Since March, we’ve been pushing DHS to make sure that you are as safe as possible during this pandemic. After securing a staggered shift agreement for facilities with more than 50 workers, we collectively continued to work to increase protections for all of our members. Our collective efforts led to DHS taking additional actions in recent weeks, including exploring telework at a greater capacity, mandating social distancing in offices, establishing processes to certify that offices are being cleaned, and providing protective equipment to all offices.

We’re happy to announce that today we reached an agreement with the Commonwealth and DHS that will significantly increase teleworking in all offices; put expected cleaning procedures into writing; increase office security, preserve seniority, and achieve additional gains.

DHS will now be scaling telework up significantly over the coming weeks. The original DHS proposal on telework involved a week-by-week phase-in to allow DHS to distribute its computing supplies for your use at home. While that phase-in remains for those without the necessary computing equipment at home, we were able to secure workers in all offices the right to telework as soon as next week if you have a computer that meets their requirements. This was the quickest and most expansive way to allow a large portion of our members to work from home and not have to wait for DHS to provide telework equipment.

Many of you have been working staggered shifts, involving two days at work and two days off. As you’re aware, due to the end of the Governor’s Order on Paid Office Closings, today is the last day of that agreement. On Monday, April 13th, management will be implementing a staggered schedule for most CAOs and CSCs that requires employees to work five days a week. Employees still working within such offices will work one of two shifts. The first shift will begin at 6:00am and end at 1:30pm. The second will begin at 1:45pm and last until 9:15pm. Those on the second shift will be paid a shift differential (additional compensation) as outlined in Article 23 of our 2019-2023 Collective Bargaining Agreement.

While DHS wanted to eliminate seniority bidding for this purpose, we were able to preserve it. However, some members may have to temporarily work the assigned schedule prior to bidding being finalized the week of April 13.

The agreement further states that offices are to be cleaned, security will be increased during irregular hours, and the shift differential found in our current four-year agreement is to be preserved. Management wanted unpaid lunches and paid breaks to be removed to shorten the length of time the offices are open. We were able to reduce the time you spend in the office by removing unpaid lunches. However, members will get a 30 minute paid lunch to replace their afternoon 15-minute paid break.

We will continue to push DHS to make this situation the best we can for you. To that end, we need to know whether this agreement is being implemented uniformly. As this is rolled out, if managers are not acting in accordance with this agreement, please let us know as soon as possible. Contact your Steward, and Stewards, contact your Business Agent, so we can work to rectify your Shop’s issues as quickly as we can.

We’ve included a Frequently Asked Questions post on our website, found here. We’ll also be holding a Tele-Townhall Monday, where we will try to answer as many of your questions as possible. Registration information is below, but we encourage members to register for this event soon as space is limited.
COVID-19 Tele-Townhall, Monday 4/13 @ 6PM
(Registration closes @ 5PM or when all spaces are filled):

Register in advance for this meeting:
https://zoom.us/meeting/register/u5Asf-mrrTlrleHuRzNEnQmwu5kdKHIC4Q

Please submit your question for our officers and staff before Noon on Sunday here:
https://forms.gle/bADBMDfE4pehpevh7

Helpful Links:
2019-2023 SEIU Local 668 Contract

SEIU Local 668 Side Agreement with DHS (Beginning April 13, 2020)

SEIU 668 CAO -- Questions
http://www.seiu668.org/cao-questions/

SEIU 668 COVID-19 Website
http://www.seiu668.org/covid19/