



NEWS

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HARTFORD OFFICE CLEANERS WIN NEW CONTRACT

New four-year contract provides wage hikes up to 20% for nearly 2,000 area cleaners

Hartford, CT - Two weeks before their contract was to expire, the Local 32BJ Bargaining Committee announced agreement on a tentative four-year contract at a rally today in downtown Hartford. Mayor Eddie Perez, House Majority Leader Chris Donovan and elected officials congratulated the workers at the rally. The contract covers workers who clean more than 90 percent of large commercial office space in downtown Hartford and office parks and buildings in other parts of Hartford County.

"This new contract will provide Hartford's office cleaners the opportunity to live the American Dream," said Kurt Westby, Local 32BJ Connecticut Director. "More office cleaners will be able to take their kids to the doctor and have retirement security."

The contract provides 17% wage hikes over four-years in the city and nearly 20 % in the suburbs.

"Hartford's businesses and Connecticut's government rely on Local 32BJ members to keep their offices running smoothly," said Mayor Perez. "The health and well-being of our city depends on these jobs paying wages that keep families out of poverty and provide health care for working families."

Fully employer-paid family health care coverage will be maintained for all full-time workers, and part-time workers have an improved health benefit, which will include life insurance, a prescription drug benefit and dental and optical insurance.

Under the new contract, suburban office cleaners won a pension benefit for the first time and gained two personal days. Employers agreed to an improved training program, which includes industry-skills classes as well as English as a Second language courses, and also to a legal services benefit program.

Cleaners also won significant gains in expanding the number of full-time jobs and increasing the minimum number of hours for part-time workers over the course of the contract. By the end of the contract, all cleaners working at buildings over 400,000 square feet will have full-time jobs, which will also provide fully employer-paid family health coverage. Part-time work will be increased to a minimum of 25 hours a week, from a current minimum of 20 hours.

Hartford-area cleaners have been negotiating their contract alongside 1,800 Local 32BJ members in Fairfield County and nearly 45,000 union members from four other states and Washington, DC. The Hartford contract is the second contract victory in the union's region-wide contract campaign.

"This is a big victory for building service workers in Hartford and throughout the East Coast," said Mike Fishman, Local 32BJ President. "On the heels of our victories in Hartford and Philadelphia, we are determined to win better pay and benefits for workers in the region, including Fairfield County."

With some 100,000 members in six states and Washington, DC, including more than 4,500 in Connecticut, Local 32BJ is the largest property services union in the country.