



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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MAYOR NEWSOM JOINS SUPERVISOR AMMIANO AND SEIU TO ANNOUNCE LONG-NEEDED WAGE INCREASE FOR ESSENTIAL IN HOME SUPPORT SERVICES WORKERS

Agreement provides just compensation to IHSS workers

San Francisco, CA - The Mayor's Office and the IHSS Public Authority negotiated with SEIU United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU UHW) to secure a raise for low-wage homecare providers, to take effect this Spring. The In-Home Supportive Service (IHSS) program is designed to help low-income elderly, blind, and disabled individuals live safely in their own homes and avoid institutional settings. IHSS homecare workers provide a wide range of services for those most in need, including household chores, shopping, cooking, and non-medical personal care such as bathing, grooming and feeding. Clients must be low-income and possess limited financial resources to be eligible for free IHSS services; others may be eligible with a share of cost.

Mayor Newsom hailed the agreement, saying "IHSS workers provide vital services for our most vulnerable populations. It's only right that we fairly compensate these compassionate care-givers for the work they do. I applaud Supervisor Ammiano and SEIU UHW for working tirelessly, together with my office, to achieve this agreement."

Supervisor Ammiano said "Two years ago, I worked with the Mayor and the Board to allocate the funding to bring the Living Wage to \$10.50. Now, I am delighted to see this further movement in the right direction to give IHSS workers the assurance they need to be able to survive on what they earn and feed their families without the fear they will have to rely on emergency health care or public assistance to make ends meet. Therefore, I expect we will continue to work together to raise the Living Wage for the other workers not covered in this negotiation in an effort to keep the Living Wage law strong."

Among other functions, the IHSS Public Authority serves as the employer of record for most IHSS workers, maintains a registry of IHSS workers for consumers to choose from, and provides training and support for homecare workers. The Public Authority was created by local ordinance but is separate from the City and County of San Francisco. The IHSS program is funded by the San Francisco Human Services Agency.

IHSS workers, who are organized under SEIU UHW, currently earn an hourly wage of \$10.65. Under the new agreement, the hourly wage will increase to \$10.95 on March 1st, and will increase again on October 1st. The additional increase in October will be to either \$11.20 or \$11.50 per hour, depending upon whether or not the State provides additional funding to support IHSS wages and benefits for the fiscal year that begins July 1st. The Governor's proposed budget for FY 07-08 would freeze state funding for IHSS wages and benefits, but that proposal requires action by the State Legislature to implement. The IHSS program is funded by a combination of federal, state and county dollars.

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