

## KEY PROVISIONS OF TENTATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN STATE OF ILLINOIS AND AFSCME COUNCIL 31

**The contract shall become effective upon ratification and continue through June 30, 2027.**

*(Except as noted below all provisions in the current State of Illinois Master Contract remain unchanged.)*

### WAGES

Employees have had to cope with a very volatile economy which has created considerable challenges for family budgets. This agreement secures significant wage increases in every year of the contract, as well as improvements in longevity and shift differential which will help employees meet those challenges. In addition, step 1c will be eliminated--progress in our union's ongoing efforts to eliminate the sub steps entirely. A stipend issued upon ratification of the contract will give all employees an extra boost in this calendar year.

Employees will receive wage increases to base pay as follows:

#### Wage Increases to Base Pay

July 1, 2023	4.0%	
Jan. 1, 2024	2.5%	
July 1, 2024	4.0%	
July 1, 2025	3.95%	
July 1, 2026	<u>3.5%</u>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.95%</b>	<b>Total wages compounded = 19.28%</b>

- Stipend--Current employees included in the AFSCME bargaining unit will receive a stipend of **\$1,200** upon ratification of this agreement.
- Longevity Pay--will increase by \$30/month effective January 1, 2024
- Shift Differential--will increase to \$1.50/hr. on January 1, 2024, and to 1.75/hr. on January 1, 2025
- Sub Step--Sub Step 1c will be eliminated effective July 1, 2024, and all employees on 1c will be moved to 1b.
- Travel Time--Employees will now be compensated for all work-related travel time in excess of their normal commute and outside their normal work hours.

## UPGRADES AND MORE

For a number of titles, job duties and demands have evolved considerably in recent years, while salaries have failed to keep pace. The Union pointed out that salary adjustments are critically important not just to fundamental fairness for current employees, but to aid recruitment efforts of new employees. As a result, the Bargaining Committee was able to make dramatic improvements on paygrades for a number of classifications—in some cases with increases of two or more pay grades.

- Thirty-seven titles, covering thousands of employees, will receive at least a one pay grade upgrade effective immediately.
- Eight new semi-automatic titles and three new bridge titles are created effective immediately
- Class studies will be conducted on ten titles in a timely manner.

## TACKLING THE UNDERSTAFFING CRISIS

There are currently some 8,000 vacancies in state government, resulting in excessive pressures—especially excessive amounts of overtime—for those staff who remain. Hiring additional staff is urgent, but filling of vacancies can currently be a lengthy and complex process. To tackle this staffing emergency, the new contract includes a Memorandum of Understanding on Recruitment, Hiring and Retention that provides for:

- The establishment of a joint labor and management committee on recruitment and retention.
- The establishment of a recruitment bonus pilot program for high vacancy titles
- Exploration of the possibility of regional training programs for new hires in the Department of Corrections
- Consideration of special recruitment tools, such as wage adjustments.

## LEAVE/TIME OFF POLICIES

Balancing work and family commitments is one of the central problems facing many state employees—especially those forced to work excessive amounts of overtime. This contract expands leave and time off options to help address this critical concern.

- Continuing efforts to make state government a family-friendly workplace, this new agreement extends paid time off for parental leave in the event of the birth or adoption of a child to 12 weeks. In the case of a stillborn child the leave will be increased to 6 weeks.
- Bereavement leave will be increased to provide one paid day off for a second instance in a single year.

- All flex-time provisions currently in the contract remain in effect.
- Where current practice does not allow for a cash or compensatory time option, employees can now request the comp time and that request will not be unreasonably denied.
- Absence from work due to a service-connected injury or illness will not count against time the employee is entitled to pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

## REMOTE WORK

Working remotely emerged as an option for many types of work during the height of the coronavirus pandemic opening the door to new possibilities for thousands of state employees who were able to work just as efficiently from home while having more time for family responsibilities. The new contract confirms that remote work will be an ongoing aspect of state operations.

A new Memorandum of Understanding will be added to the contract which affirms that remote work shall be offered to employees consistent with the operating needs of the employing agency. The MOU affirms that employees currently eligible for remote work will remain so and opens the door to expansion for additional employees.

## PROTECTING AND EXPANDING JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The new contract includes a number of provisions intended to help employees cope with the confusion that has resulted from the implementation of the new electronic system for filling of vacancies. All current promotional rights in the contract are maintained—and language has been added in a number of sections to better protect those rights, including improvements to the Upward Mobility Program.

- Clarifies that employees on parental leave can still bid on vacancies.
- Jobs will be posted on all possible electronic and standard bulletin boards.
- Employees in congregate settings will be relieved of duties for a reasonable amount of time during the posting period in order to access computers to create or update their online profile.
- Employees shall be provided with training opportunities on work time to be able to successfully utilize the electronic hiring process.
- All numerical rankings between 90-100 shall be treated as equally qualified; the same shall apply to numerical rankings between 80-89 and 70-79.
- All grades and numerical rankings already received will remain applicable for promotional purposes.
- Several new titles are added to the Upward Mobility Program.
- Certificates for UMP titles shall not expire unless there are changes to the position classification.

- The Upward Mobility Program will provide reimbursement to employees for the cost of training and securing a Commercial Drivers License where such license is a requirement of the job.

## PROMOTING EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY

**The recent murder on the job of a DCFS caseworker and the death of a DOC maintenance craftsman due to inadequate equipment serve as painful reminders of the dangers that state employees face every day. The new contract contains a number of provisions aimed at improving employee protections on the job, including:**

- The parties agree to establish a joint labor-management health and safety task force at each agency with more than 500 employees.
- In order to improve parole agent safety, vehicles in excess of 250,000 miles will be replaced.
- Body armor vests will be ordered for employees who are assigned to an armed transport team.
- Identification badges will be provided to CPI's in DCFS and ISI's in ISP.
- The Employer will be required to investigate and provide a written report when a recordable employee injury occurs.
- Where there is a risk of serious harm to employees, the Union may grieve at any time directly to the highest step.
- In the event of employee exposure to a potentially hazardous substance, tests will be conducted as soon as practicable and results made available to the Union within 24 hours.

## EXPANDED RIGHTS

**The Union Bargaining Committee pushed hard to address two areas of longstanding conflict—policies regarding vaccine mandates and drug/alcohol abuse—and made very significant progress.**

- The COVID vaccine mandate will be lifted in DHS on the same terms as in IDOC and IDJJ (i.e. all employees on leave of absence or layoff as a result of failure to comply with the mandate will be returned to their former positions.)
- Regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs, the parties shall meet within three months to evaluate whether there is a continuing need for the vaccine mandate. If any employee is currently on a leave of absence or layoff due to failure to comply with the mandate, such leave or layoff shall be extended until the mandate is lifted.
- For agencies where the mandate is lifted, any mandate-related discipline shall be expunged from the employee's record.
- The Employer will cease random drug testing for THC except as required by law or regulation.

- Detection of legal substances during a reasonable suspicion drug test shall only be cause for discipline under certain circumstances—and such discipline shall be progressive in nature.

## HEALTH BENEFITS

The Employer's initial proposal on health insurance sought large increases in employee premiums as well as alarmingly high increases in the out-of-pocket maximums that could have left employees in financial ruin. Virtually every employee would have had to pay thousands more in healthcare related expenses over the term of the agreement.

Due to the unwavering determination of the bargaining committee to maintain a quality health insurance program that is affordable for all state employees, the original demands of the employer were cleared off the table. Healthcare cost increases in this agreement are amongst the lowest when compared to other settlements within the last 20 years.

- There will be **no increase** in the annual out of pocket maximum (the total maximum you will pay for covered health care services in a year) **for the term of the agreement**.
- There will be **no increases in employee premium contributions or cost increases due to plan design changes in the first year of the agreement**. In subsequent years, out-of-pocket cost increases are limited, targeted, and consistent with health care cost trends.
- Employee premium contributions will increase by \$10/month in the second year of the contract. In years 3 and 4, employee premium contributions will increase by \$8/month.
- Recognizing the impact of the previous premium increases implemented for state employees covering families, dependent premium contributions will increase by just \$6/month in year 2, and \$4/month in years 3 and 4.
- Dental contributions for members and dependents will increase by \$1/month in the last 3 years of the contract.
- For state retirees over the age of 65 enrolled in the Medicare Advantage Plan, there shall be **no cost increases in any provisions—premiums or out-of-pocket costs—of the plan for the term of the contract**. In addition, the parties will explore the procurement of Long-Term Care insurance.