

## Myths & Facts About Collective Bargaining

**MYTH:** It's only for private sector employees.

**FACT:** Many public employees in all 50 states are represented by collective bargaining.

**MYTH:** It's only for unions.

**FACT:** Many professional associations of public employees participate in collective bargaining.

**MYTH:** It means going on strike.

**FACT:** Most states that have collective bargaining for public employees still prohibit strikes by police, firefighters, corrections officers, and other critical safety personnel. A few states with collective bargaining prohibit strikes by all public employees.

**MYTH:** Because North Carolina is a right-to-work state, it's illegal for public employees.

**FACT:** Right-to-work and collective bargaining are two separate matters. "Right-to-work" means people cannot be denied employment on account of their membership or non-membership in any labor union or association.

**MYTH:** It's illegal for North Carolina public employees to join unions.

**FACT:** The right to join a union or any other form of employee organization is guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Article I of our state constitution.

**MYTH:** Allowing public employees to bargain collectively will increase taxes.

**FACT:** A 1999 study indicates that personnel costs for state government are no more likely to be higher in states with collective bargaining than in states without.

## Collective Bargaining for North Carolina's Public Employees

*Support the campaign to improve  
North Carolina's labor laws*



### GET INVOLVED!

If you are interested in becoming more involved...  
If you would like someone to speak to your group...  
If you would like more information...

### CONTACT:

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## What is Collective Bargaining?

*Collective bargaining is the process of negotiation between representatives of workers and management to determine the conditions of employment. The agreement may cover compensation, hiring practices, layoffs, promotions, working conditions and hours, worker discipline, and benefits.*

## SEE STRENGTH

### How Collective Bargaining Works

Each state has a slightly different process. Some common features include:

- Collective Bargaining Units (CBUs) are created using departments, job classifications, or one large unit for all.
- Each CBU elects a bargaining agent (such as SEANC).
- CBU members set bargaining goals.
- Contract negotiations occur between the CBU bargaining team (usually members and staff) and a management team.
- If no agreement is reached, at first, mediation and arbitration follow, until a contract is made.
- Pay raises and other terms requiring appropriations are sent to the legislature for approval. Both employees and management lobby for approval.

#### Collective Bargaining

contracts give peace of mind because:

- 1) Management promises can't be changed unilaterally during the contract period.
- 2) Multi-year agreements reduce the amount of time spent in negotiations.

## SEE ACTION

### What You Can Do

General Statute 95-98 (passed in 1959) should be replaced with a law giving public employees the same rights as other employees—the right to a contract!

- Contact your legislators and tell them to support HB 1583, which will repeal G.S. 95-98, the statute that prohibits collective bargaining.
- Join the SEANC Member Action Team (MAT) and learn how to become a more effective grassroots lobbyist.
- Share this brochure with co-workers and other public employees.
- Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper in support of collective bargaining, including its advantages to the public.
- Ask your county commissioners, city and town councils, and school boards to support a resolution in favor of collective bargaining for their employees.

## SEE RESULTS

### Collective Bargaining Benefits Employees

- Higher wages and better benefits
- Better working conditions
- Realized Policy Platform Objectives
- Pay raises locked in for term of the contract (two or more years)
- Improved communication between managers and employees
- Enhanced individual and organizational efficiency and employee morale
- Supervisors can be included in CBUs
- Retirees' interests represented

### Collective Bargaining Benefits Citizens

- Improved public services
- Better return on tax dollars by offering competitive salaries and benefits so government can attract and retain employees with high levels of expertise and professionalism

## Why Collective Bargaining is Needed--A Broken System

- State employee raises are usually addressed last by the General Assembly, often resulting in low raises even in good economic times.
- Many SEANC Policy Platform Objectives are never realized due to cumbersome legislative and administrative processes.
- SEANC has to fight the battle for better state employee pay and benefits every year.
- North Carolina is one of only two states that completely prohibits collective bargaining.
- The International Labor Organization ruled that North Carolina's law prohibiting public employee collective bargaining, G.S. 95-98, violates international human rights laws.