Let’s face it; we all know that 2020 has been difficult at best. We’ve seen COVID-19 ravage our cities and towns – we’ve even seen it ravage the planet. We’ve seen neighboring countries fight a new mutation, put travel bans in place again, and head back into lockdown for a second, even a third time. COVID-19 has swept across the globe resulting in 64 million cases and just under 1.5 million deaths.

Here in New Hampshire (NH), there are now 5,508 active cases of COVID-19, approximately 41,670 diagnosed cases total, 715 deaths attributed to COVID-19, and an unemployment rate at 17.1%, almost 3% higher than the national average.

So what have we learned?

We, as a nation, as a state, have learned that COVID-19 isn’t about the politics of 2020. It isn’t about government control; it’s not about losing your rights or your freedoms. It’s about health, safety, and respect. Respect for those we have lost, those who are fighting this disease, those who take care of the sick, and most of all, respect for one another.
LESSONS LEARNED FOR 2021, MEANS LEAVING 2020 BEHIND, CONTINUED

We need to follow the examples of other countries such as Taiwan, New Zealand, Iceland, Singapore, and Vietnam, which have emerged almost unscathed with under 40 deaths per country and come together. Our governments need to put the politics of COVID-19 aside because when leaders come together for the better good, we can change the world. We can stop the spread, protect our economy, keep our citizens safe, create vaccines, and defeat COVID-19.

Nothing worth fighting for is easy, and 2020 was anything but. If together we fight for safety, justice, and equity for ourselves, our families, the people we care for and provide service to, and for our communities as a whole, we commit to a greater good for 2021.

NEW CHAPTER LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES OPEN TO ALL

Have you ever wanted to explore a leadership position within your chapter? Have you held previous roles or enjoyed working on a committee? If you’d like to learn more, now is the time.

Join us for our first Zoom Leadership training on Wednesday, January 20, 2021, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Training will include presentations from special guests on:

How to run a meeting, Robert’s Rules, POP – Process, Outcomes, Purpose, Taking Minutes, Executing Chapter Audits, How to successfully hold Zoom and Google meetings.

If you have ever been interested in a leadership role, now is your chance to register here.

Legislative UPDATE

The 2021 sessions for both the House and Senate began on January 6, 2021. House or Senate Calendar.

The PRO Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act are two pieces of importance to us here in NH. The House-passed legislation sitting on McConnell’s desk that’s a priority for us is the Raise the Wage Act, the $15 minimum wage bill. The NH Senators will be key on all these bills.

LET’S TALK

If there is an event you’d like to feature or a story you’d like to see in our newsletter, let us know at the link below! https://seiu1984.org/about-us/contact-us/

We’d love to hear from you.
SEA UPDATES

IT’S A WIN FOR ROCKINGHAM COUNTY NURSING HOME!

The Rockingham County Nursing Home’s first CBA was fully executed on December 30, 2020. After 22 months of effort, they have their first contract! Congratulations to all who worked so hard!

The SEA first spoke with employees in the unit in February of 2019 and were certified as the exclusive representative on October 10, 2019. Then after about a year’s worth of work and trying to negotiate in good faith, the SEA declared an impasse and went to mediation in November 2020. Mediation took place on Veterans Day, November 11, 2020, and finally, after about 8 hours of work, the parties reached a tentative agreement on a contract. After a laborious ratification process, the process concluded with the parties’ signatures on December 30, 2020.

Some of the contract highlights include: Pay increases for all employees beginning in July, raises for RN’s, new shift differentials for LNA, RN, MNA, LPN and their Per Diem counterpart’s, new weekend differentials, and also new differentials for Housekeeping Aides, Laundry Aides, Receptionists and their Per Diem counterparts.

Anthem Changes

Anthem has issued new ID cards with new ID numbers to all covered employees and dependents. These new ID numbers went into effect on January 1, 2021. All employees and covered dependents must begin using their new ID card for any visits or services received on or after 1/1/21.

It’s important to note that Anthem is limited to four (4) ID cards per mail envelope, so those employees with more than three (3) covered dependents should be aware that they may receive more than one envelope of ID cards. Any employee who has not received their new ID card by this time should contact Anthem at 1-800-933-8415. As a second reminder, the new Anthem ID cards will also be available to download on Mobile Health.


COVID-19 EXTENDED LEAVE POLICY

The Governor’s Office and the DOP have recently issued the following in regards to extended leave due to COVID-19.

The ability to exceed the maximum amount of annual leave accrual in effect for 2020 has been extended until March 31, 2021. This “excess” leave will have to be used by the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2021.

We will change back to the accrual limits, as stated in the CBA on July 1, 2021. Current unused balances of COVID-19 leave (COVID-19 S/O and COVIDX) on our timesheets was not lost at the end of December but will be allowed to carry over or use until March 31, 2021.

For clarity, EPSL=COVIDS/O and FMLA+ = COVIDX on our timesheets.

Note: No additional COVID-19 leave will be added; only existing unused balances can be carried forward until March 31, 2021.

Please understand these changes are in response to the recently approved federal legislation, and we are sharing information as soon as we receive it.

For more information on the State’s COVID-19 plans, please visit, nh.gov/covid19.
Board Nominations

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED MARCH 11, 2021

The election will be for the following positions:

- Treasurer (one position, remainder of a two-year term, 2021)
- Director of County & Municipal (one position, remainder of a three-year term, 2021)
- Director of Private Sector (one position, remainder of a three-year term, 2021)
- Director of Executive Branch (one position, remainder of a three-year term, 2022)

In accordance with the SEA Constitution, in order to be nominated as a candidate for director, a member must have been in good standing for at least one year immediately prior to the election.

The name of any member seeking election at the March Council Meeting shall not appear on the printed ballot unless a declaration of candidacy has been filed with the Membership Clerk of the Association no later than Tuesday, February 9, 2021, at 5:00 PM for distribution to the membership. Nominations must be accepted ‘from the floor’ during the Council meeting. **Nominations will be at 6:40 PM. Balloting will be online starting at 7:00 PM March 11, 2021, for 20 minutes.** The format can be found here: [https://seiu1984.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/March-2021-Nomination-form_FINAL.pdf](https://seiu1984.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/March-2021-Nomination-form_FINAL.pdf)

SEA/SEIU ANNOUNCEMENTS

Messages from SEIU regarding COVID-19

SEIU will host two national forums for members to get their questions answered about the COVID-19 vaccines – one for English speaking members on **Friday, January 15th** and one for Spanish speaking members on **Friday, January 22nd**. Both will begin at 6 pm eastern/3 pm pacific. These 75 minutes sessions will feature a pre-recorded COVID-19 vaccine roundtable video, featuring members from across the union asking questions about vaccine development, efficacy, and safety in a conversation with Dr. Alicia Fernandez, a Professor of Medicine at UCSF and a general internist at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital. For more information on all SEIU activities, please visit [https://seiu.org/](https://seiu.org/).

Updates from SEA

- Master Bargaining Update – The State’s bargaining team and the union committee have met several times over the last seven weeks to where the members of the union side have made all of their initial presentations. The SEA Master Bargaining Team has presented its proposals, and SEA sub-units have also met with the State and presented their submissions. The State bargaining team has yet to present any proposals to the union committee. The State and the Union Committee last met on Tuesday, December 22nd, and the parties are scheduled to meet again for negotiations on Tuesday, January 19th. It is the SEA master team’s hope that the State comes prepared on the 19th with proposals and responses to the union’s initial presentations.

- On November 30, 2020, the State of NH filed a “Motion for Reconsideration” with the NH Public Employees Labor Relations Board asking the Board to reverse its “Declaratory Ruling from October 28th that allowed SEA sub-units to negotiate unique cost items directly with the State outside of the master bargaining process. On Thursday, January 7, 2021, the Labor Board issued a unanimous decision to deny the State’s motion.

- On December 24, 2020, the PELRB denied the SEA’s and the NH Trooper Association’s motions for reconsideration and rehearing with regard to the Board’s decision on the legislature’s vote on the fact finder’s report. The SEA believes the PELRB erred in its decision, and that the legislature’s vote on the fact finder’s report should have been binding on the State. As a result, the next step of appeal, which the SEA intends to pursue, is to file with the Supreme Court on or before January 25, 2021.
COVID-19 DHHS Allocation Update

The Department of Health and Human Services has provided the following information surrounding New Hampshire’s COVID-19 vaccine allocation. NH DHHS is pleased to announce that “Most-Risk” ambulatory care and health care professionals working in other settings can now register to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

This communication outlines the process, which involves individuals and health care organizations working together to ensure the best use of the limited doses of vaccine available. Ambulatory care providers affiliated with a hospital organization should follow their organization’s plan for vaccinating ambulatory care providers. Non-affiliated providers can register to be vaccinated at a state-managed fixed site.

**How to Register:** First review the NH COVID-19 Vaccination Allocation Guidelines for Phase 1a. This enables you as a health care provider to categorize yourself into Most-At-Risk, Moderate Risk, and Lowest Risk, giving examples and guidance on who qualifies for which category.

For more information please visit www.cplc.nh.gov.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

CONSERVATIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE

SEA Conservatives Are in an Excellent Position to be a Powerful Influence.

New Hampshire voters selected Republican candidates to lead the legislature. With a clear majority in the New Hampshire House and Senate, Republicans will take over leadership in both chambers. The takeover means that it is less likely Governor Sununu will veto as many legislative efforts and may allow SEA conservatives an opportunity to move on some of the SEA legislative priorities, not to mention our ability to secure a contract.

Here’s How You Can Help

- Join our next Conservative Members Committee meeting on Zoom held on the Second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 PM.
- Connect with legislators in your district. If you don’t know who they are, you can find them here.
- Donate to SEAPAC, our Political Action Fund. As little as $1.00 a month helps. The link is here.

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact Mason Petit, mpetite@seiu1984.org.

MARTIN LUTHER KING COALITION

MLK coalition is hosting an event in honor of MLK Day. The program entitled, “Where do we go from here?” will be held Monday, January 18, 2021, at 2:30 pm. Due to COVID restrictions, this year’s celebration will be available by ZOOM.

- This year’s event will include: Jazz music from Central High School, Video of past MLK award winners, community leaders, and elected officials reading quotes from Dr. King.
- Participatory conversation on King’s question, “Where do we go from here?”
- This program will also be available for streaming on Youtube and will be broadcast on Manchester public TV.

You are invited to register below.
When: Jan 18, 2021, 02:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Register in advance for this meeting:
hhttps://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUpdeitpjkvGdOGYwoiXcuSlgioYwWzmOYX
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.
EVENT UPDATES

CAMPAIGN FOR PUBLIC GOOD

The Campaign for Public Good is organizing a Virtual Silent Auction to be held online in February to raise money to donate to the NH Food Bank. Programs like this have been stretched to the limit by the pandemic of 2020 and need our help.

We ask each Chapter to come together and donate a Gift Basket or other item to the auction. Some ideas for basket themes: Spa Day, Coffee, Candies, Wine, Travel, Movies, and Automotive.

If you have any questions or would like to help us organize this event or organize a pickup of a gift basket or item, please contact David Holt at dholt@seiu1984.org or call 603-781-8649. The deadline for donating items is **February 1, 2021**.

KNITTING FOR PUBLIC GOOD

Returning for 2021, Knitting for Public Good returns with virtual zoom how-to’s. We’re also looking for donated items. Yarn, hats, mittens, and blankets are all useful.

Get your patterns and your needles ready. The need is great, and it’s fun too!

Share your talents for the greater good! Contact David Holt at dholt@seiu1984.org for more information.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, BOOK CLUB

The SEA/SEIU’s Social Committee held its’ first book club meeting on Monday, January 4, 2021. The book the group chose first to read is Radio Free Vermont, by Bill McKibben.

The publisher states the book is "A book that’s also the beginning of a movement. Bill McKibben’s debut novel Radio Free Vermont follows a band of Vermont patriots who decide that their state might be better off as its own republic."

Bernie Sanders also states that "We’ve got a long history of resistance in Vermont and this book is testimony to that fact."

The book club is still open for anyone interested to join. The next meeting will be on **Monday, February 1, at 6 PM. via zoom**.

Please contact dholt@seiu1984.org if you’d like to join or have any questions.