

BARGAINING SURVEY



SEIU Local 721 Contract 2012 Bargaining Survey

SEIU 721 Brothers and Sisters,

Our union contract expires on September 30, 2012. We are making preparations now to negotiate the best possible contract for the future.

As always, we prepare for bargaining with our eyes wide open. We know that once again it will be a tough bargaining environment. Under the circumstances, it is important that SEIU Local 721 members unite behind a well-considered bargaining strategy.

Please take a few moments to fill out this bargaining survey and let us know what you think is the right approach to bargaining this year!

When you have completed the survey, please turn it in your SEIU 721 Worksite Organizer or Steward, or you may fax it to SEIU 721 at (213) 401-1790.

But don't stop there! During the month of February, meetings will be held at worksites throughout LA County so that SEIU 721 members can express ideas, voice concerns, and discuss priorities and strategies for bargaining. Please plan to attend a meeting at your worksite.

And, on Saturday, March 3 at 9:00 AM, there will be a Membership Meeting for all LA County members at the Center @ Cathedral Plaza.

Please join us!

SEIU Local 721
Bargaining Policy Committee



A. ECONOMY, BUDGET, TAXES

As we prepare for bargaining later this year, the economy is still recovering from the deepest recession of our lifetimes. Unemployment and home foreclosure rates remain high, the State of California is still struggling with multi-billion dollar deficits, and local public services continue to be cut.

1. Given the state of the economy, how concerned are you about the impact it may have on your job and your contract?

- extremely quite a bit somewhat
 a little not at all

2. Which of the following are you most concerned about?

- layoffs
 pay cuts/furloughs
 health benefit cuts
 pension cuts
 all of the above
 none of the above

3. Recently much attention has been focused on the growing gap between the 1% (wealthy individuals and large corporations) and the 99% (the rest of us). Some have argued that to get California and Los Angeles County back on track, the 1% must start paying their fair share of taxes. What do you think?

- I agree. If the wealthy and large corporations paid their fair share of taxes, our budget problems could be solved.
 I disagree. In this economy, taxes should not be raised for anyone, even the rich. We need to find other ways to balance budgets.

4. Governor Jerry Brown is planning to place a measure on the November ballot which would raise \$7 billion in revenues for California and local governments, including LA County. Under the Governor's plan, income taxes would be raised on the wealthiest Californians (families earning more than \$500,000 per year) and the state sales tax would be raised by ½ cent. SEIU is supporting this measure. What do you think?

- I support the Governor's tax plan, and believe that SEIU 721 members should work hard to get it passed in November. We need more revenues in order to protect our jobs, services, and benefits, and to win raises in the future.
 I support the Governor's plan, but don't think it should be a priority for our union.
 I do not support the Governor's tax plan.

B. SALARIES

Which of the following statements best describes your view about salaries in LA County?

- SEIU 721 members have gone for three years without a raise. There are signs that the economy is starting to improve. Now is the time for our union to fight for a long overdue salary increase for all LA County workers!
 Let's be real: The County just doesn't have the money. Department budgets have already been cut by at least 17%. You can't get blood from a stone. We should concentrate on protecting our benefits and hold off on fighting for raises until the economy improves.
 We all need raises, but this isn't the year. We should fight to improve the County's financial condition by getting the wealthy and big corporations to pay their fair share of taxes. This will allow us to bargain for raises for LA County workers next year.

C. BENEFITS

During the current economic recession our enemies have tried to blame California's budget problems on public employees, whose health and retirement benefits have been under attack. Please rank the following issues in priority order — 1 through 4 — with 1 being highest priority:

_____ **Health Care Premiums/Contributions.** We know that health care premiums will rise again next year. If we do nothing about it, this will reduce our take-home pay. We should negotiate an increase in the County \$ contribution to Options to protect our paychecks.

_____ **Pensions.** The California State Legislature is considering proposals that would allow or even encourage public employers to reduce benefits for retirees or increase costs to active employees. We should negotiate to protect our pensions from these attacks.

_____ **Retiree Medical Benefits.** The Board of Supervisors has already made it known that they would like to reduce costs by making changes to the retiree medical benefits for future retirees. We should resist such proposals.

_____ **Other.** Please state _____

D. CONTRACT 2012: BARGAINING IN A TOUGH ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The union's Bargaining Policy Committee (BPC) is made up of the chairs of the 24 elected bargaining committees. The consensus view of the BPC is that we should:

1. Focus our bargaining in 2012 **exclusively** on **protecting our benefits**. This would mean bargaining to get the County to put more money into *Options* to offset future increases in health premiums, **and** beating back any County proposals to significantly reduce pension or retiree medical benefits.
2. Fight to get the wealthy and large corporations to pay their fair share of **taxes** in California, to improve the County's financial condition.
3. Next year, in 2013, after the County's financial condition has improved, bargain for **raises**.

What do you think of this general plan?

- I agree. I think our elected Bargaining Policy Committee's plan is on the right track.
- I disagree. I think we should bargain for raises and other improvements in 2012.

COMMENTS

**YES, I WANT TO HELP WIN STRONG CONTRACTS
IN 2012 AND BEYOND!**

- Sign me up to be on the CAT (Continuous Action Team)! I'll help keep my co-workers informed, and encourage them to participate in campaign activities.
- I'll help gather signatures on petitions to get the Governor's tax plan (restoring funding for LA County) on the November ballot.
- I'll help with a legislative campaign to get large corporations to start paying their fair share of taxes in California.
- I will attend the Contract Campaign Membership Meeting on Saturday, March 3.

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE?

- Yes No Please provide me with a Voter Registration Form

The surveys of Local 721 members will be tabulated. In order for your survey to be processed, please complete the information below:

Name _____ Employee # _____

County Department (for example, DPSS, DHS, Sheriff, etc.) _____

Worksite _____ Immediate Area Where You Work _____

Bargaining Unit _____ Classification _____

Home Phone () _____ Work Phone () _____

Cell Phone () _____ Yes, I want to receive text messages from SEIU 721.

Personal E-Mail _____

Steward or Worksite Organizer who gave you this survey _____

***Return your survey to the Worksite Organizer or Union Steward who gave it to you,
or mail the survey to:***



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