

The 93 Beacon

We Make Northern New England Happen!



McLean Research Assistants Ratify First Union Contract

Belmont, MA- On September 16th, the Research Assistants at McLean Hospital voted 123-0 to approve their first union contract. This adds over 150 new members to AFSCME Council 93.

The RAs were the first group to organize at McLean Hospital, voting to join AFSCME in the Spring of 2021. They have been advocating for a first contract since then.

Ratification secured for the RAs significant wage increases, improved working conditions, job protections, and strong union business provisions.

While they faced a fierce anti-union campaign from hospital management, the group stayed strong throughout all the adversity to make sure that they advocated for a better McLean for all.

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New Local 1343 Contract in Burlington Wins First in Vermont Paid Family Medical Leave

Burlington, VT- Over the summer, Local 1343 members working for the City of Burlington overwhelmingly ratified a new four-year contract that includes wage increases, longevity bonuses, medical care cost caps, and most importantly, the first in Vermont Paid Family Medical Leave Benefit.

More than 200 members work across city in a variety of jobs and departments ranging from plowing snow, working at the water treatment plant, police dispatch and many more.

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2022 Council 93 Endorsed Candidates



*Maura Healey
for MA Governor*



*Diana DiZoglio
for MA State Auditor*



*Bill Galvin
for MA Sec. of State*



*Tom Sherman
for NH Governor*



*Janet Mills
for ME Governor*



*David Zuckerman
for VT Lt. Governor*

We all have an interest in who our elected leaders are, but for public sector workers the stakes are particularly high. Elected officials have great influence over your wages and benefits, over the privatization of public services, and indeed just about every aspect of your work lives.

Council 93 encourages all of our members to vote!

As you head to the polls, we urge you to consider the Council 93 endorsements. These candidates were endorsed only after lengthy in-person discussions, virtual meetings, phone conferences, and written questionnaires. We also reviewed our past experiences with these candidates and their actions as elected officials.

We understand that you may consider a variety of factors when voting, but when it comes to issues like privatization, workplace safety, and protecting our healthcare and pension benefits, we're convinced that these candidates are the best choices.

Election Day is November 8th.

Voter registration deadline is OCTOBER 29th in Massachusetts. Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont allow same day voter registration.



CHECK YOUR REGISTRATION STATUS TODAY!

afscme.org/action/register

Local 3912 Members Win \$15/hr Minimum Wage

Manchester, NH- In late August, the Manchester School Board unanimously approved a Memorandum of Agreement to raise the minimum wage for Local 3912 para-educators in Manchester Public Schools to \$15/hour. While most AFSCME members already make more than \$15/hour thanks to their union contract, there were a number of para-educators who work with some of Manchester's most vulnerable schoolchildren who were making less.

Through the tireless advocacy of Council 93 staff and Local 3912 leadership, the paraprofessionals were able to reach an agreement with the Manchester School Board to provide across-the-board raises for all members. With the agreement, para-educators who were making less than \$15/hr minimum wage will see pay raises of up to 16%. The agreement also calls for a guaranteed wage increase of \$0.50/hr for those para-educators who were already making more than \$15/hr.

The Executive Board and rank and file members were instrumental in advocating for the raises for the para-educators. Local 3912 President Lisa Hanel said, "We were not going to back down from what our members needed. Who can really live on \$15/hr?"

Hanel also noted the need for more para-educators in Manchester, where there were nearly 100 openings in the days before the new school year started. "These raises are great, but there is more work to be done so we can get more people in the door to do the important work we do with Manchester schoolchildren. Baby steps, but these raises are steps in the right direction."

The \$15/hr minimum wage for Local 3912 para-educators was a significant victory not only for AFSCME members, but also for the Raise UP NH Coalition that is fighting for a \$15/hour minimum wage for all public sector workers in Manchester.

Your Rights as a Union Member: Grievance Process

The negotiated contract is the union member's most important document. It contains the wages, hours, working conditions and rights of bargaining unit employees. But management sometimes forgets, misinterprets or ignores what they agreed to at the bargaining table. To help address management violations of employee rights, the contract contains a grievance procedure for addressing those violations. Grievance procedures contain a series of steps to address possible contract violations. While contracts differ in the number and specifics of these steps, below you will find explanations of common steps found in grievance procedures in AFSCME contracts.

- Step 1: Typically, this is a meeting – with the immediate supervisor and the grievant participating – to discuss the problem. Sometimes this is an informal step that attempts to solve the workplace issue before a written grievance is presented to management. In some contracts, the written grievance is initiated at this step. Always refer to your contract to ensure that you are performing the correct grievance action at this and any other step.
- Steps 2 - 4: If not submitted at Step 1, the written grievance is initiated at Step 2. When a grievance cannot be resolved at Step 1, it is reduced to writing. The written grievance can be appealed to progressively higher levels of the management structure in Steps 2-4. Those in the higher levels of management may include a department director, a division head and/or the agency administrator.
- Arbitration: If the grievance is not resolved, the final step is the request for a hearing with a professional, neutral arbitrator whose decision is final and binding – depending upon the language in your specific contract.

****ALWAYS REFER TO YOUR OWN CONTRACT FOR SPECIFICS****

How do grievances build union strength?

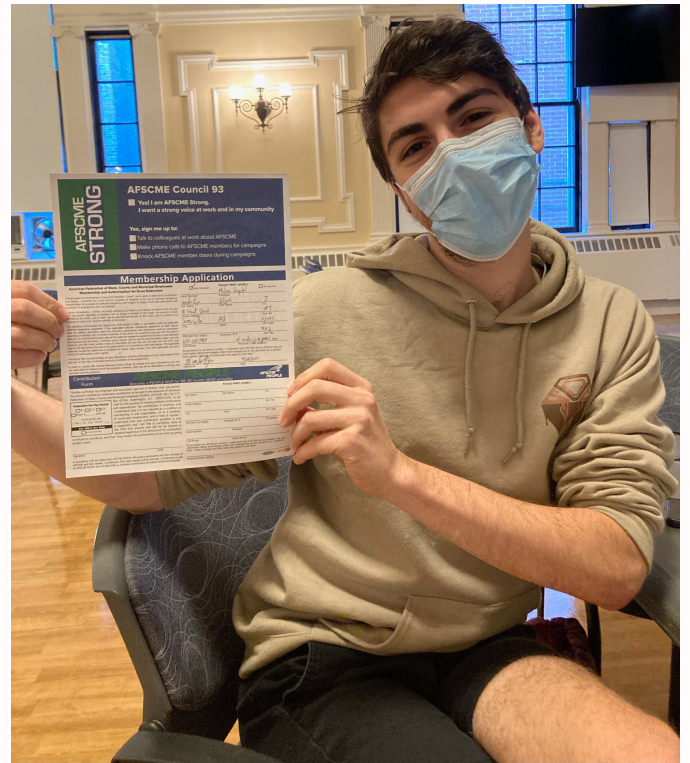
- Enforces the contract when a management action, or inaction, violates the agreement.
- Interprets contract language when the union and management have differing views about the meaning of a particular section in the agreement.
- Improves the contract by revealing problem areas and deficiencies in the current agreement, which the union can address when it negotiates the next contract.
- Protects the rights of individual workers, groups of workers or the union itself.
- Builds support for the union by publicizing victories that are won through the grievance procedure.
- Gains respect from management by showing that the union will not allow abuses or violations of the collective bargaining agreement or work rules.

McLean

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Contract Highlights Include:

- 3-Year Contract
- 30-40% wage increases
- Average Ratification Bonuses of \$3,600
- 2.5% COLA each year
- Job Training Opportunities
- Monthly Labor-Management Meetings
- Proper PPE and the right to refuse unsafe working conditions
- Hospital provided equipment (ie Laptops)
- Non-discrimination clause
- Just Cause Provision and Grievance Procedure
- Release time for union representatives
- NEO for every new employees



The first official AFSCME Member of the McLean Research Assistants Union!

While the RAs are the first group at McLean to reach an agreement and ratify a union contract, they are far from the last, as multiple other groups are ready for negotiations for their own union contracts!

Local 939 Merrimac Light Department crew in Bartow, FL providing mutual aid assisting in the clean up, recovery, and restoration efforts from Hurricane Ian.



Member Benefit Highlight: AT&T Wireless Discounts



Get \$100 in credits per line when you switch and buy a new smartphone on a qualifying installment plan through October 31st.

Plus, take advantage of additional savings including up to \$50 off on activation and upgrade fees, 20% off on eligible wireless accessories and 15% off the monthly service charge of qualified wireless plans, including AT&T 4GB Plans. Sign up today! Learn More- unionplus.org/att

Support union workers by choosing the only nationwide unionized wireless carrier. AT&T employs nearly 150,000 union workers!

AFSCME Council 93 21st Biennial Legislative Conference

Danvers, MA- Over 125 delegates, alternates, officers, and staff representing Council 93 were in Danvers, MA from September 8th to 11th for the 21st Council 93 Legislative Conference. Council 93 heard from a number of elected leaders in our four-state region as well as AFSCME International Secretary-Treasurer Elissa McBride. The conference helped to set the policies that will shape our union in the years to come. Attendees were also able to participate in workshops led by both International and Council 93 staff designed to help grow their unions at the Local level. At the annual Awards Dinner, two AFSCME Council 93 Leadership Awards were presented: the first to Local 507 President Cindy Costa and the second to Council Vice President Tiger Stockbridge. Tiger, who is also the chair of the Scholarship committee, presented the 2022 Memorial Scholarships to five deserving students. Through the generous donations of many locals and members, the Scholarship Fund was able to raise several thousand dollars at the conference to help AFSCME families with the costs of higher education.







As a VMO you can help your fellow public service workers protect their rights and build a real future for their families.

VMOs are vital to our union’s organizing and “fight back” efforts. When members speak about how AFSCME makes a difference in their work and personal lives, you are a powerful force for defending and building our union.

The VMO program trains union members so that they can successfully reach out to other workers to join together and stand up for our union and our democratic values.

Council 93 VMOs Help Organize AFSCME Members in Texas

San Antonio, TX- For two weeks in August, Council 93 leaders joined with AFSCME Volunteer Member Organizers (VMOs) from across the country to assist in organizing thousands of civilian employees in the City of San Antonio.

Council 93 President Charlie Owen, Executive Board Member Kelly Abreu, and Local 24 President Mary O’Brien braved the Texas summer heat to talk about the strengths and benefits of AFSCME membership with thousands of San Antonio city workers.

Growing our union will make AFSCME stronger at the bargaining table and at the ballot box. It will help us unite for fair pay, benefits and respect, and stop the attacks on working people.

AFSCME VMOs inspire, lead and encourage through the organizing techniques they learn at AFSCME trainings and through direct practice in partnership with an experienced organizer.

**Interested in becoming a VMO?
Reach out today to learn how!**
actionnetwork.org/forms/vmo-interest-form/



In September, Local 298 helped organize a city-wide union softball tournament for all Manchester, NH public sector unions to benefit the Boys & Girls Club of Manchester.



Upcoming Events

North Shore Stewards Training

- October 29, 2022
- Danvers, MA
- To register, please contact Debbie Schofield at 781/246-5300 or dschofield@afscme93.org

AFSCME Council 93 Executive Board Meeting

- November 5, 2022
- Springfield, MA

Virtual Steward Training

- November 7/9/14/16, 2022
- Online from 6-8pm
- Register [HERE-](https://www.afscme93.org/fall-2022-afscme-council-93-basic-steward-training)
<https://www.afscme93.org/fall-2022-afscme-council-93-basic-steward-training>

Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Winners Announced

Danvers, MA- The 2022 AFSCME Council 93 Memorial Scholarship winners were announced at the recent Council 93 Legislative Conference. Each year, the AFSCME Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Fund provides a number of one-thousand dollar (\$1,000) scholarships to students enrolled in a two-year or four-year accredited college, recognized technical, or trade school.

Awarded in memory of all of our departed members, the scholarship is renewed for each year of attendance. Over the past two decades, tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships have been awarded to deserving AFSCME families.

2022 Scholarship Recipients

- Anna Minichino
 - Child of Local 1700 Hanover Public Schools
 - Member Lauren Minichino
 - Attending UMass Amherst
 - Studying Music
- Emma Orszulak
 - Child of Local 24 Member Laura Orszulak
 - Attending Worcester State
 - Studying Criminal Justice and Psychology
- Kendell Chase
 - Grandchild of Local 507 UMass Dartmouth
 - Member Gail Lyonnais
 - Attending University of New Hampshire
 - Studying Marine Biology
- Ocean Isherwood
 - Child of Local 851 City of New Bedford
 - Member Ralph Isherwood
 - Attending Salem State University
 - Studying Nursing
- Tiarah Swann
 - Granddaughter of Council 93 President Charlie Owen
 - Attending SUNY Adirondack
 - Studying Creative Writing

Congratulations and best of luck in your future studies!

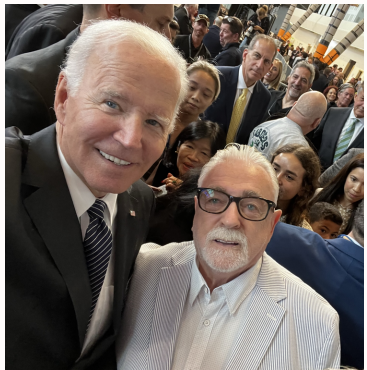


Council 93 Executive Board Member Kelly Abreu with candidate for MA Governor Maura Healey, teaching her grandchildren about the rights, benefits, and privileges of belonging to a union!

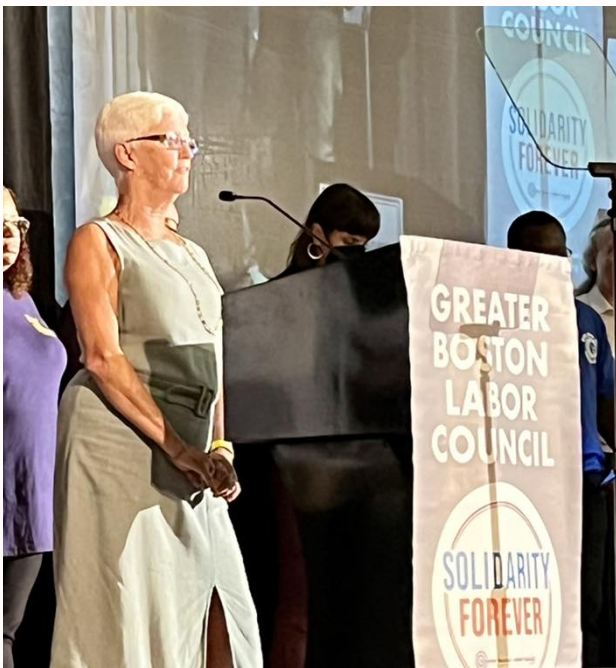
President Biden Visits Massachusetts to Promote Infrastructure Investments



Boston, MA- President Biden visited Massachusetts on September 12th to celebrate a \$62 million grant to Logan Airport to improve and modernize the airport. The grant is part of the larger Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed in 2021 to upgrade America's vital infrastructure. AFSCME Council 93 was invited to attend the event along with our union brothers and sisters in the trades along city, state, and federal elected officials.



US President Joe Biden with AFSCME Council 93 President Charlie Owen at the Build Back Better Event on September 12th



Local 230 Boston Cafeteria Workers President Dale Feeny representing AFSCME frontline workers at the Greater Boston Labor Council's Labor Day Breakfast



AFSCME Local 1730 members and Council 93 staff supporting a fair contract for AFT Massachusetts Local 1269 members at Essex Tech!



Congratulations to Local 298 President Dennis Bourgeois on his retirement from the City of Manchester, NH after nearly 30 years with the city and 10 years as local president.



VT

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Members will see their wages go up 18% over the four-year contract, including a 7.2% raise in year-one. In addition to the wage increases, workers with over 5 years of service will receive longevity bonuses.

Total employee healthcare costs will remain at 20%, but there will be a new cap based on salary where the healthcare burden to each worker cannot exceed 6.5% of base salary in year 1 and rising to 6.95% by year 4.

Beginning on July 1st this year, workers will have four weeks of paid family leave at 100% of their compensation. The following year, they'll earn four weeks at 100% of compensation and four weeks at 60% compensation, with an additional 4 weeks at 60% for 2024 and thereafter. Local 1343 members are the first municipal employees in Vermont to win such a provision.

Congratulations to the members of Local 1343 for paving the way on family leave in Vermont. While Burlington is the first community with family leave in Vermont, it is most certainly not going to be the last. Council 93 will continue to advocate for policies that improve the lives of our members and all working people.

Council 93 Memorial Golf Tournament Raises \$50,000 for AFSCME Families

Northborough, MA- The 2022 Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament was held on July 25th at the Juniper Hills Golf Course in Northborough, MA. This annual golf tournament is the premier fundraising event for the Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Fund, which helps AFSCME families meet the high cost of a college education. This year, the Tournament accommodated over 250 golfers and raised approximately \$50,000. Many thanks to everyone who attended and contributed to this great cause!



Council 93 Organizing Updates



- On August 1st McLean clinical staff working at the Fernside program in Princeton, MA voted to join Council 93 by a vote of 11-1. These 20 employees chose AFSCME Council 93 and they will be added to the McLean United Local 1115.
- On August 31st, in accordance with Local 1343 Town of Shelburne's contract that includes a card check provision, Council 93 petitioned to add 4 DPW employees to the existing bargaining unit. These employees will be added to Vermont Local 1343.
- On September 15th Council 93 and the Hanover New Hampshire Police Department reached agreement to add the seven (7) Sergeants into the existing unit of Local 3657, Hanover Police Department Employees.
- On September 23rd Clinical Staff at McLean Hospital's Boston Metro Campuses voted 38 – 9 to join with AFSCME Council 93. This will result in a net gain of 103 new members.
- On September 29th Behavioral Assistants in Milford, MA public schools voted 38 – 0 to join AFSCME Council 93 and will become a part of AFSCME Local 1709.

Joining Council 93 starts with a conversation- to learn more contact our Organizing Staff at info@afscme93.org

Student Loan Forgiveness Deadline October 31st!

As a front-line public service worker, you keep our country and economy running, even in these difficult times. Your work means everything to your community, but at times it can be dangerous, adding considerable stress to you and your family.

On top of this, you may be burdened by student debt. Your union is here to help. AFSCME has partnered with the Student Borrowers Protection Center (SPBC) to provide members with information and resources to ease the burden.

PSLF is a federal student loan relief program established in 2007 and designed to encourage individuals to enter and continue to work full time in public sector jobs. Participation in the program generally requires that the borrower have a federal Direct Loan, be employed by a qualified employer on a full-time basis and make 120 loan payments under a qualifying repayment plan. Upon meeting these requirements, the borrower's loans are to be forgiven. The Department of Education has announced a temporary waiver to PSLF that expands the number of public service workers who are eligible for loan forgiveness. ***This temporary waiver will expire Oct. 31, 2022.***

Our union played an important role in advocating for these temporary PSLF changes and we don't want you to miss this opportunity.

Don't Wait! Apply TODAY!
Visit [PSLF.gov](https://pslf.gov) to learn more!
You must apply by 10/31/2022!

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