

MARCH 24, 2010

# UNION UPDATE



Local 1000 members joined other SEIU workers to hear from candidates at this March 15 town hall in Sacramento.

## Members step up politically

### Candidates answer member questions at statewide forums

Local 1000 joined with other SEIU locals to hold a series of town hall-style election forums where political candidates made presentations and answered questions from members.

One of Local 1000's top priorities is to step up politically and elect a governor that will protect vital services and respect the state workers who provide those services. Local 1000 is working to elect a two-thirds majority in the state Legislature that is committed to state government.

#### Elect a new boss

"It's up to us to elect a new boss and a Legislature that values the work that we do," said Local 1000 President Yvonne Walker.

The largest town hall, on March 20, was simulcast statewide across 11 locations and included candidates for governor and attorney general. There have been smaller events such as a March 15 forum in Sacramento where about 75 SEIU members gathered to hear from candidates for a mix of local and state offices.

**"It's up to us to elect a new boss and a Legislature that values the work that we do."**

—Yvonne Walker  
President, Local 1000

#### Where candidates stand

"I'm here because we need to know what these candidates *really* stand for," said Amabelle Ocampo,

a business tax representative at the Board of Equalization (BOE), who met her elected boss – BOE Chair Betty Yee – at the March 15 forum. "It's important who we elect to office. Just look at furloughs—the governor imposed furloughs while the BOE and other constitutional officers did not. Furloughs were a political decision."



**"It's important who we elect to office... Furloughs were a political decision."**

—Amabelle Ocampo  
Board of Equalization

Like Ocampo, many members were participating in their first candidate forum.

"There is a real personal touch to having these candidates come into our house – right here in our union hall – and tell us what they can do for state workers and the programs we administer," said Renee Lee, a Franchise Tax Board employee who was attending her first candidate forum. "This experience showed me that the political process is incredibly important and we have to be involved."

Barry Frazier, another BOE employee, said that state employees hold "a special responsibility" for getting involved in the political process.

"We are literally where government meets the citizens," Frazier said. "We are intimately aware of how government works and how it affects private citizens. It's our responsibility to elect effective leaders because if we don't – government doesn't work."

## Resource Center

Monday-Friday  
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
866.471.SEIU (7348)

## Website

[seiu1000.org](http://seiu1000.org)

## Connect with Local 1000

### Facebook

[SEIU Local 1000 fan page](#)

### YouTube

[youtube.com/seiu1000](http://youtube.com/seiu1000)

### Twitter

[twitter.com/seiu1000](http://twitter.com/seiu1000)



The following is a list of this week's top questions members have asked the Local 1000 Resource Center staff.

### 1. If I travel for work, will I be reimbursed for my expenses?

Yes, the state agrees to reimburse employees for actual, necessary and appropriate business expenses and travel expenses incurred 50 miles or more from home and headquarters, in accordance with existing DPA rules.

Read Article 12.1 of our contract for more information.

### 2. My supervisor says I can only use sick leave in one hour increments. Is this correct?

No, an employee has the right to request and take sick leave in 15 minute increments.

Read Article 8.2 of our contract for more information.

### 3. What is the vesting schedule for health benefits contribution?

The vesting schedule for health benefits is as follows: 50 percent of the normal employer dependent portion upon enrollment; 75 percent of the normal employer dependent portion upon completion of twelve months of employment; 100 percent of the normal employer dependent portion upon completion of 24 months of service.

Read Article 9.1.B. of our contract for more information.

### 4. Can my manager cancel my pre-approved vacation?

A manager cannot cancel a pre-approved vacation, unless unanticipated operational needs require the employee to be at work.

Read Article 8.1.K. of our contract for more information.

# Know Your Rights

## Contract & Law *Release Time for Exams & Elections*

Local 1000's contract, and state law, guarantees the rights of release time for different types of situations. Here are a few instances.

### Release Time for State Civil Service Examinations

**Article 8.10** - Employees who are participating in a State civil service examination shall be granted reasonable time off without loss of compensation to participate in an examination if the examination has been scheduled during his/her normal work hours and the employee has provided reasonable (normally two working days) notice to his/her supervisor.

### Blood Donations – Paid Time Off

**Article 8.20** - Bargaining unit employees who donate blood, plasma, platelets and other blood products to certified donation centers may be allowed reasonable release time without loss of compensation when donations are made either at or in close proximity to the work site. Donation verification shall be provided upon request.

### Time Off to Vote

**California Elections Code Section 14001** provides that an employee may request paid leave time in order to vote if the employee does not have sufficient time outside of normal working hours to vote. The intent of this law is to provide workers an opportunity to vote if they would otherwise not be able to do so because of their jobs. The employee can be given as much time as he/she needs in order to vote, but only a maximum of two hours is paid. Polls are generally open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., and most employees will have sufficient time to vote without additional time off. Employers may require employees to provide advance notice and may require the time off to be taken at the beginning or end of a shift.

California law prohibits an employer from taking an adverse employment action against an employee for exercising a legal right. Therefore, you should not get "in trouble" for requesting time off to vote or for taking the time off if you are eligible.