

CWA NJ Executive Branch Bargaining Update | February 6, 2018



Your Bargaining Committee

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Brothers and Sisters,

Before the election in November, the State had provided a list of bargaining proposals to CWA which would have rolled back several sections of the contract, including PARs, removed workplace dignity from the contract, and other issues. We discussed many of these bogus proposals in previous bargaining updates.

As you know, Governor Murphy took office January 16. Both CWA and the State have acted quickly since that time to get negotiations back on track and to clear roadblocks the Christie administration left in our path. CWA's top priorities for our state executive branch membership are to settle our long-expired contract and resolve the dispute over stalled increments as quickly as possible.

Here is what we have done so far:

1. Christie's challenge at PERC to block our increment grievance was removed from PERC's agenda.

After the NJ Supreme Court ruled that increment grievances were arbitrable, Christie filed a petition with his hand-picked PERC Commission asking to block our grievance and arbitration. Governor Murphy and CWA jointly requested that Christie's challenge be removed from PERC's January 25 meeting agenda. That request was granted.

2. CWA Is Acting Quickly to Open Contract Negotiations with the New Administration

We are setting up formal bargaining dates and the Governor is replacing Christie's bargaining team with new representatives. We will bargain strongly but quickly because the issues are well-known after three years working without a contract.

3. Critical Appointments are Moving Forward.

Replacements are progressing for the Public Employment Relations Commission, the Governor's Office of Employee Relations, and the Civil Service Commission. PERC oversees arbitration and contract disputes. OER oversees state-wide labor relations issues and the CWA-State contract. The CSC oversees testing, seniority rules, classification and desk audits, hours of work, disciplinary appeals, and other important work rules that affect us every day.

4. In addition, the Murphy Administration has notified the Civil Service Commission to cease its effort to change rules on overtime. The Christie CSC had proposed changes to OT rules that would exclude any benefit leave time from OT calculation and would make it harder for employees to qualify for FMLA.

By illegally stopping the payment of our increments, Governor Christie created a legal and financial mess for our members and for the new Governor. That mess has to be untangled. CWA members are rightfully anxious to receive what we earned and are due under prior contracts, but we are encouraged by the initial steps taken by the new Governor to quickly resolve our outstanding contract negotiations.