



SEIU 517M
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of
SEIU Local 517M

July 2025

Paraprofessionals at Wayland Schools Win New Contract



Huge shout out to the Wayland Union Schools Paraprofessionals! On June 16th they ratified a new two-year contract. They achieved improvements in tuition reimbursement, Earned Time Off (ETO) usage, clothing allowance, training/mandatory meeting pay, sick days and wages. Their bargaining team worked diligently at the

bargaining table to ensure that member voices were heard through the contract bargaining process. This is what success looks like when you collectively work together to improve your working conditions and environment.

A Thank You From an SEIU Scholarship Winner

Dear SEIU 517M,

Thank you so much for selecting me as one of the 2024 Tomorrows Michigan Today Scholarship winners. This money was very helpful towards paying my tuition for college.

I just finished with my freshman year at Alama College. I declared my major as Business Administration with a concentration in Operations and Supply Chain Management. I also played on Alama's varsity softball team. It was a good year!

Thank you again for the opportunity to receive this scholarship.

Sincerely,
Camille Lozmack

Staff Directory

Interim Executive Director:
Greg Merricle - 517.267.2065

**Information Services/
Union Member Discounts:**
Dave Corrie - 517.267.2090

Office Manager:
Ashley Konyha - 517.267.2095

Dues & COPE Deductions:
Andrea Valerio - 989.797.4241

Member Strength Director:
Marian Wilcox - 517.744.5393

State Unit Labor Relations:
Scientific and Engineering Unit:
Howard Gordon - 517.267.2070

Human Services Support Unit:
Janice Cosey - 313.246.1137

Technical Unit:
Kevin Karpinski - 517.267.2088

**School and Local Government Unit
Labor Relations:**

Clint Bryant - 989.797.4258

Christine Stressman - 616.696.2141

Lamont Williams - 313.314.6511

Brandell Tomanica - 517.237.0426

STAND TOGETHER — STAND STRONG

www.seiu517m.org



@seiu517m



@seiu.517m

SEIU 517M Stands in Solidarity at Local 1 Justice for Janitors Rally



On June 11, 2025, SEIU 517M's Labor Relations Specialist Brandell Tomanica proudly attended the SEIU Local 1 Justice for Janitors Rally in Detroit to stand in solidarity with fellow union members and essential workers. Representing SEIU 517M, Tomanica (pictured below at podium) shared a heartfelt testimonial from one of our unit Presidents, Staci Olsen from the Plainwell Community Schools Custodial/Maintenance Unit.

The rally underscored the vital contributions of janitors, custodians, and maintenance workers across Michigan and the nation. SEIU 517M's participation highlights its unwavering commitment to justice, dignity, and fair working conditions for all laborers.

"We're here to remind everyone that our voices are stronger when we raise them together," said Tomanica. "The struggles of one are the struggles of all, and solidarity is how we win."



Immigrant Workers - Know Your Rights!

By Rabia Keo, HSS Board Member
SEIU International Asian Pacific Islander Caucus

In Michigan, immigrant workers, regardless of their immigration status, have the right to join or form a union and are protected from discrimination for exercising this right. This includes the right to be free from employer retaliation for union activity, such as being fired or facing other adverse actions. While some specific categories of employment are excluded from union eligibility, most workers, including those in various industries and occupations, are covered.

No matter where we come from or what color we are; where all families and communities can thrive; we are diverse in voice and in profession. What unites us is a deep care for our work and the people we serve.

SEIU stands in solidarity with immigrant workers, advocating for their rights and promoting comprehensive immigration reform. They emphasize that immigrant workers are integral to the economy and deserve respect, dignity, and the opportunity to build power in unions. SEIU's efforts include fighting for a pathway to citizenship, protecting immigrant families, and ensuring immigrant workers have a clear voice in democracy.

If you are an immigrant in Michigan encountering Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), there are several resources available to provide assistance and information:

Continued on Page 4

Tech Notes - News for Technical Unit Members

This section of the newsletter is dedicated to the issues being faced by our State of Michigan Technical Unit members.

NASHTU

Technical Unit President Rod Jackson and former Unit President George Heath attended the National Association of State Highway Transportation Unions (NASHTU) conference last week in Washington D.C. Their report of the conference will be sent to the membership when completed.

Labor Relations

We filed a Civil Service grievance and a Contract grievance for a member who was denied a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The department is claiming that the service animal is not allowed due to one bathroom accident and the fact that the dog barked one time to raise awareness of a stranger wearing a mask (it was wintertime). We are waiting for the Step 2 answer to see if they will allow the accommodation since the member provided additional training for the dog.

Overtime Balancing Grievance

The Civil Service Commission denied a grievance that challenged the lack of overtime balancing in the Grand Rapids and Detroit TSC's at MDOT. The Technical Unit appealed the matter to the Court of Claims and the parties have submitted briefs.

Subcontracting Grievance – MDOT

A grievance was filed challenging the lack of MDOT's oversight in monitoring the CS-138 contracts they enter into with consultant contractors who perform Technical unit work. The subcontracting rules state that bargaining unit employee FTE's are not to be reduced when these contracts are in effect. There have been three contracts with a duration of 10-years each since 2015 and 2016. While the contractor employee numbers have risen, the MDOT Transportation Technician numbers are down 66 FTE since 2015. The department is responsible for making sure the rules are followed, and they did not pay attention. The Civil Service Commission is supposed to audit these contracts, and they haven't been audited over the 10 years of the contract. We believe this is a very solid case.

Special Pays

We continue to receive questions regarding the negotiated special pays for Pharmacy Assistants, Dental Hygienists, and Radio Technicians. Nothing has changed and they are expected to go into place on October 1, 2025.

Civil Service Commission

The Civil Service Commission is opening a discussion regarding certain topics to be removed from the prohibited subjects of bargaining (PSB) list. This would allow those topics to be negotiated by the Unions and the Office of the State Employer at the bargaining table. Continued discussions and comments are requested by the Commission on this subject.

Please support reinstating the Union's ability to negotiate these rights, including: Transfer Rights, Assignment, OT Balancing, Seniority, Union Leave, and Layoff/Recall.

Please email the Commission at: civilservicecommission@michigan.gov to make a statement in support of allowing negotiations to occur for these rights.

Continued from Page 2

- Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC): They can provide assistance and referrals for immigration cases in Michigan, including help finding an immigration lawyer. You can call them at 734-239-6863 or visit their website. <https://michiganimmigrant.org/>
- Michigan Legal Help: This website offers resources and information on immigration law, finding an immigration lawyer, and finding a detained friend or relative. <https://michiganlegalhelp.org/resources/immigration/immigration-help-basics>
- Immigration Law & Justice Michigan: They offer free and low-cost immigration legal services. <https://www.iljmi.org/>
- Michigan State University College of Law Immigration Law Clinic: They provide free legal representation for various immigration matters. <https://www.law.msu.edu/clinics/immigration.html>
- Migrant Legal Aid: If you are a migrant or seasonal farmworker, they offer free legal aid regarding employment and other issues. <https://migrantlegalaid.org/>
- Farmworker Legal Services of Michigan: They have a joint hotline with MIRC for immigrant worker rights issues at 1-800-968-4046. <https://www.farmworkerlaw.org/>
- National Immigration Legal Services Directory: This directory can help you find non-profit organizations providing immigration legal services across the U.S. <https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/legaldirectory/>
- Freedom for Immigrants: They provide resources for immigrants facing detention. <https://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/>
- Immi.org: This website offers resources for finding free legal help, including searching for private lawyers. <https://immigrantinfo.org/resources/immi-org/>
- Immigrant Justice, all individuals in the United States have rights, regardless of immigration status. <https://immigrantjustice.org/for-immigrants/know-your-rights/ice-encounter/>

Save the Date - Families First Action July 26th

SEIU has signed on nationally to a **FAMILIES FIRST ACTION** for **Saturday, July 26th**.

The objective is to hold Members of Congress accountable and continue the fight to preserve Medicaid funding that pays for some of our member positions.

The goal is to have events in all 50 states.

More information will be sent on the specifics for the Michigan event.

Have a Safe and Happy Independence Day!

