

**Union** ★  
**Update**

**OPEIU**  
Local



*For Local 8 Members at King County*

*November 3, 2020*

## **KC Employees Win Child Care Benefits!**

With schools closed and parents struggling to juggle work and kids, I'm thrilled to announce that King County unions have negotiated an emergency child care benefit for County employees. We also protected our health benefits with no benefit cuts and found money to reduce layoffs.

### **Child Care**

Through negotiations at the Joint Labor Management Insurance Committee (JLMIC), King County unions won a \$9 million fund to cover child care expenses for County employees for the 2020-2021 school year. These benefits will become available this Fall once we've worked out the details.

Labor and Management also agreed that any leftovers from the \$9 million not spent this school year will be available for negotiations for a potential on-going child care benefit in the future.

## **Protecting Health Coverage and Reducing Layoffs**

In addition to child care, JLMIC bargaining also protected employee health coverage with no benefit cuts, and found money to reduce layoffs.

Every two years, the Unions negotiate how much King County contributes toward health care benefits. Any unspent money goes into a Reserve Fund. Because of successful past negotiations, the Reserve Fund had grown to over \$75 million. With those reserves, we temporarily reduced King County's contributions to health benefits with no cuts to employees, saving the County millions of dollars dedicated to reducing layoffs. The contribution rate will go back up in 2022, protecting benefits for current and future employees.

## **Master Labor Negotiations**

Negotiations for a new Master Labor Agreement are finally happening. Management has proposed a 0% raise in the first year and 1% in the second. They also proposed an extensive list of contract changes, including to paid leave; dropping the professional development pilot; reclassification; special duty; job posting; grievance procedure; and more.

The Coalition of King County Unions expected a simple, one-year contract extension so we could see the impact of COVID on the County's budget, and bargain again next year.

We've had a few bargaining sessions but no tentative agreements have been reached.

## **Small Table Bargaining**

We are currently scheduling small table bargaining to negotiate any changes for your contract that are specific to your bargaining unit.

Please contact your team members with questions.

## **The MLA OPEIU Bargaining Team:**

Cindy Bernasconi DOA

Vickie Austin Public Health

Ida Kovacic OPEIU Union Representative

***Questions? Contact Union Representative Ida Kovacic  
at 206-441-8880 ext. 117 or email [ida@opeiu8.org](mailto:ida@opeiu8.org).***



**OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION LOCAL 8**

1-800-600-2433 or 206-441-8880 ★ Fax: 206-441-441-0207 ★ [www.opeiu8.org](http://www.opeiu8.org)

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