

The new Psych Tech contract is ratified

By a 3-to-1 margin, employees in Psychiatric Technician Bargaining Unit 18 approved the tentative two-year contract negotiated by CAPT and the state that provides important salary increases and relief from soaring healthcare premiums.

In results announced today from the secret mail balloting, 75 percent of valid ballots were to approve the contract while 25 percent were to reject it and send the union and state back to the bargaining table.

“We are gratified that the contract was ratified so salaries will rise and employees won’t have to foot the total cost of the big health premium increases on the horizon,” said CAPT State President Tony Myers.

“Our negotiating committee’s goal was a double-digit salary increase, with a bottom line of the 10 percent that we did achieve. There’s no denying the contract does not meet our original goals and what we believe our members really need and deserve. But we weighed the long-term effects of turning down the state’s final offer and decided to have the employees vote for themselves.”

The new contract gives all employees a 2.5 percent salary increase retroactive to July 1, 2006 and an additional 2.5 percent increase on July 1, 2007.

Also on July 1, 2007, there will be an additional 5 percent increase for all licensed Psych Techs who have been at the top of their pay range for 12 months or more. This covers approximately 65 percent of all licensed employees. For the rest of the licensed staff, that 5 percent increase takes effect when they reach the 12-month point.

And the state’s contribution to health premiums for employees and dependents will be increased to a dollar amount equaling 80 percent of the average premiums. The increase will be retroactive to July 1, so employees will get refunds for part of the health premiums they have paid.

It’s too early to tell when the increases will show up on paychecks. We expect the retroactive payments for the pay raises and health premiums will be combined into one check and issued separately from regular paychecks.

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