



# TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NEW CONTRACT AGREEMENT INKED BETWEEN EAST HAMPTON TOWN AND ITS CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**

**East Hampton Town’s union workers and the East Hampton Town Board have ratified a new union contract that provides for significant increases in employee wages and longevity payments**

*Contract also reduces new employee waiting periods for health insurance eligibility, adds Juneteenth as a holiday for workers, and provides workers, for the first time, with a paid lunch period*

The new contract agreement between East Hampton Town and its CSEA, reached prior to the Dec. 31, 2023 expiration of the current contract, will cover the years 2024 through 2027.

CSEA members will see a \$2,000 across-the-board increase to their base wages in 2024, on top of a \$3,000 base wage hike implemented this year, under the new contract that was negotiated by East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc along with a team including town Budget Director Rebecca Hansen, and the town’s labor counsel, Vince Toomey. In addition, the union members’ new base wages will increase by 4 percent annually in the first three years of the contract, and by 5 percent in the contract’s final year, 2027.

The Civil Service Employees Association approved the contract on Nov. 9 with a vote of 114-15. The Town Board passed a resolution formalizing its approval at its work session today.

“The new contract represents a very fair and reasonable agreement between the town and its union employees,” said East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc. “It was negotiated in good faith, by both sides, with the understanding that East Hampton needs to remain competitive in the local labor market in order to attract and retain staff. The contract acknowledges the work of our competent and highly professional employees and balances the town’s needs and challenges with our fiscal responsibility to our taxpayers.”

In addition to the wage increases, the new contract calls for an increase in the “longevity” payments made to employees who have served the town for five or more years. The payment at

five years of service will increase to \$2,500, from \$1,700, with payments increasing by \$500 every five years up to 30 years of employment.

Juneteenth will be officially added as a holiday, and the Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve holidays, both half days, will become full days off. In exchange, Good Friday will no longer be a holiday. The list of family members for whom employees are entitled to bereavement leave will be expanded to include step-parents and step-siblings. Beginning in 2024, workers will have a 30-minute paid lunch period, although there will be no compensation for missed lunch periods.

New contractual items regarding health insurance include reducing from 62 days to 30 days the waiting period for health insurance eligibility for new employees; offering an alternative health insurance plan, besides the one the Town currently offers through the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP), to provide employees with a less expensive option, and instituting a program that would allow employees to utilize accumulated sick leave to reduce the cost of their share, if any, of health insurance premiums after retiring.

Under the new contract, the Town will have the right to implement an annual employee evaluation program, which could be used when considering employees for promotions or for merit pay. Eligibility for merit pay, which can be issued by the Town Board upon a department head's recommendation, will be contingent upon a positive evaluation, as will continuance of previously granted merit pay.