

Union ★ Update

OPEIU
Local



for OPEIU Local 8 members at Washington State Ferries

August 21, 2020

Dear OPEIU 8 Member:

Since the outcome of our vote on July 30th, we have continued discussing the economic issues with OFM and trying to push them to agree to something more reasonable and fair. For weeks the State wouldn't budge -- they were prepared to go to interest arbitration fighting for a 3% wage reduction. Finally this week, we were able to get them to move on a couple of issues. Things are better than when we last communicated, but not good.

- Instead of having step (periodic) increases suspended for two years, they will be suspended for one year (from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022). In addition, we secured "me too" language that states if another union, WFSE, maintains their step increases during the first year of the biennium, we will as well. WFSE is still in bargaining and will conclude by October. What exactly does a suspension of steps mean? Time served during this time period will not be counted toward your next step increase. However, time before and after this period will be. So, for example, if a member was due to receive a step increase on August 1, 2021 they will receive it on August 1, 2022. If you are unsure when

your next step increase is supposed to be, you can contact me and I will tell you.

- Although the State is still stating a need for 24 furlough days (1/month over the next biennium), we were able to secure language that allows employees greater flexibility over scheduling these days, exempts dispatch, and allows for us to re-open this subject for bargaining in the second year of the contract. This means, if there are improvements to revenue streams and the budget, we can bargain to decrease the number of furlough days necessary between July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.
- There still will be no general wage increases but we did secure “me too” language in case any of the other maritime unions were to get one.
- No King County pay premium. The State was unwilling to even consider any new budgeted costs.

I know many of you are disappointed and upset over these results, and rightly so. You work hard and are talented, dedicated employees. I join you in frustration and anger -- shame on WSF for proposing a 3% pay cut and for interrupting the step increases which honor employee experience and longevity. In my ten years working with WSF, this has been the most difficult round of contract negotiations but I am glad we were able to squeak out a little more in the end.

See finalized tentative agreements attached.

As always, please feel free to contact me with questions.

Sincerely,
Valarie Peaphon
Union Representative
OPEIU LOCAL 8
Valarie@opeiu8.org

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Text **Local 8** to **97779** to receive text updates.

It will prompt you to let us know your name and where you work to make sure you get the right updates. (Message and data rates may apply)



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