

CAPSule

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Lowest Health Premium Increases in 20 Years

Open Enrollment for CalPERS' Health Benefits program begins September 11 and ends October 6. During this period, eligible members may enroll in CalPERS health plans, add eligible family members, or make changes to their existing plans for the 2018 health coverage year.

The good news is that CalPERS members will see health premium rate increases for 2018 that are the lowest in 20 years. In June, the CalPERS Board of Administration approved a premium package with an overall average rate increase of 2.33 percent. **Challenges remain, including the ever escalating cost of health care overall, high copays and deductibles in many plans, and the lack of low cost choices in rural areas.**

Members can learn about and plan their health plan options through my.calpers.ca.gov. They'll find all the Open Enrollment information they need, including their individual annual Health Plan Statements, the 2018 Health Benefit Summary, the Health Program Guide, and the Medicare Enrollment Guide.

Health Plan Statements and Open Enrollment resources are available online through **my|CalPERS** beginning August 28, and will be mailed on the same date to members who chose to continue that option.

CalPERS is making it easier for members to make decisions about their 2018 health coverage through a newly revised health plan comparison tool available in **my|CalPERS** called **Find a Medical Plan**. In one convenient location, members can use **Find a Medical Plan** to set up scenarios showing side-by-side, benefit-to-benefit comparisons of multiple CalPERS health plans. Then, they'll be able to save up to 10 of the scenarios for future reference.

More Health Plan Choices. CalPERS is adding Western Health Advantage (WHA) to its list of Basic (non-Medicare) HMO plans in 2018. WHA will serve members in Placer, El Dorado, Sacramento, Yolo, Colusa, Solano, Napa, Sonoma, and Marin counties.

Kaiser Permanente will expand its CalPERS coverage to 13 counties in Washington state. Health Net SmartCare will expand to the Placer County cities of Lincoln, Loomis, Roseville, Rocklin, and Granite Bay. And Anthem Blue Cross Select HMO is adding Monterey County to

replace the Anthem Exclusive Provider Organization plan (subject to regulatory approval).

Notable Health Plan Changes. Medicare subscribers will have a new health plan option available to them through Anthem Blue Cross beginning January 2018. Anthem will offer a Medicare Advantage plan, coupled with its Basic HMO Traditional plan. This change will provide an additional Medicare plan option for families that need both Medicare and non-Medicare coverage. Retired contracting agency members will also have an option to purchase dental and vision benefits from Anthem.

The availability of the well-regarded SilverSneakers community fitness program is another benefit subscribers to Medicare PPO plans can look forward to next year.

CalPERS PPO plans are adding 12 procedures to the Value Based Purchasing Design program. According to CalPERS, this program encourages the use of high-quality, lower cost ambulatory surgery centers for certain outpatient procedures, providing members with another less expensive option for covering the costs of common surgeries. The added surgeries include gastrointestinal procedures, sigmoidoscopies, hysterectomies, tonsillectomies, and kidney stone fragmentations.

All health plan changes take effect January 1, 2018. CalPERS encourages you to log in to your **my|CalPERS** account at my.calpers.ca.gov to find a complete listing of 2018 health plans, premium rates, and benefit changes. You may also find these resources in the Health Benefits sections of the CalPERS website at www.calpers.ca.gov.



How are YOUR Dues Spent?

CAPS represents state Bargaining Unit 10, one of 21 state bargaining units. Nearly everything CAPS does is devoted to furthering the employment interests of ALL state scientists. A small portion of CAPS' activities is devoted to CAPS members only. These are activities which cannot be charged to fee payers. CAPS membership dues are currently \$59 per month. The non-member fee is slightly less, \$52.47 monthly. Dues and fees charged by CAPS are among the lowest charged by any state employee organization. As a percentage of salary, the dues charged by CAPS are likely THE lowest charged by any state employee union. CAPS commissions an independent outside audit of its finances every year to establish the fair share fee amount for the next year. The audit for 2016 is on the CAPS webpage under the "Members Only" section.

The chart below accurately reflects the findings of the independent audit with respect to how CAPS dues and fees are spent. All organizational decisions for CAPS are made by its volunteer Board of Directors and committees. The President of CAPS, (currently Patty Velez), oversees CAPS' operations and ensures that the Board's decisions are carried out effectively. Staffing and representation duties are primarily performed by Blanning & Baker Associates, Inc. (B&B), a labor relations consulting firm. B&B employs the professional negotiators, consultants and advocates that assist CAPS' leaders and members in achieving their objectives and resolving individual employment disputes. For legislative advocacy in the Capitol, CAPS works with the lobbying firm, Aaron Read & Associates, Inc. CAPS additionally engages law firms, accounting firms, and others as needed. During 2016, CAPS spent \$1,555,320 on representation activities, broken down as follows:

CAPS Meetings and Governance: \$135,518 (8%) Meetings of the Board of Directors, CAPS members and general union affairs and governance.

Contract Administration: \$390,162 (25%) Resolution of contract disputes, grievances and legal actions concerning wages, hours and working conditions, including researching and answering questions from members about rights arising from their employment.

Contract Negotiations: \$75,821 (5%) Events and meetings related to collective bargaining. These expenses were relatively light in 2016 because it was not a bargaining year.

Disciplinary Representation: \$59,823 (4%) This item supported state scientists on whose behalf CAPS challenged disciplinary action.

Science Friday: San Diego



CAPS Board and staff members meet with CAPS members at the CDFW Office in San Diego for a lunchtime discussion. From left: Director Stephanie Lewis, President Patty Velez, members Nancy Frost (Sr. ES Specialist), Meredith Osborne (ES), Eric Hollenbeck (Sr. ES Specialist), Kris Wiese (ES), Director Jim McCall, and Director Brittany Sheahan.

Legislative Activity: \$150,576 (10%) Legislative analysis and lobbying that directly concerned the employment rights of state scientists.

Departmental Issues: \$759 (>1%) Activities unique to individual departments.

Statewide Issues: \$93,191 (6%) Activities affecting members statewide.

Member Only Benefits: \$57,934 (4%) Benefits available only to CAPS members, such as the \$5,000 death benefit provided to every CAPS member.

Contributions: \$24,752 (2%) This expense supported member-only CAPS grants and any other charitable or educational purposes.

Political Expenses: \$31,407 (2%) Political activities related to state elections.

Administrative Costs: \$108,161 (7%) Overhead and costs related to operating the organization, including costs of this audit.

Postage and Mailing: \$9,8569 (>1%) Postage-related expenses.

Publications and Communications: \$224,569 (14%) This expense paid for the cost of printing CAPSule, contracts, special mailings, correspondence, copying, website management and any media time purchased by CAPS.

Legal and Litigation Expenses: \$34,262 (2%) Representing CAPS as an institution before agencies or in the courts or in the enforcement of rights arising out of an employment relationship for which CAPS is the exclusive representative.

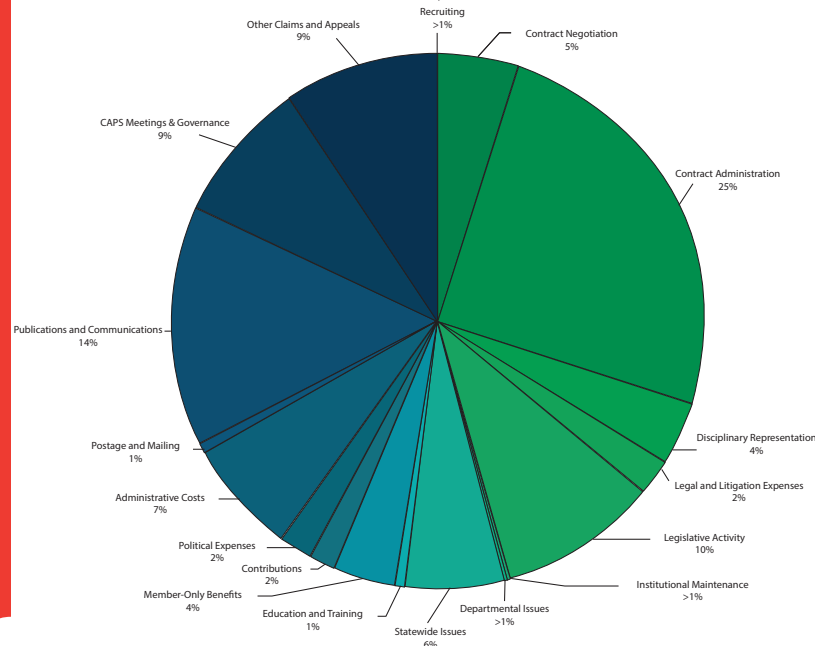
Institutional Maintenance: \$3,495 (>1%) This expense relates to CAPS' efforts to retain representation rights, including defending against the contracting-out of unit-employee work.

Education and Training \$9,292 (>1%) This expense relates to internal organizational workshops and other training programs in subjects regarding public-sector collective bargaining.

Other Claims and Appeals \$145,415 (9%) This expense relates to individual and/or group claims and appeals on behalf of employees not covered under other headings, including statutory appeals to CalHR (i.e., Petition to Reinstatement Following AWOL Separation); appeals to the SPB (i.e., merit issues complaints, examination appeals, etc.); appeals from denials of merit salary adjustments; and health and safety complaints.

Recruiting \$327 (>1%) This expense relates to efforts to recruit new members.

The chart below shows "where the money went" in visual format:



The Squeaky Wheel Gets the GREASE

By Patty Velez, President

It's not just a well-worn cliché. It summarizes just about any effort to accomplish important things under challenging circumstances. The number and complexity of problems facing every single one of us is daunting – personal issues, family issues, environmental, social, religious. Layer on top of that the many different viewpoints and perspectives in a group as large and diverse as ours. One only has to look at the political divide in this country to see that we have such a long way to go on issues of race, income inequality, health care and so much more.

That's why CAPS generally stays in a very narrow lane when it comes to accomplishing its mission. That mission is to represent the employment and professional interests of California State Scientists with professionalism (helping individual scientists fulfill their needs as professionals), independence (pursuing professional courses of action without regard to political influences), and responsible advocacy.

I heard from a member recently that until Salary Equity is achieved, the Governor and his people will get nothing but **SILENCE** from him. I disagree. We must not be silent when it comes achieving a livable wage. I again call on **EVERY** State Scientist to make their own version of positive noise in support of CAPS in our mission to achieve Salary Equity for ALL State Scientists.

This is the single most difficult and unifying challenge we've ever faced. Too many of our members live and work in areas that aren't supported by our current salary levels. Especially in many high cost and coastal areas. Admittedly, there are other state employees working in and around just about every State Scientist who fare even worse. I don't know how they make ends meet. I do know

that even with a 15% increase to our salaries over three years, it's not enough.

That's why CAPS remains a very squeaky wheel. Our media campaign employs limited resources to underscore the identity of State Scientists and the importance of our work. Our social media presence has been greatly expanded. We were leaders in the March for Science in seven major cities throughout California. Our lime green t-shirts are now a staple every Science Friday. And there is more to come that's creative and aggressive in getting our message before the decision makers and the public generally.

We know we're on the right track. That's because three years ago Governor Brown extended full salary equity

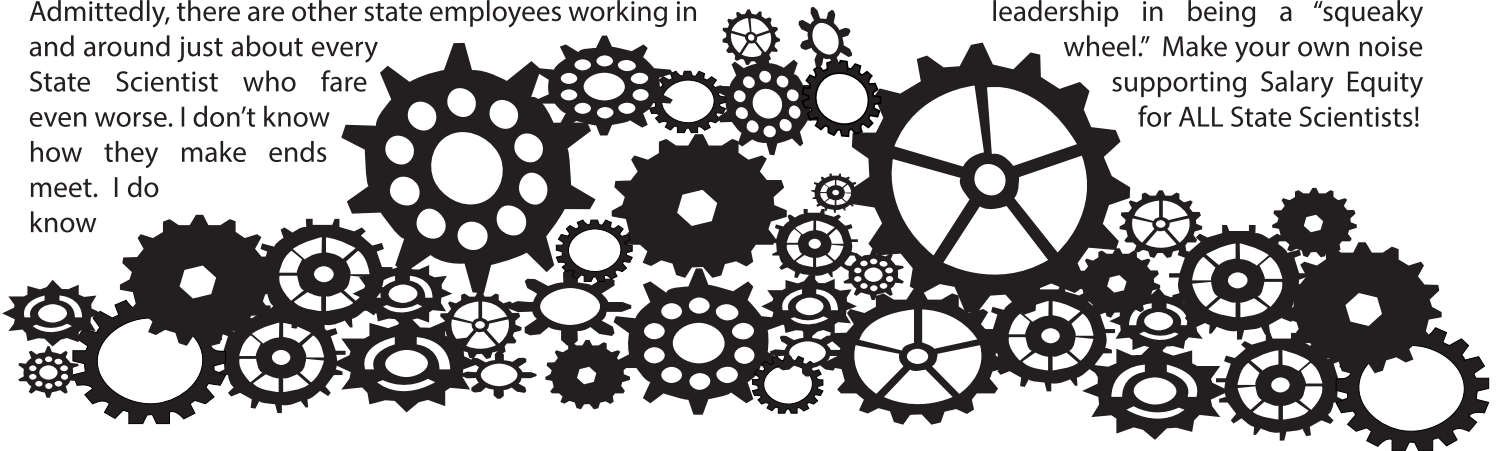
"Too many of our members live and work in areas that aren't supported by our current salary levels."

to the scientific supervisory classifications that were part of the CAPS' Like Pay for Like Work case. His Administration has taken great care to keep salary equity in place between those supervisors in their engineering counterparts.

But what he hasn't done is to make Salary Equity a reality for the rest of us. We know what we need—to the penny—that's our principal focus during the next round of 2018 contract bargaining.

Every one of us has a responsibility to do our part in support of this effort. If you aren't yet a member of CAPS, join immediately — you can do that via the CAPS webpage. Request and wear your CAPS T-shirt to work every Science Friday. Support and promote your colleagues and the work that you do in every way possible. In summary: join me and your CAPS

leadership in being a "squeaky wheel." Make your own noise supporting Salary Equity for ALL State Scientists!



Go Green, and help reduce CAPS' expenses by opting out of your paper copy of CAPSule! Just go to <http://capsscientists.org/capsule/go-green/> and enter your info.



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David Miller for CalPERS

When it comes to protecting the pension and health care plans on which State Scientists—and hundreds of thousands of California public employees rely—there are few elected positions more important than those on the CalPERS Board of Administration. That's why CAPS strongly endorses **David Miller** for the CalPERS Member-at-Large Position. That seat is being vacated by incumbent JJ Jelencic. If you value your defined benefit pension and affordable health care, **David Miller** is *your* choice. The CalPERS election for this position will take place throughout September with ballot information sent to the home of every CalPERS member.

David Miller is a Senior Environmental Substances Scientist at the Department of Toxic Substances Control. He is a long-time CAPS member and has twice served as CAPS' statewide president. When elected, **David Miller** has pledged to put the interests of state scientists and all CalPERS members – employees and retirees – *first*. That's what he's done for 25 years as a CAPS member and leader. **David Miller** was a co-founder of *Californians for Retirement Security*, the broad coalition formed in 2005 to fight back against the nonstop attacks on public employees and our pensions. He was on the front lines opposing ex-Governor Wilson's raids on CalPERS, he strongly backed Prop. 162 (The Pension Protection Act), and has spoken out repeatedly in the media against the countless anti-pension ballot proposals we have faced.

David Miller will:

- Protect and defend our defined benefit pensions from attacks.
- Ensure high quality, affordable health care – including affordable long-term care.
- Restore integrity and transparency at CalPERS.

In recognition of his commitment to CalPERS and its members, Miller has been endorsed by State Treasurer John Chiang and Controller Betty Yee and countless groups that represent CalPERS members.

Please **VOTE** for **David Miller** for CalPERS when ballots go out in September. To learn more, please visit www.davidmillerforcalpers2017.com.