



# DIGNITY

SEPTEMBER 2019

Oregon's Homecare & Personal Support Worker Newsletter

## What do politics have to do with a strong contract?

Winning a strong contract begins long before we sit down at the bargaining table. Months and even years of member and political engagement lay the groundwork to have sufficient resources for a fair contract. Our Tentative Agreement with the state for homecare workers is the result of years of hard work by SEIU 503 members.

Since a ballot initiative capped real property taxes in 1990, Oregon has had a critical need for meaningful revenue reform to fund the quality services that the people of our state rely on every day, including in-home care. Many of us can recall the Measure 97 campaign in 2016. While millions of dollars from corporate-interests kept our effort to pass a tax on large corporations from passing at the ballot box, all of the doors we knocked, phone calls we made, and conversations we had with voters were not in vain.

Passing revenue-raising legislation requires a two-thirds "supermajority" in the Oregon State Senate and House of Representatives, which is no easy task, but SEIU members volunteered thousands of hours to elect a Legislature capable of passing revenue reform in 2018. Our hard work resulted in the passage of the Student Success Act earlier this year, which will raise more than \$1 billion a year in new revenue to fund education, and relieve stress on the overall state budget. Not pitting in-home care and other important public services against education for limited public funding finally created an opportunity to reach a contract that better reflects the value of our labor.

SEIU 503's United for a Better Oregon campaign aimed to ensure that the Legislature invested in the people who make our state work by dedicating resources to fund strong contracts for public workers. Oregon passed a budget that had DOUBLE the money for homecare worker salaries as the last budget! The members on our bargaining team made sure that the extra investment by the Legislature ends up going to workers.

We thank every SEIU 503 member who participated in this work. It's a real testament to the fact that we are truly stronger together. This is the union difference.

Invest in our political strength today!  
Go to [seiu503.org/contribute-to-cape/](http://seiu503.org/contribute-to-cape/)



YOUR MEMBER-ELECTED SEIU 503 HCW/PSW BARGAINING TEAM

## Homecare/PSWs Settle New Contract, Path to Retirement, Historic Anti-Harassment Protections

Back in December, our Homecare Bargaining Team conducted surveys and went on the road to hear SEIU members' top priorities for our next contract. We heard loud and clear that members wanted a wage increase. We also learned that 73% of homecare and personal support workers do not have a retirement plan, and that hundreds of us experienced late paychecks.

This week, the bargaining team settled a contract with the State that will raise wages, create a retirement plan for homecare workers, address the late pay issue, and more! Below you'll find the highlights of the tentative agreement.

### Bargaining Process

- Survey members to identify key issues
- Campaign to pressure management
- Win a "salary pot" through the Legislature's budget process
- Settle a "Tentative Agreement"
- Ratify by a vote of all dues paying members (*you must be a member to vote*)
- Get our raises and member benefits

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**"This is one of the proudest moments in my career. We are rising to the challenges in the long-term care sector. Winning a retirement plan and a wage increase will help pull this workforce up financially. This contract will make us stronger, more stable, and better able to support seniors and people with disabilities."**

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- Rebecca Sandoval, Homecare President

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### Membership Is Key

We win contracts because we stick together in Union. In order to vote on your contract or get access to member benefits, you must be a member of SEIU 503. You can sign up online at any time at [seiu503.org/join-us/](http://seiu503.org/join-us/)

### Contract Highlights:

#### Wages

Homecare workers will receive a \$0.35 per hour raise on January 1, 2020, bringing our base pay to \$15 per hour!

Our Union has long fought to bring the base pay rates up to \$15 to stay above the minimum wage in Portland.

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