

Working People Made their Voices Heard, Winning Historic Election Victories Across the Nation



President-Elect Biden and Vice President-Elect Harris appear with their spouses.
(Photo courtesy AFSCME)

Election 2020 was one of the most important elections of our lifetime. With nearly every value we hold dear on the ballot, AFSCME members turned out in historic numbers to protect our rights and stand up for all working families.

We made our voices heard - and we won.

AFSCME President Lee Saunders said, "During one of the most difficult moments in our nation's history, Americans have come together to elect two fearless fighters for working people, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, to be our president and vice president.

"This victory is especially meaningful for public service workers who have fought day after grueling day against a raging virus. AFSCME members have shown extraordinary strength and courage. And come January 20, we will have a White House that honors our work, respects our sacrifice and fights for the aid to states, cities and towns that we need."

In addition to delivering Minnesota's 10 electoral votes toward defeating Donald Trump, Minnesotans re-elected Senator Tina Smith and US Representatives Ilhan Omar, Betty

McCollum, Angie Craig and Dean Phillips. We also defended a pro-worker majority in the Minnesota House and narrowed the GOP majority in the State Senate. At the local level, we secured major wins on the Hennepin County, Ramsey County and Saint Louis County Boards.

By turning out - no matter what obstacles COVID-19 threw at us - Minnesota retained our number 1 spot as the state with the highest voter turnout in the country. Nearly 80% of eligible voters participated in our democracy.

Once again, AFSCME members did the work necessary to turn out our labor siblings and elect pro-worker candidates up and down the ballots. AFSCME members successfully managed our way through a virtual world with our political program. We made over 66,000 phone calls to AFSCME folks alone, hosted our first ever text banks where we sent over 130,000 text messages, and our lost time members deeply connected with thousands of AFSCME members to relay pertinent information and listen to our rank-and-file.

"Now we move into the next phase which is holding elected officials accountable to our shared values as working people," said AFSCME Council 5 Executive Director Julie Bleyhl. "We're ready to roll up our sleeves and build back our communities even better than before. On behalf of our union, I want to thank every volunteer, member and staff who delivered these victories and for strengthening our union for all members."

Experts Raise Alarm as COVID-19 Cases Surge in Minnesota

Though proactive steps kept Minnesota exceptional in the Midwest for slowing the spread of COVID-19, new cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in Minnesota are spiking.

This week, Minnesota broke a grim record, surpassing 7,000 confirmed daily cases for the first time since the start of the pandemic. This surge in cases pushed Minnesota above 200,000 confirmed COVID diagnoses, with 37,000 of those cases coming in the last week.

Healthcare providers are raising the alarm as emergency rooms and ICU beds near capacity. In response, Governor Walz announced new restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19, limiting indoor dining and expanding testing across the state. Gov. Walz also announced \$10 million in funding to support small businesses affected by the pandemic.

Our AFSCME siblings working in healthcare across the state are already stretched to their limits. Show your solidarity with essential workers by practicing social distancing, staying at home whenever possible, and wearing a mask in public. Though challenging days are ahead of us, we will get through this together.

New members vote to join Local 3481

Family Advocates at The Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery (Local 3481) voted unanimously this week to accrete into Local 3481's current contract, which would bring new members into our union family. These workers will be moving into negotiations soon.

Looking forward to welcoming you to the family, siblings!

Local 551 employees at MN Public Housing Agency reach TA

Local 551 members at the Minnesota Public Housing Agency (MPHA) reached a tentative agreement this week. The three-year agreement includes a 3% ATB each year, a boost in tuition reimbursement, and clarified on-duty and tele-work language.

Ranges will adjust by 3% in the first year. In years 2-3, the top and bottom of the ranges will freeze. Employees at the top of the range will receive a lump sum payout of 3% of their salary.

The maximum education reimbursement increased from \$3,500 to \$4,000. The TA also expands the definition of paid leave to allow use "for any valid reason" and requires that the employer pay for work uniforms.

Congratulations on your TA, siblings!

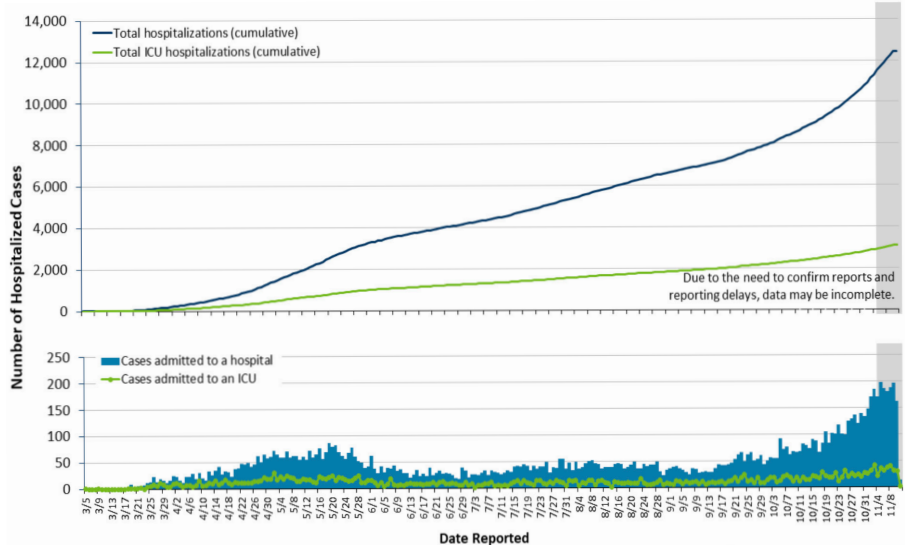
Head of the Lakes United Way members ratify new contract

Local 3558 members at The Head of the Lakes United Way ratified their two-year TA.

The agreement includes a 1.75% raise retroactive to July and a 2% raise in 2021. It also includes MLK Jr Day as a paid holiday, more paid leave for part-time workers, and new longevity steps at 10 and 15 years.

The TA also adds a more culturally inclusive, expanded definition of "family" for use of sick leave and bereavement leave.

Congratulations, siblings!



COVID-19 cases requiring hospitalization are on the rise, threatening our health care infrastructure and our union siblings who work there. Do your part to slow the spread.

(Graph via the Minnesota Department of Health.)

L3884 - City of Prior Lake TA ratified

Local 3884 members at the City of Prior Lake ratified a one-year contract earlier this month.

The contract includes a 2% cost of living increase and 60/40 split of medical insurance premium increase, with the city covering 60% of the increase. It also includes incentives for hiring and retention and improved language for shift differential for snow removal for hours outside of normal work hours.

The contract adds Independence Day to the list of holidays for which employees will receive 2x their base rate of pay. It also adds a floating holiday for part-time employees after 5 years and a one-time incentive of \$500 to employees in the Public Works Department who receive their APWA Public Works Certification.

The ratified contract will go before the Prior Lake City Council later this month.

Congratulations, family!

Local 1129 - Roseville ISD 623

contract update

Clerical and Paraprofessional members at Roseville ISD 623 (Local 1129) unanimously ratified their contract last month.

The contract includes a 1.5% wage increase in the first year with no increase to medical or dental. In the second year of the contract, the employer will contribute the same amount to medical insurance as they do for the teachers' contract - a huge equity victory for the contract groups.

The contract team also negotiated improved seniority, bumping and layoff language, and improved language for movement between contract groups and language defining rehire versus new hires and step placement of both to allow for improved hiring and retention.

Earlier this week, the ISD 623 school board voted to ratify the contract, completing the final step in the process.

Congratulations, family!

Resources for Members

Stay up to date on all the latest news by following @afscmemn5 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Get guidance and resources at afscmemn.org under the COVID-19 tab.

Look for action alerts via email and texts so you know when to take action to protect working families. We are all in this together, siblings.