

Justice Reinvestment Coalition

Highlights Needed Investments in DOC to Create True "Second Chance Society"

On February 24th, the Justice Reinvestment Coalition, comprised of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, the ACLU, Recovery for All, Stop Solitary CT, Transitions Clinic Network, YWCA, and SEIU District 1199 New England, held a press conference to demand funding to address the staffing crisis, improve medical attention, mental health supports, and reentry programs.

The Coalition is calling for increases of \$30 million to address the staff shortages, \$20 mil-

lion to improve inmate medical services, \$5 million to train and recruit formerly incarcerated individuals to work in healthcare and reentry, funding and creating a regulatory oversight body over DOC healthcare, and growing effective reentry strategies through education, training, and discharge programs, and fully funding Unified School District #1 (USD #1).

Kevin Devery, an English Teacher at USD #1 and P3B Leader in CSEA, spoke to the press:



I teach English as a second language to the students in Manson. I work my hardest to integrate non-English speakers into a state and country where English is the dominant language, so that when *continue onto page 4*

CSEA SEIU LOCAL 2001
VICTORY
ALERT

Fairfield Para Members
Win \$4-\$6/Hour Raises



Paras Fight & Win for Better Pay

CSEA members in the Fairfield Para Chapter have won HUGE raises in a MOU recently signed which gave members hourly increases ranging from \$4-\$6 per hour for about 250 paraeducators. During their last negotiations, they ended in mediation and although they won pay raises, it wasn't enough to address the critical retention and turnover issues.

Sure enough, that was what brought them back to the table to negotiate a MOU that replaces their last contract year pay raise

which was previously slated to be \$0.50/hour. Paras moved from 10 pay levels (note that there is no one in pay level 7), to 5 pay levels, with 80% of members moving to level 1 of the new pay structure.

There isn't a school in Connecticut that isn't faced with a staffing crisis and Fairfield was no different - there were new paras who were quitting by lunch on their first days. Retention issues impact not only the paras who are burnt out and leaving the industry, but also the students, the parents and the rest of the education community that paras interact with on a daily basis. Schools rely heavily on paras.

Congratulations to the Fairfield Paraeducators on their hard-fought UNION win.

Legislative Session Update:

Public Hearings in Full Swing

The 2023 Legislative Session is in full swing with CSEA members testifying in public hearings, filming videos for legislators and attending webinars to learn more about the legislative process and how we are fighting for items on our legislative agenda.

CSEA members are up at the Capitol (or sitting in front of Zoom from the comfort of their

home!) demanding change and insisting that we cannot continue on with the status quo. From expanding paid sick days to improving the work of the State Contracting Standards Board to making it easier to vote early or by mail and much more - there are a number of issues on which we are focused and with CSEA members standing collectively, there is much we can accomplish together.

As a reminder of the legislative process, before any bill is ready to be signed into law, or even get a vote on the House and Senate

floor, it must first make it through the committee process. There are 27 committees in the General Assembly, covering every facet of public life and government operations. From the Appropriations Committee that has oversight of the state budget to the Education Committee that handles matters related to K through

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Visit our union's website at: CSEA-CT.com

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Meetings And News

MEETING DATES

The March Delegates Meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, March 16th at 10am at the CSEA Union Hall

Chapter 401 (Hartford area):
Thursday, April 6th
12:30 lunch & 1pm meeting
CSEA Union Hall & via Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Patrice Peterson: (860) 416-0306

Chapter 402 (Danbury area):
*Meeting will be canceled if Danbury Public Schools are closed or delayed due to weather.
Wednesday, March 8th - 10am
United Methodist Church
5 Clapboard Ridge Rd. Danbury
Linda Albanese: (860) 354-6965

Chapter 403 (Norwich area):
Tuesday, March 14th - 1:30pm
Guest Speaker: Kevin Sullivan, CSEA
Rose City Senior Center
8 Mahan Drive., Norwich
Carol Burgess: (860) 859-3641

Chapter 404 (Waterbury area):
Tuesday, March 14th - 10am
Guest Speaker: Aetna Representative
Trinity Orthodox Church
937 Chase Parkway, Waterbury
John Quinn: (203) 804-0189

Chapter 405 (New Haven area):
Thursday, March 9th - 10:30am
Guest Speaker: Julianne Munda,
From Ivy Rehab Center
Hamden Government Center Bldg
2750 Dixwell Ave, Hamden
Ron Osokow: (203) 671-7685

Chapter 406 (Middletown area):
Tuesday, March 14th - 1pm
American Legion Post 75
58 Bernie O'Rourke Dr., Middletown
Joe Formica: (860) 347-4532

Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area):
Wednesday, March 15th - 1pm
Guest Speaker: Cigna Representative
St. Josephs of Stratford Catholic Church
1300 Stratford Rd., Stratford (on Rt. 113)
Joan Matzonkai: (203) 751-0300

Chapter 408 (Willimantic area):
Thursday, March 9th - 12:30pm
Guest Speaker: Aetna Representative
Mansfield Senior Center
303 Maple Ave. Mansfield
Doug Racicot: (860) 234-2537

Chapter 409 (State University Professors)
Friday, March 17th - 10am
CSEA Union Hall & via Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Dave Walsh: (860) 684-4773

Chapter 410 (Windsor Locks area):
Monday, March 13th - 1pm
Guest Speakers: Kim Forte,
A Better Connecticut Institute
Suffield Senior Center
145 Bridge St., Suffield
Amelia Smith: (860) 687-1848

Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area):
Thursday, March 16th - 12pm
Guest Speakers: Aetna &
Cigna Representatives
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Subby Puglisi: (860) 836-4009

Chapter 412 (Putnam area):
Tuesday, March 21st - 1:30pm
Guest Speaker: Bernadette Conway, CSEA
Putnam Town Hall
200 School St., Putnam
Don Gladding: (860) 933-9998

Chapter 414 (Torrington area):
Monday, March 20th - 10am
Cooperative Service Extension Bldg
843 University Dr, Torrington
Karen Pineman: (860) 354-6727

Chapter 415 (Manchester area):
Monday, March 27th - 1pm
Guest Speaker: Aetna Representative
Manchester Elks Lodge
30 Bissell St., Manchester, CT
Stuart Clark: (860) 205-0657 (c)
(860) 454-4818 (h)

Chapter 416 (New London area):
Tuesday, March 14th - 12pm
Guest Speaker: Cigna Representative
Groton Public Library
52 Newtown Road, Groton
John Knaff (860) 857-4244

Chapter 417 (Plainville area):
Wednesday, March 8th - 1pm
Guest Speaker: Aetna Representative
Plainville Public Library - Auditorium
56 East Main St., Plainville
Mark Kirschner: (860) 882-2717

Chapter 418 (Community College Retirees):
Tuesday, March 7th - 10am
Guest Speaker: Aetna Representative
4C's Union Hall
907 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford
Bill Searle (860) 745-3692

Chapter 421 (Daytona, FL Chapter)
Social Luncheon
Wednesday, April 5th
Location: TBD
11:30 - 1:30pm
Guest Speaker: TBD
Questions? Reach out to:
Ruth Finizio (860) 680-1860 or
John Veray (386) 265-1649

Chapter 431 (Carolinas Chapter)
*Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Tuesday, March 14th at 11am
Golden Corral
868 Oak Forest Ln, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Buffet Cost: \$10 per person
Speakers will include:
Kevin Sullivan CSEA Retiree Organizer
Representatives from Aetna & Cigna
Checks made out to "CSEA Chapter 431"
Should be mailed to: Virginia Nolan
3204 S. Memorial Ave., Nags Head, NC
27959
Questions? Call John Yopp (203) 507-1022

Important numbers to have on hand:

Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528

Aetna Customer Service: 1-855-648-0391

Retirement Division Life Insurance: 860-702-3537

Caremark: 1-800-318-2572

Retirement Division Health Insurance: 860-702-3533

Cigna: 1-800-244-6224

Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield: 1-800-922-2232

CSEA Retiree Organizer, Kevin Sullivan:
860-951-6614 x118

HEP Care Management Solutions: 1-877-687-1448 or visit them at their portal:
<https://www.connect2yourhealth.com/ParticipantPortal/Default.aspx>



Don't Get Stuck Out in the Cold. Warm Up with a Great Auto Loan Rate!

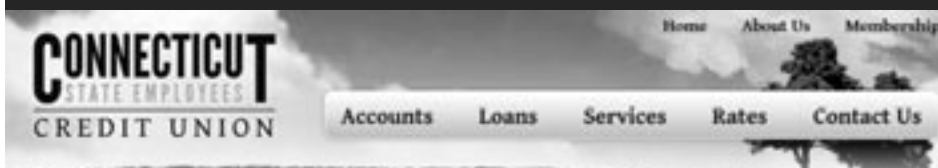


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Dividend Rates - Fourth Quarter 2022

	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	2.00%	2.02%
SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	0.75%	0.75%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	1.25%	1.26%

Minimum opening balance \$25.00. The annual percentage yield is accurate as of the last dividend declaration date. Rate may change after the account is opened. Fees or other conditions may reduce the earnings on the account.

7 Full Service Offices To Serve You

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MIDDLETOWN Connecticut Valley Hospital P.O. Box 2485 Middletown, CT 06457 (860) 347-0479	STORRS 1244 Storrs Rd. Storrs, CT 06268 (860) 429-9306	SOUTHBURY Southbury Training School P.O. Box 644 Southbury, CT 06488 (203) 267-7610
		NEWINGTON O'Neil Plaza 2434 Berlin Turnpike Newington, CT 06111 (860) 667-7668

Hours: Main Office: Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Branches: Mon-Fri, 9:30am-4pm
Drive-Up Teller (Hartford Only): Mon-Fri, 8:30am-4pm; Paydays Open Until 5pm

**Gone too Soon:
CSEA Members Who Have Passed On**

The Office of the State Comptroller has provided CSEA with the following members that have recently passed away. Our condolences are with their friends, family and loved ones.

Ausburger, Patricia
Barnett, Arlene
Basile, Frank
Bohara, Richard
Boylin, William
Budryk, M Elinor
Calderon, Jose
Colello, Joseph
Conway, John
Cybulski, Stella
Ertl, Robert
Fleming, Carl
Fortson, Josephine
Gaud, Ramonita
Gaudio, Rita
Grady, Rayford
Grady, Yvonne
Haddad, Elaine
Hennessey, Gail
Holmes, Barbara
Howard, James
Joaquim, Mary
Kennedy, Jessie
Lagan, Irene

Lewin, Michael
Lockwood, Eleanor
Lucia, Joseph
Luh, Peter
Mccue, Martin
Mcguinness, Paul
Milesi, Robert
Moulton, Carol
Murphy, Miriam
O'neil, Peter
Oldershaw, Mary
Ottiano, Robert
Palumbo, Joan
Ropiak, Michael
Ross, Gretchen
Serrano, Miguel
Sharifuddin, Dawud
Smith, Carol
Strittmatter, Philipp
Tedford, Kenneth
Thankappan, Kunjathan
Tyson, Nellie
West, James



CSEA NEWS

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Local 2001, Service Employees International Union, CTW/CLC

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Update of the 2023 Legislative Session

Public Hearings in Full Swing

12 schools, there is a committee for everything.

These committees hold public hearings throughout February and March to hear from members of the public, ask questions and, eventually, decide what bills will be voted out of committee and which ones will not. Public hearings are a core function of our democratic process and legislators rely on those that testify to learn more about the bills, but more importantly it's an opportunity for you to tell your story.

All public hearings will continue to be hybrid, and anyone can testify. Testifying in person or virtually is easy to do - and submitting written testimony is even easier! And, best of all, CSEA staff helps you through all of it.

So far, we have had dozens and dozens of members testify, including over 60 childcare providers who turned out to tell their story at the Appropriations Committee hearing where

they demanded that the legislature fully fund and expand the Care4Kids childcare program.

And this work is not going unnoticed, at the time of publication, we have the following progress to report:

- Both Recovery For All proposals, SB 351 and HB 5673 had a public hearing in the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee on February 27.

- We are waiting for our School Paraeducator Advisory Council proposal to be formally raised with a bill number and language but in the meantime, lobbyists, including our own Danny Medress, has continued to meet with legislators about the specifics of the bill while members continue to prepare for the eventual public hearing in the Education Committee.

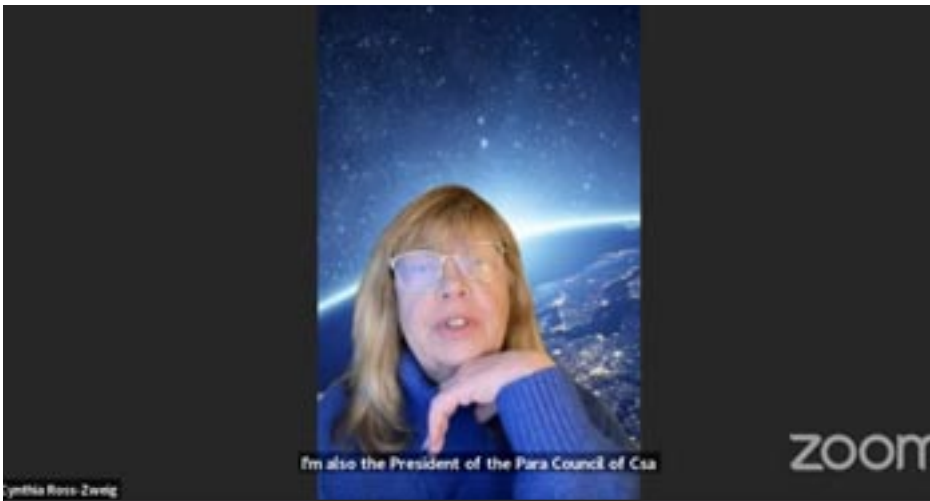
- Paid Sick Days, State Contracting Standards Board (SCSB), and FOIA Exemption proposals

have all been raised as concepts, and we are waiting on a bill number, language, and public hearing dates.

- We do not yet know which of the Early Voting Implementation and No-Excuse Absentee Voting proposals will be the ultimate legislative vehicle for early voting, but the discussion right now largely revolves around whether there will be ten or fourteen days of early voting.

- Our Collective Bargaining Rights for Probate Court Workers proposal, SB912, had its public hearing in Labor on January 31 and was voted out of the committee on February 16. It's likely to go to two more committees, Appropriations and Judiciary.

- The Governor has released his budget proposals and public hearings started on the budget in Appropriations started on February 15 and concluded on March 1.



ABOVE: Travis Woodward, President of CSEA, has testified at several public hearings, including here, where he is testifying in front of the Appropriations Committee hearing on the Department of Transportation budget.



ABOVE: Diane Murphy, President of P3A Council, testified in front of the Appropriations Committee to demand full funding for the State Department of Education.



ABOVE: Eva Bermudez-Zimmerman, CSEA's Organizing Director, testified in front of the Labor and Public Employees Committee in support of Probate Worker's right to organize.



ABOVE: Travis Woodward, President of CSEA, testified in front of the Finance, Revenue and Bond Committee in support of the Recovery For All tax reform proposals.

Justice Reinvestment Coalition Press Conference

Demands for Full Funding and Staffing Continue

continued from page 1
they leave, they can successfully, and lawfully participate in society.

Over my career, I have had students, some for a year at a time and later on when I see them speaking English fluently in the hallways I realize that I did my job and they don't need me anymore.

The work we do is critical for these students. Oftentimes their best part of the day is during school. But, unfortunately, our school has been chronically short staffed.

We haven't had a librarian for

more than a year, so students haven't been able to utilize the library. Our second gym teacher retired more than two years ago, so now only under 18 year olds have gym class.

We need a full complement of teachers – including special education teacher, re-entry counselor, art teacher, secretary, and world language teacher. We need more certified and non-certified staff to have a fully operational school, let alone the Directors that should be hired for our school Districts Administration.

With a record surplus and an overflowing rainy day fund, there is no reason for my students to be shortchanged. The funding USD #1 has been receiving is not enough. It doesn't support the neediest group of students in our state or educators like myself who are in the classroom with them.

In a year when legislators are talking about increasing education funding, USD #1 must be part of that discussion. I urge you to appropriate additional funding for the schools and educational programs in DOC, as well as make

USD #1 a line item in the state budget.

I am proud to work for the people of Connecticut and ask you to craft a budget that makes needed investments in public services, the people who provide them, as well as the people who rely on them.

A budget that increases overall funding while creating a dedicated funding stream for USD #1 and other educational programs.

Para Council Prepares for Legislative Fight

Over the past several sessions of the Connecticut General Assembly, CSEA members have made important progress for paraeducators and the students we serve. But we all know that there is much more work to be done. This year, we are fighting for transformative legislation that will bring critical improvement to the work we do, and the pay and benefits we receive.

During the 2021 and 2022 legislative sessions, we passed bills that improved the School Paraeducator Advisory Council, put in place a system for paraeducator career development, and one that allows paras to attend PPT meetings and view IEPs. This was just a start, and with all of us working together, we can deliver even more for our members during the 2023 legislative session.

This year, CSEA, other unions representing paras, and the School Paraeducator Advisory Council have proposed legislation that will make improvements to our pay, healthcare, and retirement benefits, as well as more fully integrate paras into the PPT and IEP process.

This month we were very busy getting ready for this fight, preparing for the public hearing, filming a video series for legislators and hosting webinars for members to learn more about the legislative process.

Myself, Jen McLarney, the President of the Tolland Para Chapter and Missy Cole, the President of the Danbury Para Chapter participated in hour long interviews with a film crew where they talked about their experiences as a para, the obstacles they face and the changes that we need to make in order to lift up the work paras do and ensure that chronic vacancies are filled. Throughout the next few weeks we will work with the film crew to edit down these hours of video to short 2 minute videos to be shared with legislators

and posted on social media. Once these videos are finalized we will share them with you all, please help us spread the word by then sharing these videos widely in your networks.

On February 15th and February 28th, CSEA joined our other para coalition unions (AFT CT, MEUI, UAW Region 9A, and AFSCME Council 4) for virtual webinars to discuss what to expect over the next few months and how to prepare testimony for the upcoming public hearing.

Final legislative language is still being drafted, but the bill will be raised in the Education Committee and will be the subject of a public hearing. We do not have a public hearing date yet, but I'll share it with you as soon as we do. Telling your story at a public hearing is easy, fun, and incredibly effective. CSEA staff will help you with every phase of your testimony. You can submit written testimony, testify via Zoom, or come up to the Legislative Office Building in Hartford to speak in person. Whatever works best for you! **Scan the QR code to the right to sign up to get involved!**

Together, let's make this legislative session the Year of the Paraeducator!
- Cynthia Ross-Zweig
Paraeducator, New Fairfield
President, Paraeducator Council



ABOVE: Cynthia Ross-Zweig (left), Jen McLarney (middle) and Missy Cole (right) participate in the Para Video Series.

Care 4 Kids Program Could be a Beacon for Equity

By: Rhonda Knowles, Childcare Council Leader

The following opinion piece was written by CSEA Childcare leader Rhonda Knowles and has been submitted to a number of media outlets.

This year when we listened to the Governor's budget proposal there was a new "equity requirement" that requires each Governor to include "an analysis of the impact of both proposed spending and proposed revenue programs", and "an explanation of the manner in which provisions of the budget further the Governor's efforts to ensure equity in the state" in their recommended budget document.

I live in West Haven and I have been a childcare provider with Care 4 Kids for 32 years. Throughout these years I have seen countless babies grow up to become big kindergarteners, having learned critical skills from their time with me during their first few years. These first few years of life have been proven to be crucial in the

child's long term developmental growth, but currently 50% of Connecticut lives in a child care desert without viable options for stable child care. The research shows how critical these early years are, so why aren't we putting the resources in place so that all families can have access to affordable and quality childcare.

As a Care 4 Kids provider and CSEA member, I will anxiously be waiting to see how much Governor Lamont allocates to the Care 4 Kids program. Care 4 Kids is a state program that not only uplifts parents and children but the child care providers, who are predominantly women of color, as well. This program helps low-to-moderate income families pay for child care costs while also providing job opportunities to providers who might otherwise not be able to participate in the workforce because of their own child care needs. On top of all of that, the

State's subsidy is 80-85% funded by federal allocations of Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG).

This is a model program that directly invests state funds towards low-income families through a targeted approach. It moves Connecticut towards a more equitable childcare future by providing affordable options to parents who need to join the workforce, an engaging and educational experience for the children and a stable and rewarding career for providers.

As a provider, I receive \$0 towards my healthcare. Before I turned 65 I was fully reliant on my husband's health insurance despite working a full time job, funded by the State of Connecticut. I am lucky that my husband's job offers him health insurance options or I would be forced to rely on state aid programs.

Healthcare is a critical benefit for everyone, but anyone who has ever had a child in daycare knows

how constant the cycle of illnesses are. I am greeted by runny noses and uncovered coughs each and every day I go to work, and I continue to show up knowing that I am one of the lucky ones who gets good health insurance elsewhere, but many of my co-workers aren't that lucky. Without employer-provided health insurance, they can't afford to seek medical care.

I also know that each day that I have to close my doors due to illness I am leaving all of my parents in a disarray, struggling to find child care for the day to avoid missing work.

Not only do more families need to qualify for the Care 4 Kids program to address the crisis we are seeing in the childcare industry, but we also need to address the recruitment and retention issues. We cannot expect providers to create a career in this industry without offering fair wages and benefits.

This isn't just an opportunity for providers and parents, this is an opportunity for Connecticut to move towards a more equitable future for the childcare industry.

Council 400: Turning 65 Soon? *What to Expect and What to Do*

If you will be turning 65 soon, you are probably confused as to what will change for you and what you need to do. Hopefully this will help clarify the process for you.

ALREADY RETIRED AND TURNING 65:

If you are already retired and turning 65, you need to sign up for Medicare Parts A and B only. To sign up for Medicare Parts A and B you can go online to www.medicare.gov, visit a Social Security office, or call them on the phone to speak with a representative at 1-800-772-1213. You can enroll in Medicare during the seven-month period that begins three months before the month you turn 65.

Coverage will start the first of the month that you turn 65. If you don't sign up during this initial enrollment period, you will be charged higher premiums for the rest of your life – so it is critical that you sign up during that period for Medicare Parts A and B. If you do end up paying the higher amount because you didn't sign up during the seven month period, the State will not reimburse you for that additional penalty.

For those under the age of 65, your healthcare provider is Anthem, and you have to pay premiums for that coverage. Once you turn 65 and go onto Medicare, your healthcare will be the Aetna Medicare Advantage Plan, which provides the same benefits and coverage.

There is no charge for Medicare Part A, but you will need to pay for Medicare Part B, and you will be reimbursed for it by the State (which is a negotiated benefit by your Union!) There are two ways to pay for your Medicare Part B. If you are already collecting your Social Security benefit, it will automatically be deducted from your monthly Social Security check. If you are not collecting Social Security yet, you will be billed quarterly, and you must pay that bill. You will not receive reimbursement unless you submit your paperwork, so make sure you submit by following the directions below.

HOW TO SUBMIT PAPERWORK FOR REIMBURSEMENT:

After you sign up for Medicare you will receive your Medicare card and a statement from Social Security showing how much you will be paying for your Part B. First, make a copy of your Medicare card AND a copy of the Social Security statement showing the amounts you will be paying for Part B. You will then need to submit both copies to the Retiree Health Insurance Unit to receive your reimbursement.

This process is not just for you, but for your spouse as well. Mark your State Employee ID number above your name on the copies before you submit them to the Retiree Health Insurance Unit. You can put your Medicare card somewhere safe, because you will not need to carry that around

with you and will only need to use it on very rare occasions.

You can submit the copies by mail or email to:

BY MAIL:

Retiree Health Insurance Unit
Office of the State Comptroller's Office
165 Capitol Ave.
Hartford, CT 06106

BY EMAIL:

osc.rethealth@ct.gov

Having proof that you submitted it is important to make sure you can confirm the date you sent it. If you are able to attach it as a document in an email, the email is verification that you sent it. We sometimes hear from people that have sent the information in, but are not getting reimbursed at all, or not the correct amount. If the paperwork gets lost in the mail and there is no way to verify that you sent it, you will not get reimbursed or retroactively reimbursed unless you have proof that you sent it and the date you sent it on, so we highly recommend sending it by email or return receipt so you have verification that you sent it.

WILL I NEED TO SEND IT IN EVERY YEAR?

It depends. Once you are enrolled in Medicare, you will receive a statement at the end of every year showing you how much you will be paying for your Part B (and in some cases you may pay Part D – but do not enroll in Part D) for the following year.

If you are notified that you are paying the basic amount for Part B only, you do not need to mail anything in that year, your reimbursement will be automatically adjusted by the State.

If you are notified that you are paying an amount higher than the basic amount, or are paying an amount for Part D, then you will need to make copies of that statement and send it in for that year.

HOW MUCH DOES PART B COST?

The amount for Part B changes every year. The basic amount for Part B in 2023 is \$164.90, which is what most retirees will be paying. If that is the amount you will pay, you don't need to do anything further, the State will automatically adjust your reimbursement to that rate. However, if you are notified by Social Security that you will be paying an amount different from \$164.90, higher or lower, or that you are paying for Part D, then you will need to send a copy of the Social Security bill or statement to Aetna. Aetna is now processing the paperwork for all those paying a premium higher than the basic amount. The address to send it to is:

BY MAIL:

Aetna, Inc.
PO Box 7083
London, KY 40742

EMAIL:

medicareenrollmenttransactions@aetna.com

BY FAX:

1-855-481-3124

If you submit by email or fax, you will have confirmation of when you sent it. If you send by mail you can call to confirm it was received by them at 1-855-648-0391.

We highly recommend checking your advice (what the Comptroller's Office refers to as your pay stub) regularly so you know the amount you are being reimbursed. Since they no longer send out monthly advices, you will need to go online to review it at the Retiree Portal at <https://retirees.ct.gov>, or you can call them to have one sent to you at 860-702-3480.

You only need to send a copy of your Medicare card and Social Security statement to the Retirement Division once, when you first go on Medicare. After that you only need to send a copy of your Social Security statement to them if you are paying more than the basic amount, and it will only need to be sent to Aetna.

WHAT IF MY SPOUSE IS NOT 65 YET AND I TURN 65:

If you turn 65 and go onto the plan, but your spouse is not yet 65, your spouse will continue with their current insurance provider until they turn 65 and sign up for Medicare Parts A and B. Your dependents aged 26 and younger will also remain on the Anthem plan, even if you move onto the United Healthcare plan.

IF YOU ARE STILL WORKING FOR THE STATE AND TURN 65:

If you turn 65 and are still working, you absolutely need to sign up for Medicare Part A, but do not sign up for Part B until you actually retire. As long as you are still working for the State, you will remain on Anthem. But as soon as you retire, SIGN UP FOR PART B immediately! You will then switch to the Aetna Medicare Advantage plan. Make sure to follow the instructions to submit your paperwork for reimbursement.

Remember, if you don't submit copies of your Medicare card and Social Security statement showing how much you will be paying for Part B, you won't be reimbursed!

WHY DO SOME PEOPLE PAY A HIGHER RATE, OR PAY FOR PART D:

If your Medicare premiums are something other than \$164.90 per month for 2023, it is because you have higher annual earnings, so you will be charged a higher amount (called an Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount or IRMAA) for Part B and Part D.

Those with a retirement date prior to August 1, 2022 are eligible for full reimbursement of this monthly rate. Those retired on or After August 1, 2022 are eligible for 50% reimbursement of the additional monthly rate.

Physical Therapy Issues With Transition to Aetna Plan Resolved

Since the transition for retirees of Medicare age to the Aetna Medicare Advantage Plan on January 1st of this year, our members contacted us that their authorizations for physical therapy were not carried over as they should have.

We had all been told that all authorizations would roll over from United Healthcare to Aetna. But for some of our members that had pre-authorized physical therapy sessions for their treatment, their authorizations didn't roll over to the Aetna plan, and they were told they only had limited visits authorized.

We were able to take the information our retired members reported to us to contact the State of CT and Aetna and bring the issue to their attention to resolve it. We have received confirmation that previous authorizations for physical therapy will be now carried over.

For those that were told they were limited to six physical therapy appointments,

you do not need to do anything. Aetna is already in the process of updating their system to allow for claims to be processed correctly. While they update their claims system to ensure this fix is put in place, they are also reaching out to all utilized physical therapists to notify them of this update. The one thing to note is that prior authorization is the responsibility of the provider, not the member, and does not typically involve direct communication with the member. You should not have to do anything more at this point.

If you received a letter stating you have partial denial for physical therapy and are only authorized for a limited amount of visits, you should just ignore that letter. We were able to resolve this issue quickly and fairly because of CSEA members sticking together and working as a team to ensure your benefits and rights are protected!

CSEA pushed for a new bill (§ 414 — PENSION AND ANNUITY TAX EXEMPTION ACCELERATION) to speed up the process. Under the new bill, pension and annuity income is fully tax exempt starting with the 2022 tax year.

By law, taxpayers are eligible for this exemption only if their federal AGI is below (1) \$75,000 for single filers, married people filing separately, or heads of households and (2) \$100,000 for married people filing jointly. If your Federal AGI is at or above this amount (either as a single or joint filer) you will not be eligible for any exemption. The legislation also increases the threshold for 100% exemption for income taxes on Social Security from \$50,000 to \$75,000 for singles and \$60,000 to \$100,000 for couples.

Part of CSEA's Legislative Agenda for this session is to remove the threshold so that ALL retirees, no matter their income, will be exempt from any taxes on their retirement income.

Accelerated Tax Break for Retirees in Connecticut

CSEA has long understood that many of our retirees in Connecticut are on a tight budget—and with the increased cost of living, handling expenses while aging can be difficult. During the 2018 legislative session, CSEA advocated for a bill aimed at making that tight budget a little easier to deal with.

The bill became effective in 2019, and increased the threshold for Social Security income exemptions as well as implemented a new exemption for State of Connecticut residents who receive a State of Connecticut pension, starting at 14% and increasing progressively until it reaches 100% in 2025.

During the last legislative session,

Is your Spouse a Member of Council 400?

The size of our membership is an important way that CSEA Council 400 demonstrates our power, our voice and our strength—and for 2023 we've set out to drastically increase our membership numbers amidst the 2023 Legislative Session and expected legislative threats.

Spouses are a large part of our membership, and it's no secret why—they are affected by health insurance and pension benefit changes and are often slated for survivor benefits.

By becoming a member, your spouse will ensure they will continue to receive the CSEA News and important notifications

regarding the benefits you worked hard to secure if you were to pass away. They will also be eligible for SEIU Member Benefits like travel rewards and reduced auto and home insurance rates.

But most importantly, by becoming a member, they will help to increase our membership numbers so that CSEA Council 400 will have an even larger voice against our opponents who want to slash benefits—your benefits, their benefits.

If your spouse isn't yet a member, contact our Retiree Organizer, Kevin Sullivan at Ksullivan@csea760.com or 860-951-6614 x 118 to get them signed up!

Council 400 Quarterly Virtual Meeting with Aetna Representative

The next Quarterly Virtual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 15th at 4pm. Although the overall transition to the Aetna Medicare Advantage Plan has gone smoothly, there have been some issues for retirees. It's important we communicate to the State of Connecticut Comptroller's Office, who oversees the Retiree Health Benefits, and Aetna, the carrier, the issues you have experienced and any that still need resolution. Our speakers will be:

Quarterly Virtual Meeting

Wednesday, March 15th at 4:00PM

Speakers: Rae-Ellen Roy, Assistant Director of Policy and Benefits Division of the Comptroller's Office, and Kristin Grose, Aetna representative.

If you have email you will receive a Zoom link to the virtual meeting but you can call into the meeting at:

1-929-205-6099 and enter Meeting ID# 838 6801 8842



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Family Child Care Provider News

Noticias para Proveedores de Cuidado Infantil

Happy March! The childcare council would like to thank all the provider members that were present at last month's Financial Success Conference. We received amazing feedback and would like to bring to you bite-sized sections of finance webinars so you can have all the tools to have a successful financial year. Also, we would like to introduce you to our new segment called "Did you know," where we will share information about benefits, OEC regulation changes, and anything childcare related. If you would like to share with us relevant information so we can share with all members in this new segment, please send it to: smartinez@csea760.com. Expect to see the next post biweekly in your emails with new information!

¡Feliz marzo! El concilio de cuidado infantil quisiera agradecer a todos los miembros proveedores que estuvieron presentes en la Conferencia de Éxito Financiero del mes pasado. Recibimos comentarios increíbles y nos gustaría traerle secciones breves de seminarios web de finanzas para que pueda tener todas las herramientas para un año financiero exitoso. Además, nos gustaría presentarles hoy nuestro nuevo segmento llamado "¿Sabía usted?", donde compartiremos información sobre beneficios, cambios en las reglamentaciones de la OEC y todo lo relacionado con el cuidado de infantil. Si desea compartir con nosotros información relevante para que podamos compartirla con todos los miembros en este nuevo segmento, envíela a: smartinez@csea760.com. ¡Espere ver la próxima

publicación cada dos semanas en sus correos electrónicos con nueva información!

EVENTS 2022 / EVENTOS 2022

- 3/4- Childcare Council Meeting from 9AM-11AM
Reunión de Concilio de Proveedores de las 9AM-11AM
- 3/6 -CCFCT Monday Meetings -OEC will be speaking about the new Infant Toddler Expansion funding
Reuniones de los lunes de CCFCT: La OEC hablará sobre los nuevos fondos de expansión para bebés y niños pequeños

Go Green!

Opt-In to our Digital CSEA News

Did you know that the average person in the US uses more than 700 pounds of paper per year? Or that despite global digitalization, paper usage has actually grown 126% in the last 20 years in the US?

The CSEA News has been an integral part of our communications program for decades, but it is 2023 and we have a host of resources to reduce our carbon footprint and "Go Green." The most effective way for our members to "Go Green" is to request that the CSEA News be sent digitally rather than a hardcopy in the mail!

"Going Green" not only helps decrease the amount of paper waste in our landfills, but it also reduces ink waste and the carbon emissions from delivery. Many of our CSEA members have been interested in decreasing their carbon footprint and opting into the digital E-Newsletter is a great way to take a small step towards a greener future! Every month you will receive this digital paper in

your email inbox - all of the same information, just a lot less waste! To opt into the Go Green E-Newsletter, simply visit bit.ly/GoGreenCSEA and fill out the form.

To make your communications experience even easier, we've launched a NEW WEBSITE! Visit CSEA-CT.com or SEIU2001.org and let us know what you think - give us feedback on what you like, don't like and what you want improved by visiting bit.ly/CSEAWeb-siteInput (case sensitive).

If CSEA has your email address, then you've already received this survey in your inbox, but if we don't then it is also a good opportunity for you to update your contact information by visiting bit.ly/UpdateCSEA (case sensitive).

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