

# Gov. Pritzker, AFSCME Council 31 Announce Contract Ratification

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**CHICAGO** — Governor JB Pritzker's administration and AFSCME Council 31—the largest union of frontline Illinois state employees—have announced the ratification of a new contract after membership voted overwhelmingly in favor.

The agreement was tentatively reached by negotiators for the state and the union in the early morning hours of July 1. Over the past two weeks, members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 31 attended

local union meetings throughout the state to review and vote on its terms. The four-year agreement is now in effect.

“Illinois is a pro-worker state—and when it comes to workers’ rights, my administration is committed to ensuring that every Illinoisan has access to good-paying opportunities,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “This contract represents a partnership that won’t just expand our pool of state employees—it will strengthen our state’s workforce and provide opportunity for employees and their families. I’m thankful for a productive negotiation that led to a contract which recognizes the valuable contributions of state employees and makes government more efficient.”

“AFSCME members care deeply about serving their communities. They go above and beyond to meet challenges like the COVID pandemic and staff shortages,” AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said. “This contract helps to address the toll that inflation has taken on state employee incomes and keeps health care affordable.”

The agreement provides for a 4.0% pay increase retroactive to July 1. In all, base wages will rise 17.95% over four years. Other provisions include expanded parental leave to 12 weeks and new joint efforts to improve workplace safety.

The agreement also includes a number of significant actions to expedite the filling of vacancies and improve strategies to recruit, hire, and retain workers, such as:

- Modernizing how vacancies with State agencies are filled by updating the contract language to reflect the state’s transition to an electronic hiring process.
- A commitment to work together to streamline the State’s hiring process to improve the pace at which vacancies are filled.
- Increasing hiring and retention of current employees by forming a joint labor-management committee that will meet to identify roadblocks to hiring.
- Implementing a pilot program for recruitment bonuses for positions that have high vacancy rates.
- Ensuring that employees on Parental Leave may still bid on vacancies during their leave.

AFSCME represents some 35,000 state employees who work to provide the essential public services our communities need in every part of Illinois, every day. They protect children, care for veterans and people with disabilities, help struggling families, keep prisons safe and much more.