

# CAPSULE

MARCH 2023  
ISSUE: #23-3

[www.capsscientists.org](http://www.capsscientists.org)  
[caps@capsscientists.org](mailto:caps@capsscientists.org)



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# CAPS BARGAINING Q&A

CAPS leaders are committed to keeping you apprised of what is happening regarding our bargaining efforts on your behalf. Here are three questions and answers to bring you up to speed on the latest developments.

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

**No Contract, Going on Year Three.** At the outset of the pandemic, the CAPS Bargaining Team (CAPS Team) made a decision. Instead of rolling over the expiring contract (also known as an MOU or Memorandum of Understanding) to wait out the pandemic and what looked to be a huge economic downturn, they elected to continue working to improve all sections of the successor MOU. Meanwhile, the CAPS Team negotiated a series of side letters for the Personal Leave Program in 2020, the General Salary Increase and return of funds in 2021, and a host of other benefits over the last three years instead of having a new MOU in place.

The expired MOU's Evergreen Clause – which keeps the existing terms of the contract in effect until CAPS members and the Legislature ratify a successor agreement – allows the CAPS Team to forego a rollover contract and take time to review the entire MOU and educate the Administration on Unit 10 issues.

**Tentative Agreement rejected.** On February 1, 2023, CAPS voting members resoundingly rejected the Tentative Agreement (TA) reached between CAPS and the Department of Human Resources (CalHR), which represents the Newsom Administration. The official count was 1094 against ratification (59.30%) and 751 in favor (40.70%). Two-thirds of eligible rank-and-file members, 1845 of 2744, cast ballots.

The vote sent a clear signal that members were

dissatisfied with the TA. CAPS informed CalHR of the results. The CAPS Bargaining Team (CAPS Team) will return to the bargaining table to resume negotiations with CalHR for a successor agreement as soon as possible.

## WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

**New bargaining survey.** The CAPS Team released a new [bargaining survey](#) on March 15. There are two versions – a survey designated for members, and a survey designated for non-members – so that the CAPS Team can hear from as many State Scientists as possible. Please encourage your non-member colleagues to, at a minimum, take the survey, and then join YOU and thousands of other State Scientists in [opting-in to CAPS membership](#). The CAPS Team will begin reviewing survey data at the end of March to prepare for meetings with the State at the bargaining table. Please be sure to get your survey in!

**More worksite meetings.** During this critical time, the CAPS Team also wants to increase opportunities for dialogue with you and your colleagues about bargaining. These will be smaller, focused worksite meetings than in the past to encourage conversation. Again, your input is critical. Most meetings will be held virtually. Stay tuned for more details.

**Reviewing all terms and conditions.** The CAPS Team's return to the table provides an opportunity to review all aspects of the terms and conditions beyond compensation that were part of the TA to ensure they remain appropriate. The review will also consider the results of the new Bargaining Survey and ideas from members submitted through the 2023 Bargaining Proposal template, which can be found at <https://capsscientists.org/caps-bargaining-updates/tentative-agreements>.

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## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

**April meeting with CalHR.** The CAPS Team will review the Bargaining Survey results toward the end of March and will likely meet with CalHR in early April. The CAPS Team has informed CalHR of this timeline.

The “**May Revise.**” In mid-May, Governor Newsom will update the State Budget proposal he issued on January 10, forecasting a \$25 billion deficit. The so-called “May Revise” will provide a more telling, and official, picture of the State’s finances as the CAPS Team continues bargaining with the intent to bring a fair and equitable TA to the membership before the Legislature departs for recess in September.

**Legislative Work.** The CAPS Team is coordinating with the Governmental Affairs Committee (GAC) to ensure legislative and political avenues to support negotiations are in play. The GAC is responsible for recommending to the CAPS Board of Directors positions on, and sponsorship of, legislation of interest to State Scientists.

**Forward into 2023.** The CAPS Team is committed to being as transparent as possible. Look for reports from the table as the bargaining continues.

The CAPS Team will continue working with the Member Action Committee (MAC) and the Contract Action Team (CAT) on union actions to ensure your voices are heard! Meanwhile, the Public Relations Committee will work on promoting our goals publicly. The Membership and Communications Committee will also strengthen our collective power by recruiting new members to join our cause.

The power of any union is in its members. CAPS is no different. The CAPS Team needs sustained, meaningful participation from you and your colleagues to help us achieve big wins at the bargaining table. Please watch for future updates, ask questions, and get ready to show the State the strength of our membership. Commit to participating in union actions and recruiting new CAPS members, and consider applying to be a CAT member or Local Representative!

## CAPS ANNOUNCES NEW GROUP INSURANCE OFFERINGS, OPEN ENROLLMENT

As a CAPS member, you are automatically enrolled in our complimentary Basic Life Insurance plan, which can benefit your family during a difficult time. In addition, you have access to the CAPS Group Policy with The Standard, which allows you to purchase Supplemental Life Insurance and Long Term Disability.

Starting in April, CAPS members will have access to three new insurance products via our Group Policy:

- **Accident Insurance** - helps with costs that medical insurance doesn’t cover if you’re hurt in an accident
- **Critical Illness** - helps with the expenses from a serious illness that your medical insurance doesn’t cover
- **Hospital Indemnity** - helps to cover out-of-pocket expenses that your medical insurance may not cover, especially when you have a hospital stay – planned or unplanned

CAPS will host an open enrollment period from April 17 to May 31 for CAPS members to take advantage of the new insurance offerings and enroll in existing Supplemental Life Insurance and Long Term Disability plans.

Be sure to check your email for more information about the new plans and details on enrollment. If you have any questions, please email [caps@capsscienists.org](mailto:caps@capsscienists.org).

## MENTORING? THERE’S A LEAVE CREDIT FOR THAT.

If you have given your time to assist any of the 15 regional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fairs CAPS supports statewide – or any other kind of volunteer work in a program approved under the CAPS MOU – be sure to apply for Mentoring Leave.

Under the terms of CAPS [MOU Section 3.16](#), you can use paid leave (or CTO during work hours) to volunteer your time and then receive an equal number of hours as Mentoring Leave. For example, after volunteering 8 hours on a Saturday, you could then request 8 hours to mentor during the workweek. Mentoring leave is subject to supervisory approval, and certain conditions apply, so carefully read the MOU to understand the rules. Questions? Contact CAPS ([caps@capsscienists.org](mailto:caps@capsscienists.org)) or call 916-441-2629.

# WHAT CAPS NEEDS FROM YOU!

As the CAPS Bargaining Team (CAPS Team) resumes bargaining for our next Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), they will need your help.

Why? Because our power at the table is tied to how seriously the Newsom Administration believes Unit 10 employees support the CAPS Team's bargaining agenda.

The Administration will be less attentive to our pay equity demands and all the other issues that concern us if they believe State Scientists are detached and disinterested. Instead, if we demonstrate solidarity, cohesion, energy, and determination, the State will know the six members of the CAPS Team are speaking for thousands of engaged State Scientists who won't be ignored.

So, then the question becomes, how can you contribute to our collective power over the coming months?

## Educate yourself.

Read CAPS bargaining emails, this publication, and other union communications to educate yourself about the bargaining process and to stay abreast of what is happening at the bargaining table.

## Engage via social media.

Follow [@capsscscientists](#) on Twitter and [capsscscientists](#) on Instagram. Please share our posts, which use hashtags such as [#AvoidCollapse](#), [#PayEquityNow](#), and [#ValueStateScientists](#). The State watches these public forums to gauge employee interest and stakeholder support.

## Talk to a colleague about joining us.

The power of the union message is that we are stronger at the bargaining table when we speak with one voice. As of mid-March, about two-thirds of Unit 10 State Scientists (2,734 of 4,097 rank-and-file employees, to be precise) are CAPS members. While that is a higher percentage than many other state bargaining units, it could be better.

Imagine the leverage our CAPS Team would have if just 1 in 4 members recruited a non-member in the next three months. Our membership percentage would jump to 80%. The CAPS Team could point to that meteoric growth as concrete evidence that State Scientists strongly back our bargaining agenda: Securing salaries that are on par with those paid to local, State, and federal counterparts. Restoring the historical relationships between rank-and-file employees and supervisors and managers. Providing meaningful family leave benefits. Geopay, maximum telework flexibility, and more.

So please, talk to one or two colleagues about joining CAPS because our collective strength relies on individual commitment.

## Participate in member actions.

The State will also measure our commitment by how many State Scientists participate in collective actions online and on the streets. So join in the Flat Gavin campaign using the materials provided at [capsscscientists.org/flat-gavin](#). Sign petitions when CAPS issues them. And when CAPS organizes other member actions, such as marches, rallies, and other public displays of solidarity, please unite with your colleagues.



# CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SCIENTISTS

455 Capitol Mall, Suite 500  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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CAPSule (ISSN 10446230) is published monthly by the California Association of Professional Scientists, 455 Capitol Mall, Suite 500, Sacramento, CA 95814. Periodicals Postage Paid at Sacramento, CA.  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: 455 Capitol Mall, Suite 500, Sacramento, CA 95814-2483.

## CAPS ACCEPTING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS, AWARDS INCREASED FOR 2023

One benefit of CAPS membership is the Dependent Scholarship Program, which awards college scholarships to the children and other legal dependents of CAPS members each year. Qualified applicants must be enrolled in an accredited university or community college (but not a vocational school) and complete a CAPS Scholarship Application.

**Be advised:** The competition for scholarships is steep. The Member Benefits Committee, which selects the winning submissions, urges applicants to fill out the online form carefully and submit all the requested supporting materials. Failure to complete the application (including photo attachments, proof of enrollment documentation, the 25-word statement, or full student and sponsor contact information) is the leading reason applicants are dropped from consideration each year. So PLEASE fill in ALL the information to maximize your chance to win!

The Dependent Scholarship rules and a link to the application are available at <https://capsscientists.org/members/caps-dependent-scholarships>. The deadline for submission is **June 1, 2023**.



## CAPS ENHANCES 2023 DEPENDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The CAPS Member Benefits Committee is pleased to announce that Dependent Scholarship awards this year will be \$750 each, up from the \$500 winners have received since 2017. In addition, the Committee is making five more scholarships available, bringing the total to 20 for 2023.

### SACRAMENTO

455 Capitol Mall, Suite 500  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 441-2629

### LOS ANGELES

215 N. Marengo Avenue, Suite 185  
Pasadena, CA 91101  
(818) 246-0629

### SAN FRANCISCO

100 Pine Street, Suite 750  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
(415) 861-6343

### CAPS INSURANCE

(415) 958-1344