plan** that will substantially reduce future monthly payments for lower- and middle-income borrowers. The proposed rule would protect more income from loan payments. It would cut in half—from 10% to 5% of discretionary income—the amount that borrowers have to pay each month on their undergraduate loans, while borrowers with both undergraduate and graduate loans will pay a weighted average rate.

The Department is announcing new steps to take action against colleges that have contributed to the student debt crisis. These include publishing an annual watch list of the programs with the worst debt levels in the country and requesting institutional improvement plans from colleges with the most concerning debt outcomes that outline how the college intends to bring down debt levels.

More details will be rolling out in the coming days and weeks. **Borrowers do not need to take action today to access relief.** Borrowers will likely need to submit an application to verify their income. You can read more in the [press release](#). Answers to frequently asked questions can be found at: <https://studentaid.gov/debt-relief-announcement/>

Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) offers loan forgiveness to those who work in public service including the military, qualifying non-profits, or federal, state, local, or tribal governments. After 10 years of public service employment and on-time payments, you can have your entire balance forgiven.

The U.S. Department of Education has instituted temporary changes that provide more flexibility and make it easier than ever to have your debt forgiven under the PSLF. This includes allowing borrowers to receive credit for past periods of repayment that would otherwise not qualify for PSLF.

However, these temporary changes end on October 31, 2022. Michiganders who work in public service should apply at: studentaid.gov/pslf/.

Upcoming Event—Save the Date



Member Appreciation/Member Engagement Event

The Human Services Support Unit will host the first of our regional Member Appreciation/Member Engagement events on Sunday, September 11, 2022, at the William G. Milliken State Park and Harbor located at 1900 Atwater St., Detroit, MI 48207 beginning at Noon.

All dues-paying members of SEIU Local 517M and guest are encouraged and invited to attend.

We have secured both the Harborlight and Heritage River Shelters to accommodate all comfortably and safely, so join our picnic in the park filled with plenty of food, fun, and fellowship.

More information and a registration link will be sent in the near future.

State Membership Reauthorization Nearing Cancellation Deadline

Under current Civil Service Rules, all state employee union members must reauthorize their dues authorization on a yearly basis. This must be completed by October 14, 2022 otherwise the State will end deducting union dues causing your union membership to end. We are coming down to the deadline to reauthorize your union membership.

We thank the members who have taken the time to reauthorize their membership dues deduction.

A strong membership provides an increased voice at the bargaining table, and for championing other measures that support public employees such as Public Employee Recognition Month and recognition pay bonuses.

Please take a few minutes now to join with your fellow members and [reauthorize your membership now](#).

As we get closer to the deadline, we will continue to contact those members individually who haven't had the chance to reauthorize.

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Who first proposed the holiday for workers? Some records show that in 1882, Peter J. McGuire, general secretary of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners and a co-founder of the American Federation of Labor, suggested setting aside a day for a "general holiday for the laboring classes" to honor those "who from rude nature have delved and carved all the grandeur we behold."

But Peter McGuire's place in Labor Day history has not gone unchallenged. Recent research seems to support the contention that Matthew Maguire, later the secretary of Local 344 of the International Association of Machinists in Paterson, New Jersey, proposed the holiday in 1882 while serving as secretary of the Central Labor Union in New York.

According to the New Jersey Historical Society, after President Cleveland signed the law creating a national Labor Day, the Paterson Morning Call published an opinion piece stating that "the souvenir pen should go to Alderman Matthew Maguire of this city, who is the undisputed author of Labor Day as a holiday." Both Maguire and McGuire attended the country's first Labor Day parade in New York City that year.

The first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City, in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union. The Central Labor Union held its second Labor Day holiday just a year later, on September 5, 1883.

By 1894, 23 more states had adopted the holiday, and on June 28, 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed a law making the first Monday in September of each year a national holiday.

Many Americans celebrate Labor Day with parades, picnics and parties – festivities very similar to those outlined by the first proposal for a holiday, which suggested that the day should be observed with – a street parade to exhibit "the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor organizations" of the community, followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of the workers and their families. This became the pattern for the celebrations of Labor Day. Speeches by prominent men and women were introduced later, as more emphasis was placed upon the economic and civic significance of the holiday.

American labor has raised the nation's standard of living and contributed to the greatest production the world has ever known and the labor movement has brought us closer to the realization of our traditional ideals of economic and political democracy. It is appropriate, therefore, that the nation pays tribute on Labor Day to the creator of so much of the nation's strength, freedom, and leadership – the American worker. *[From the U.S. Department of Labor website, www.dol.gov]*