



**SEIU 517M**  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of  
SEIU Local 517M

## November 2020

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### State Employee Holiday for Election Day

By Dave Corrie, SEIU Staff

General Election Day is tomorrow, November 3rd. This is a holiday for state employees that was negotiated by SEIU Local 517M on behalf of our members to make sure that they can have the time to exercise their right to vote.



All permanent and limited term full time state employees shall be allowed 8 hours paid absence from work on the General Election Day in even numbered years.

Less than full time state employees will receive paid absence based on their average hours in pay status for the previous 6 pay periods.

An employee may be required to work on this holiday. Payment for such work will be made in accordance with the Hours of Work and Overtime Articles in the state contracts, or by mutual agreement, take another day off within the same pay period as a holiday.

### State Employee Seniority Lists Available

By Dave Corrie, SEIU Staff

Twice a year the Employer prepares a seniority list that shows the continuous service hours of our members. When the State faces the task of having to reduce the workforce they utilize these lists; therefore the accuracy of the list can be critical in a layoff and bumping situation.

The most recent list was run as of October 17, 2020. Please review it for accuracy. Members have found errors in the report in the past. You must notify your Human Resources Division if you believe any of the hour counters are inaccurate. Click on your specific unit below:

[Human Services Support Unit](#)  
[Scientific and Engineering Unit](#)  
[Technical Unit](#)

**STAY SAFE — STAY INFORMED**

[www.seiu517m.org](http://www.seiu517m.org)

[Twitter at: @SEIU517M](#)

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## Technician Holiday Overtime Pay Reminder

By Kevin Karpinski, SEIU Staff

Your Union won an arbitration last year regarding the issue of working on a holiday and how holiday overtime is recorded on time sheets.

This award states that the overtime rate of 1.5x is paid when an employee is in “pay status” for the week that the holiday occurs. The decision defines pay status as being paid for time worked, for approved time off using paid leave time such as sick leave, annual leave or any other paid leave during the week. In addition, the 8 hours of “Holiday Off” that everyone receives on the actual holiday is considered as being on pay status.

As you may know, regular overtime is not paid when you use sick leave or annual leave during the week you received the overtime. With this arbitration award, OT worked on a holiday is NOT penalized when you use sick or annual leave during the 40-hour week that the holiday occurs.

So, all paid time worked or paid time off counts for the purpose of calculating time worked on a holiday. The Technical Unit (UTEA) contract allows overtime for working over 8 hours in a day, or, working over 40 hours in a week. This language applies to all departments.

## Union Reports Violations, Fights for Members Safety

By Kevin Karpinski, SEIU Staff

In 2018 the DNR Animal Clinic in East Lansing was overwhelmed with processing more than double the number of deer heads during hunting season while checking for Chronic Wasting Disease. Some of the deer also carried Bovine Tuberculosis. Five Laboratory Technicians were exposed and contracted TB. The treatment for TB is a once per lifetime regiment of drugs.

After the employees were identified, tested and returned to work, safety protocols were put in place after DHHS and MIOSHA investigations took place. The Union heard reports that department policies were not being followed, including samples being processed in unauthorized areas, improperly recorded dates on paperwork pertaining to employee TB exposure, and improper respirator mask fittings for employees. These violations were investigated by MIOSHA, and their final report identified these concerns and required corrective action and levied a fine.

In their first meeting with the department regarding this matter, the Union explained to the newly appointed DNR Director, Daniel Eichinger that the Union (Tech Unit) Board would be voting to pull the Technicians out of the workplace due to the violations of safety protocols and compromising the health of our members. The Tech contract allows members to leave an unsafe workplace to report safety violations, and are not required to return until they are rectified.

The Union appreciates the DNR Director's response to the reported concerns. He agreed to initiate an investigation and the Department, while working with the union outside of the grievance procedure, resolved the matters of concern.

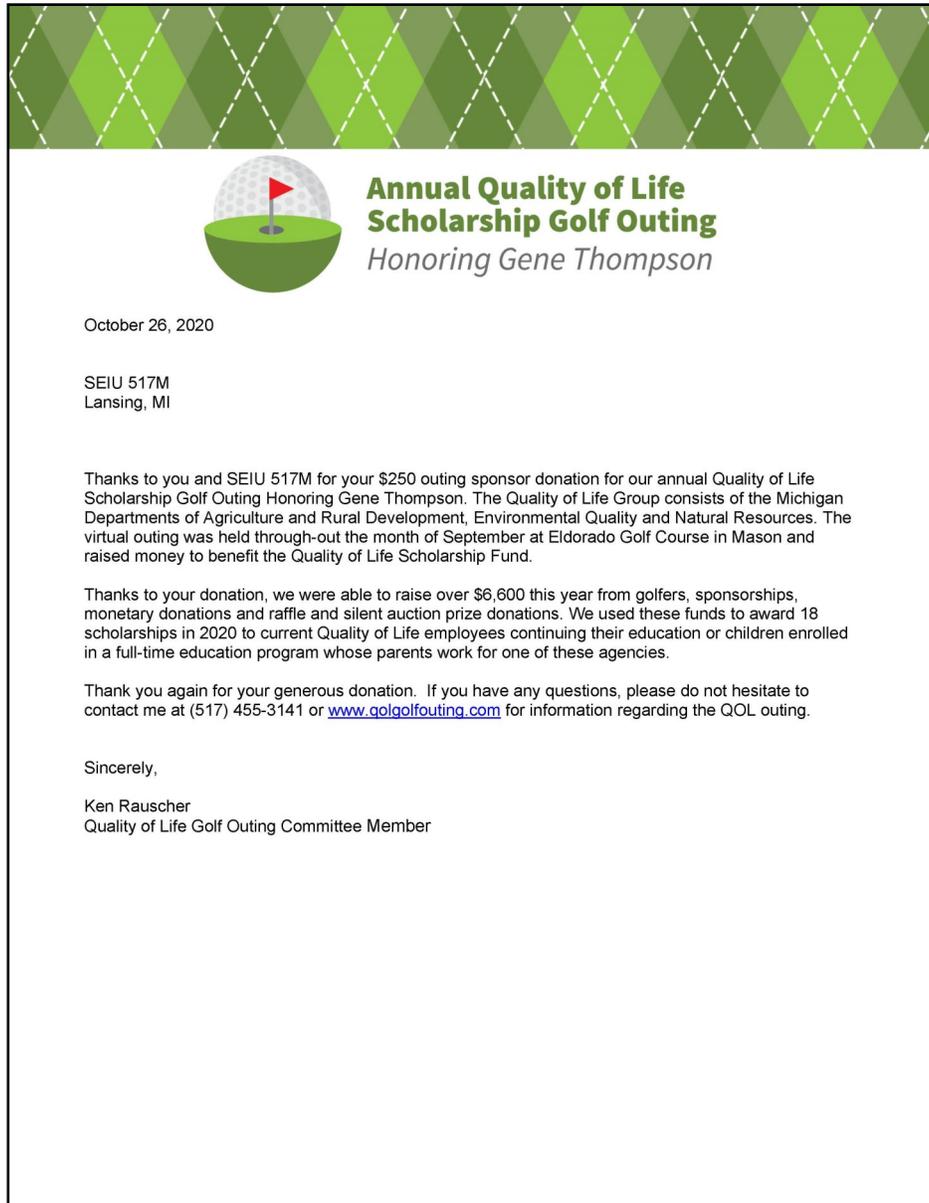
The Union protects workers by negotiating enforceable safety language to help members in their time of need.

Another solid reason to be Union Strong!



## Scientific and Engineering Unit Donates to Scholarship

The SEIU 517M Scientific and Engineering Unit recently received a thank you letter for their donation to the Quality of Life Scholarship Fund. The letter is below.



## Latest COVID-19 Information is Available on our Website

By Dave Corrie, SEIU Staff

SEIU Local 517M is working diligently to keep you informed with the latest information on the spread of COVID-19 and the steps taken to contain the virus from the Governor's office and SEIU International. We have dedicated a section of our website as a resource to members containing this information.

Please keep checking back for the [latest information on our website](#).