

*PRESS RELEASE*

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**WOODWARD RESOURCE CENTER TO RESIDENT TREATMENT WORKERS: MANDATORY OVERTIME OR TERMINATION**

DES MOINES – On December 5, 2018, Resident Treatment Workers (“RTWs”) at the Woodward Resource Center were given new “Position Description Questionnaires,” (job descriptions) that included the following requirement, “Meet Individual care standards, including recommended/required staff-to-individual ratios.” Supervisors read from a prepared script (attached) that was not provided in writing to RTWs, explaining that the new requirement, “means it is an essential function of the RTW position to work extra shifts as deemed necessary by facility management to meet minimum standards as well as recommended staffing levels….” The current requirements are to sign up for a minimum of one 8-hour overtime shift every two weeks. Any RTWs who do not complete a minimum of 8 hours of overtime every two weeks will not be fulfilling the essential functions of the RTW position, resulting in discipline or termination. Additionally, RTWs were told that FMLA cannot be used in place of this mandatory overtime. If a doctor’s note is provided stating that they cannot work more than an 8-hour shift, then they cannot perform the essential functions of their job, again resulting in being terminated. Supervisors told RTWs that the changes were, “coming from Des Moines.”

“Woodward Resource Center and DHS don’t want to pay to adequately staff their facility housing some of the most vulnerable Iowans, so they’re forcing their employees to work overtime to fill in their gaps,” **said AFSCME Council 61 President Danny Homan**. “It is management’s responsibility to ensure adequate staffing levels, and they can start by chipping away at the 38+ RTW vacancies within the facility. We are sick and tired of workers being intimidated by the State of Iowa and being forced to fix their mistakes when they drop the ball on something as critical as staffing levels. Management should also think long and hard about interfering with legally-protected FMLA hours.”

*The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Council 61 represents 40,000 public employees in Iowa including law enforcement and correctional officers, firefighters, mental health workers, professional school staff, emergency responders, and many other workers. AFSCME Council 61 also represents home health care and child care providers across the state and private sector workers at Prairie Meadows, Palmer College of Chiropractic, Des Moines University, and ABM (Marshalltown).*

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