



Council 13

AFSCME Council 13, the biggest union in PA, represents more than 65,000 employees.

What Has the Union Done For Me?

AFSCME Contracts throughout the years.
By Jim DeLarre, President, Local 2015

Editor's Note: Jim DeLarre, President of Local 2105 (Beaver County Penn DOT Employees) authored this article which was originally published in Local 2105's newsletter, "The Local Connection." According to Ruth Ann Hoschar, Editor of the "The Local Connection", DeLarre painstakingly researched every AFSCME contract with the commonwealth of PA to answer the question, "What has the Union done for me?" Hoschar said, "Take the time to read DeLarre's contract analysis. Try to imagine where we came from, and where we are today. The next time someone asks me what the union has done for them, I will respond, "What did you do for the Union?"

I started as an employee May 10, 1971. AFSCME just started to negotiate with the Commonwealth. There was a lot of room to negotiate. The pay was low. There was no paid hospital and medical insurance, nor paid life insurance. Pay for overtime was straight time; and usually overtime was given to the bosses friends; or offered only if you would take comp time in place of overtime pay. Yet all I heard was: "If the Union can only get me job protection; that is all I want." Well here's what we got in our first "unit" contract AFSCME negotiated for Commonwealth Maintenance & Trades employees, and which was effective from November 4, 1971 thru June 30, 1973:

- Union Security
- Fourteen paid holidays
- Furlough & bidding rights based on seniority
- General pay increases of:
 - 5% - November 14, 1971
 - 5% - February 15, 1972
 - 5% - July 1, 1972
 - 5% - November 15, 1972
- Anniversary pay increases (5%)
- Overtime pay at time & one-half
- Equalization of overtime
- Fully paid Blue Cross/Blue Shield (Major Medical Plan)
- Fully paid life insurance and
- A grievance and arbitration procedure.

This was, and still is the groundwork for all we have. One of the finest agreements ever negotiated with much more for us than job protection which is the only thing the members wanted.



We need a strong, unified membership to enable us to meet employers on even terms. If only a portion of employees were members, we would not have the strength to represent you effectively. A union, any union, is only as strong as its members. You, along with other members, ARE the union.

First AFSCME Master Commonwealth Employee Contract effective July 1, 1973 thru June 30, 1976:

- Two personal leave days
- General Pay increases-
- July 1, 1973 - 26 cents per hour
- July 1, 1974 - 26 cents per hour
- July 1, 1975 to be determined by wage re-opener negotiations
- Double-time pay for the 7th day worked
- Shift differential of 15 cents per hour
- Creation of the PA Public Employees Health and Welfare Fund
- One year's salary for work-related injuries
- Unit's special working conditions incorporated as 'appendices' in Master Contract
- Anniversary pay increases

AFSCME Contract effective July 1, 1981 thru June 30, 1983:

- One additional personal day
- General pay increases-
- July 1, 1981 - 8%
- July 1, 1982 - 8%
- Shift differential increased to 35 cents per hour
- Anniversary pay increases

AFSCME Contract effective July 1, 1988 thru June 30, 1991

- Total seniority came into effect
- Shift differential increased to 40 cents per hour
- General Pay increases-
- July 1, 1988 - 5%
- January 1, 1989 - 1%
- July 1, 1990 - 5%
- January 1, 1991 - 1%

AFSCME Contract effective July 27, 1976 thru June 30, 1978:

- Shift differential increased to 25 cents per hour
- General Pay increases-
- July 1, 1976 - 30 to 51 cents per hour based on employees' pay ranges

- July 1, 1977 - 34 to 56 cents per hour based on employees' pay ranges
- Major improvements in health benefits
- Anniversary pay increases

AFSCME Contract effective July 1, 1983 thru June 30, 1985:

- One additional personal day
- Annual days-
- Up to 1 year - 4% of total hours paid
- 1-15 years - 6% of total hours paid
- 16-25 years - 10% of total hours paid
- Standby time pay increase to 25%
- General pay increases-
- January 1, 1984 - 2%
- July 1, 1984 - 3%
- Anniversary pay increase or 2% cash payment

AFSCME Contract effective July 1, 1993 thru June 30, 1996:

- Temporary employees given bid rights to fulltime positions and recall rights to temporary positions. (no other union does this for non-permanent employees)
- General Pay increases-
- July 1, 1993 - 3%
- January 1, 1994 - one pay schedule or cash payment
- July 1, 1994 - 3.5% or 45 cents per hour, whichever is greater

AFSCME Contract effective from July 1, 1996 thru June 30 1999:

- Annual service increment of 2.5% or cash payment each year of agreement
- General Pay increases-
- July 1, 1996 - 2%
- July 1, 1997 - 3%
- July 1, 1998 - 3%

I have only gone into the money of the agreements. After the first contract, there have been many pluses in the Units. One very important right in Penn DOT was the right to bid worksites.

We have gone through some rough times of givebacks; but AFSCME remained fast, and we lost nothing. We always got pay raises. Most important, we kept our health plan with no co-pay. I still have sick days, lots of annual time, and am making almost \$16 an hour more than when I started 27 years ago. All that I have now means that anyone who started after me starts out better than they would have, had I not been granted these benefits through AFSCME's hard work.

What has my union done for me? I hear this or statements just like this from the members of my union almost daily. I know that without the Union, most, if not all the gains I have listed would not be here for any employee. My family and I live well on the money and the health care that AFSCME gained for me at the negotiating table and I wish to thank them.

AFSCME Contract effective July 1, 1999 thru June 30, 2003:

- Annual service increment of 2.25% or cash payment each year of the agreement
- General Pay increases:
- July 1, 1999 - 3%
- July 1, 2000 - 3%
- July 1, 2001 - 3.5%
- July 1, 2002 - 3.5%
- Continued Health, Eye Care, and Dental care coverage for employees and their families at no cost to the employees
- Increase in the amount of sick family leave that may be taken according to years of service
- Increase in shift differential to \$1 per hour
- Significant increases in the Commonwealth's contributions to the PEBTF to preserve our health care benefits
- Enhancements to bereavement leave eligibility
- Increase timeframe to use compensatory leave from 90 to 120 days

AFSCME Contract effective July 1, 2003 thru June 30, 2007:

- General Pay increases:
- July 1, 2003 - No increase

- July 1, 2004 - step increment or lump sum 2.25%
- July 1, 2005 - 3%
- July 1, 2006 - step increment or lump sum 2.25%
- January 1, 2007 - 3.5% & step increment or lump sum 2.25%
- Significant increases in the Commonwealth's contributions to the PEBTF to preserve our health care benefits as modified by the Fund

AFSCME Contract effective July 1, 2007 thru June 30, 2011:

- General Pay increases:
- July 1, 2007 - \$1,250 one-time lump sum
- January 1, 2008 - step increment 2.25%
- July 1, 2008 - 3%
- January 1, 2009 - step increment 2.25%
- July 1, 2009 - 3%
- January 1, 2010 - step increment 2.25%
- October 1, 2010 - 4%
- January 1, 2011 - step increment 2.25%
- Contribution to the PEBTF increased from \$300.00 to \$440.00 July 1, 2010
- Taking compensatory leave from 90 to 120 days
- Add foster child to the definition of immediate family

WHAT YOUR UNION DOES FOR YOU

- **Negotiates and enforces the contract**
- **Settles your grievances**
- **Prepares necessary paperwork, insurances, etc**
- **Keeps you informed; holds meetings**
- **Supports fair labor legislation**
- **Furnishes legal protection**
- **Acts in your interest with the community as well as the management**

WHERE YOUR DUES GO

- **Rent, supplies, and equipment**
- **Affiliation fees**
- **Salaries of full time representatives**
- **Printing, postage, educational materials**
- **Labor board and arbitration expenses**
- **Other legal expenses**
- **Costs incurred in disputes**
- **Organizing expenses, negotiation expenses**