


OUTREACH

January/February 2024

ISSUE 01, VOLUME 41

California Association of Psychiatric Technicians

A photograph of a homeless encampment in a wooded area. In the foreground, there are several tents, including a large tan and blue tent on the right. A fire is burning in a metal ring on the left. In the background, several people are standing and talking. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

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Compensation for BU 18 Psych Techs, pg. 18

Welcome.

California Association of Psychiatric Technicians

The California Association of Psychiatric Technicians is a non-profit corporation serving as the exclusive representative of all employees in Psychiatric Technician Bargaining Unit 18 in California State Civil Service. CAPT is also the professional association for approximately 11,000 state-licensed Psych Techs who work in California programs serving people with mental illnesses and developmental disabilities. CAPT is represented by Lyles, Wiesmann, Pizzotti and Associates, Inc. The *Outreach* is CAPT's official publication and is printed at least six times each year. A digital archive of the *Outreach* is maintained at www.psychtechs.net.




Integrated Community Chapter President Randy Tyer (left), Former CAPT Activist and PT BVNPT Member Lessie Moore, and Community Facilities Chapter President Donald Cofer pictured at the CAPTE Conference at Mt. San Antonio College, story on page 6.

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 You may contact your state and chapter officers directly. Their contact information is listed on page 4. Be sure to leave your name, work location, and phone number, as well as a short explanation of your issue.



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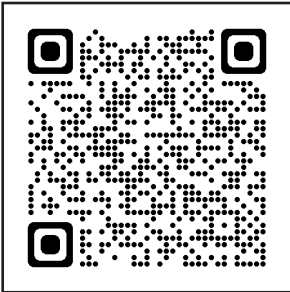
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Important Reminders

CAPT's 2024 Board Meetings

CAPT's policies require publication of the dates and locations of the quarterly meetings of the statewide Board of Directors. The meeting dates and locations for the 2024 statewide quarterly meetings are provided below:

March 12-13 (virtual meeting)
May 14-15 (Sacramento, CA)
August 6-7 (virtual meeting)
December 17-18 (Sacramento, CA)

CAPT board meetings are open to all CAPT members. For more information or to RSVP, please contact State President Eric Soto at (909) 364-2486 or at eric.soto@psychtechs.net.

Planning to retire soon?

Don't forget that CAPT offers its retired members insurance benefits similar to what it provides its active members. As a retired member, CAPT will continue to provide – \$5,000 in Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage and \$5,000 in Life Insurance – without any age term.

Important: For your insurance to continue after your retirement – for only \$5 per month – you must contact CAPT Headquarters at (800) 677-2278 within 31 days of the last day in the month in which you retired. If you fail to do so, your policy will lapse and cannot be reinstated.

psychtechs.net

Check out our catastrophic leave list on our [website](http://psychtechs.net). Keep abreast of what's happening! CAPT updates its website frequently, making sure you have current information on state, department, and CAPT news, at your facility and statewide.



The President's View

CAPT's MOU Benefits Members Statewide: Mental Health Stipend and Salary Increases on the Horizon; Plus, A Call to Action for Political Participation

CAPT Brothers and Sisters,

CAPT's collective bargaining agreement continues to pay off for our brothers and sisters throughout the state. In January, Bargaining Unit 18 employees who qualified began receiving another \$600 installment of the Mental Health and Wellness Stipend. In July, eligible people will receive the final installment of the \$ 2,400 Mental Health and Wellness Stipend. In addition to the MHWS, everyone at the top of their respective range for 12 months will receive a 4% increase. Those not yet at the top step of their range will receive it when they meet that mark.

In the coming year, CAPT will begin preparing for contract negotiations. As the year rolls on, please review your copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and note things you want the Negotiating Team to address. In the meantime, do not hesitate to report any contract violations to your local chapter. Grievances and complaints play a critical role in making our arguments that change/improvements are needed in areas of the contract.

In a matter of days, Californians will be asked to go to the polls for the March primaries. While I am sure many of us would rather ignore politics,

I was told years ago, "You can ignore politics, but politics will not ignore you." As public employees, union members, and working-class men and women, we must pay attention and exercise our voting rights. It is crucial that, as a body, we vote for individuals who care and advocate for the betterment of working men and women. We must work to elect those who have an understanding of the very unique and crucial job that our members have. Vote for those who champion the cause of the labor movement, seek to empower workers, and strive to strengthen the struggle for a more fair and equitable workplace.

Solidarity Forever!

Eric Soto
CAPT State President
(909) 214-4298





Empowering Psychiatric Technicians Through Knowledge Exchange

On October 19 and 20, educators representing California's accredited Psychiatric Technician programs gathered to swap stories, forge connections, and deepen their professional ties. The assembly, hosted by Mt. San Antonio College, marked the annual CAPTE 2023 meeting, an event bringing together members of the California Association of Psychiatric Technician Educators and dedicated Psychiatric Technicians from across the state. The CAPTE 2023 meeting provides an annual platform for knowledge dissemination with featured speakers who delve into industry topics to promote interactive discussions and advance the field.

Notable among the presenters were industry leaders such as PTI and CAPT Integrated Community Chapter President Randy Tyer, PT (shown bottom left, left) and CAPT Community Facilities Chapter President Donald Cofer (top right), PTI Lori Miller, Central STAR, (top left) and SPT Defina Davis, Southern STAR (bottom right, right).

A significant event highlight was the presentation by Randy, Donald, Lori, and Defina—PT professionals employed by DDS. Their session, titled 'Who says Psych Techs don't work in DDS anymore?' emphasized the indispensable role of licensed Psychiatric Technicians in the care and treatment of individuals with developmental disabilities, even in the wake of three state-run developmental center closures (Agnews, Lanterman, and Sonoma).

Underscoring the responsiveness and resilience of Psychiatric Technicians, the group's presentation focused on Psych Techs and their pivotal role in providing primary nursing care and implementing 'individual habilitation' plans. Despite the closures, Psychiatric Technicians continue to be integral to the care framework in several DDS settings, including the Porterville Developmental Center (a secured treatment facility), Canyon Springs Community Facility (a safety-net facility), the Community State Staffing Program, and in regional STAR homes. The STAR program, an acronym for Stabilization Training Assistance Reintegration, is a statewide, regional initiative serving individuals requiring time-limited crisis stabilization services, facilitating their successful transition to a community living setting.

Reflecting on the CAPTE 2023 experience, Donald expressed, "I was honored to attend the CAPTE conference, not only as a speaker but as an engaged attendee learning about the educational programs and career opportunities in California for individuals entering the field of Psychiatric Technology."

Dedicated to fostering collaboration, sharing knowledge, and promoting the growth of the Psychiatric Technician community, CAPTE envisions a future where education and professional development continue to elevate the standards of care for individuals with mental illness and developmental disabilities across the state of California.





CAPT Atascadero CHAPTER NEWS

February 14, 2024

CAPT-ASH Secures Safer Staffing for Psychiatric Technicians

DSH-A will stop forcing units to absorb their first 1:1 observation at CSP, Step 3

The Atascadero Chapter recently achieved a significant health and safety victory, prompting heightened scrutiny of management's staffing practices. Vice President Steven Wright filed a grievance highlighting a critical staffing error on January 5, 2024, which compromised patient and staff safety.

Grievance Details:

On January 5, 2024, the Department of State Hospitals-Atascadero (DSH-A) forced several units to operate understaffed by requiring them to absorb 1 to 1 coverage. This staffing decision severely impeded staff members' ability to fulfill all necessary duties for maintaining a safe environment. CAPT asserted that this staffing shortage violated our contract in [Article 10.1 Health and Safety](#), as it rendered staff overburdened and unable to respond to emergencies, particularly during a "Redlight" alert.

Requested Remedy:

CAPT sought a remedy whereby Atascadero State Hospital would cease the practice of forcing units to absorb their initial 1 to 1 observation.

Response and Resolution:

In its first-level response, DSH-A acknowledged the error of forcing units to absorb 1 to 1 observation yet disputed that the staffing mistake violated

Article 10.1. The department cited a successful response to a Redlight Alert on unit 12 as evidence that patient safety had not been directly compromised.

However, DSH-A partially granted CAPT's grievance, attributing the error to the failure of the Central Staffing Office to adhere to the facility's Contingency Staffing Plan (CSP), specifically Step 3. The CSP, designed to manage staff shortages effectively, had not been properly implemented, leading to compromised safety measures.

Despite its reluctance to admit a violation of Article 10.1, DSH-A ultimately accepted CAPT's remedy. This resolution prompted DSH-A management to implement corrective measures, including staff re-education to prevent similar incidents in the future. While acknowledging the violation of the Contingency Staffing Plan, DSH-A emphasized that the error was unintentional and isolated.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact the Atascadero Chapter at (805) 460-6131.



*Don't let your chance to **DECLARE** pass you by!*

If you're planning to run for a CAPT Chapter office, don't forget - **the March 11** declaration deadline is **FIRM!**

Which offices are up for election at your chapter?

ATASCADERO CHAPTER (3 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer

COALINGA CHAPTER (3 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer

COMMUNITY FACILITIES CHAPTER (3 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer

NORTHERN CORRECTIONS CHAPTER (4 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

SOUTHERN CORRECTIONS CHAPTER (3 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer

INTEGRATED COMMUNITY CHAPTER (3 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer

METROPOLITAN CHAPTER (4 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

NAPA CHAPTER (3 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer

PATTON CHAPTER (4 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

PORTERVILLE CHAPTER (4 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

STOCKTON CHAPTER (4 offices)
President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

Eligibility to Run

To run for office, **you must have been a CAPT member and completed job steward training on or before January 1, 2024.**

Candidate Filing Deadline

March 11, 2024 is the deadline for filing a declaration of candidacy. The declaration must be received by CAPT Headquarters **no later than 5 p.m. on March 11, 2024.**

A declaration must be signed by the candidate for it to be considered valid. *Declarations must also include your address and phone number to be valid (for CAPT use only).* The recommended method for filing the declaration is by "certified mail, return receipt requested" through the U.S. Postal Service. The date of delivery shall be the date of filing. Filing may be done by facsimile transmission (FAX) and via email. If sent by email, declarations must be signed and in the form of an attachment. The candidate is encouraged to phone Headquarters to confirm that the filing was received. No filing delivered by a candidate or a candidate's representative shall be accepted.

Candidate Statements

A candidate may submit a one-page campaign statement to be included in the ballot packets that will be mailed to members. To be included in the packets, campaign statements must be submitted with the declaration of candidacy or afterwards.

REMEMBER ...

Candidate statements may be mailed, faxed or emailed, but **must be received by Headquarters no later than 5 p.m. on March 11.** If mailed, the date of delivery shall be the date of filing. **Late submissions will not be accepted.**

NOTE: Specific requirements for the candidate statements are in the CAPT Operating Policies. Contact your Chapter office or CAPT Headquarters and the requirements will be sent to you.

Eligibility to Vote

In order to be eligible to vote, **you must be a CAPT member by March 15, 2024.**

Mailing of Ballots

Ballots will be sent by first-class mail before April 1 to all eligible CAPT members.

Election Results

Ballots will be counted on May 15 by the Sacramento accounting firm of Mistretta and Associates. Winners will take office that day at 5 p.m. There are procedures for runoff votes and election challenges.

If you have any questions regarding the Chapter election process, please refer to the *Chapter Election Procedure* section in CAPT's Operating Policies. Or, contact Debi Loger at **800-677-2278** or at **loger@psychtechs.net**.



Trends in Union Membership: A Snapshot of 2023 Labor Statistics

The recently [released data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) provides a comprehensive overview of the state of union membership in 2023. With 14.4 million wage and salary workers being members of unions, the union membership rate held steady at 10.0 percent, reflecting minimal change from the previous year. The report data highlights industry, occupation, gender, race, and regional trends.

Union Membership Rates: A Historical Perspective

In 1983, the union membership rate stood at a robust 20.1 percent, with 17.7 million union workers. Fast forward to 2023, and the landscape has evolved, witnessing a decline to a 10.0 percent union membership rate.

Sector Disparities: Public vs. Private

A striking divide persists between public-sector and private-sector union membership rates. The public sector boasts a significantly higher rate of 32.5 percent, surpassing the private sector's 6.0 percent. Notably, local government maintains the highest union membership rate at 38.4 percent, driven by heavily unionized occupations like police officers, firefighters, and teachers.

Industry and Occupation Influence: Key Drivers of Unionization

Certain occupations continue to exhibit high unionization rates. Workers in education, training, and library occupations lead the pack with a 32.7 percent unionization rate, closely followed by protective service occupations at 31.9 percent. Conversely, sales, food preparation, computer, and management occupations experience lower unionization rates, ranging from 2.9 to 4.1 percent.

Gender and Race Dynamics: Varied Patterns

Men persistently maintain a higher union membership rate (10.5 percent) than women (9.5 percent). Additionally, Black workers consistently demonstrate a higher union membership rate (11.8 percent) than their White, Asian, or Hispanic counterparts.

Earnings Disparities: Union vs. Nonunion

The data reveals a wage gap between union and non-union workers. Union members enjoy median weekly earnings of \$1,263, while nonunion workers trail at \$1,090. This difference reflects collective bargaining agreements and nuances in occupation, industry, age, firm size, and geographic region.



Regional Variances: State-Level Insights

Hawaii and New York emerged as the states with the highest union membership rates, boasting 24.1 percent and 20.6 percent, respectively. In contrast, South Carolina and North Carolina record the lowest rates at 2.3 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively. Regional disparities underscore the diverse landscape of unionization across the United States.

Union Favorability

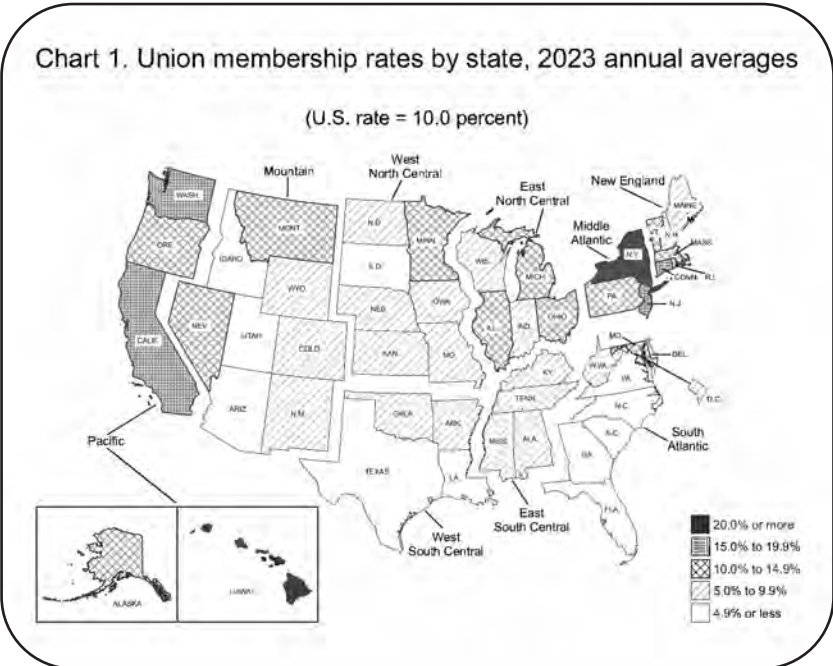
In a noteworthy development, a recent [Gallup poll](#) reveals that labor unions in the U.S. are experiencing sustained approval, with 67% of Americans expressing support. This figure, while slightly down from 71% in the previous year, signifies that approval has surpassed the long-term average of 62% for the fifth consecutive year. A decade ago, union approval hit an all-time low of 48%, indicating a remarkable rebound over the years.

Unprecedented Optimism for Union Strength

A striking revelation from the survey is the unprecedented surge in optimism about the

future strength of unions in the country. Thirty-four percent of Americans believe unions will become stronger, a significant increase from 19% five years ago and the highest in the trend since 1999. This newfound confidence may be attributed to the changing dynamics in the labor landscape and an increased focus on workers' needs.

Chart 1. Union membership rates by state, 2023 annual averages



Source: BLS, Union members 2023

Proposition 1, a state measure appearing on your March 5 Presidential Primary Election Ballot, authorizes a \$6.38 billion bond to address mental health treatment and homelessness in California. The proposition seeks to modify the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) of 2004 by re-allocating a larger share of MHSA tax revenue to the state from county mental health services.

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) provided a comprehensive analysis of Proposition 1, shedding light on its potential implications for various stakeholders, including state-employed psychiatric technicians. While the proposition addresses mental health and substance abuse challenges, it focuses on infrastructure development, such as building treatment facilities and housing units. However, it lacks a comprehensive approach that includes long-term care, early intervention, and prevention programs.

Shift in Financial Responsibility

The LAO's analysis highlights the fiscal impact of Proposition 1, including shifting a portion of MHSA funds, approximately \$140 million annually, from coun-

ties to the state, potentially impacting local mental health services. Counties may face challenges in maintaining current service levels as they allocate more funds towards housing and support services, leaving gaps in traditional mental health care provision.

Dependency on Bond Funding

Additionally, the proposition would entail increased state costs of approximately \$310 million annually for 30 years to repay the bond. While the bond funding would facilitate the construction of mental health treatment facilities and housing units, it poses long-term financial liabilities for the state, potentially exacerbating California's budget deficit.

Proposition 1 on California Ballot: Im



Privatization Concerns

Moreover, Proposition 1 raises concerns about the privatization of mental health behavioral services and facilities. By allocating funds for infrastructure development, the proposition may prioritize profit-driven private entities over public mental health institutions. This shift towards privatization could compromise the quality and accessibility of mental health care, leading to concerns about accountability, oversight, staffing, and wages.

From the perspective of state-employed psychiatric technicians, Proposition 1 may negatively impact job vacancy rates within BU 18. With the expansion of mental health treatment facilities funded by Proposition 1,

there may be increased competition from the private sector for qualified mental health professionals. Moreover, the existing number of psychiatric technician programs is insufficient in graduating an ample number of PTs to meet the current attrition rate, let alone accommodate the growing demand in the private sector.

Implications, Concerns, and Critiques



Emphasis on Infrastructure over Services

While Proposition 1 aims to address mental health, substance abuse, and homelessness, its approach lacks comprehensiveness. The proposition prioritizes the construction of treatment facilities and housing units, overlooking the importance of quality mental health and substance abuse services. Merely expanding infrastructure does not guarantee improved outcomes for individuals grappling with mental health and addiction issues. Without adequate investment in evidence-based treatment modalities and support programs the effectiveness of newly constructed facilities may be limited. The proposition primarily focuses on building treatment facili-

■ Continued, next page

■ Continued, previous page

ties and housing, neglecting crucial aspects like long-term care, early intervention, and prevention programs. Simply providing housing without comprehensive support services may result in temporary solutions rather than sustainable outcomes. This could perpetuate a never-ending cycle of homelessness, dependency, and reliance on emergency services.

The proposition's reliance on bond funding, shift in financial responsibility, emphasis on infrastructure over services, and potential privatization of mental health care, coupled with the projected limited impact on reducing homelessness, raise concerns about its efficacy and long-term sustainability. Despite the substantial investment in mental health services through the MHSA over the past two decades, California continues to grapple with a significant population of untreated individuals who have mental illness, many of whom are among the state's nearly 200,000 homeless individuals. This underscores the need for a more comprehensive and nuanced approach to addressing mental health and homelessness, one that prioritizes care, prevention programs, and extensive support services alongside infrastructure development.

Additionally, Proposition 1's potential impact on job vacancy rates within BU 18 highlights the necessity for proactive workforce planning and support measures to ensure the recruitment and retention of qualified mental health professionals in the public sector, particularly in the face of competition from the private sector.

Learn More:

- [Prop 1, LAO Analysis](#)
- [Prop 1, Voter Guide](#)
- [Understanding Proposition 1, California Budget and Policy Center](#)



Catastrophic Leave

Helping one another through Catastrophic Leave Donations

BU 18 MEMBER(S) CURRENTLY IN NEED OF C.L. DONATIONS:

None at this time

CAPT got the concept of Catastrophic Leave off the ground three decades ago; the program's been in our state Bargaining Unit 18 contract since 1989.

Article 6.9 of the CAPT contract gives state-employed Psych Techs and related professionals the right to request leave donations from coworkers in cases of financial hardship due to injury or the prolonged illness of the state Bargaining Unit 18 member or his or her family member, or for parental or adoption leave purposes.

You can help state-employed coworkers by donating vacation, annual leave, personal leave, CTO and holiday credits. Simply contact your personnel office to fill out a Catastrophic Leave donation form. And don't forget: You can donate to state employees who work in different departments or facilities.

If you need help and have received department approval to get leave donations, contact CAPT to be included in our publications. You also may qualify for reduced union dues while you recuperate. Contact your chapter president to find out more.

Those requesting donations on our online and magazine lists will automatically be removed by the next Outreach publication date unless CAPT is informed of ongoing needs. If you still need to remain on our lists -- no problem! Just call Christine Caro at (800) 677-2278.

State enacts employment leave for reproductive losses



The California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) has recently announced the implementation of a Reproductive Loss Leave Policy, effective January 1, 2024. The Reproductive Loss Leave Policy is a compassionate and forward-thinking initiative aimed at providing support to eligible employees during challenging times. It recognizes the diverse nature of reproductive experiences and acknowledges the need for appropriate leave following a reproductive loss event.

Provided below are key highlights of the new Reproductive Loss Leave Policy.

Eligibility and Duration:

State employees with a minimum of 30 days of employment are entitled to a maximum of five days of unpaid reproductive loss leave.

Reproductive loss events covered by the policy include failed adoptions, failed surrogacy, miscarriage, stillbirth, and unsuccessful assisted reproduction.

Flexibility in Leave Usage:

The policy allows flexibility in the use of reproductive loss leave days, which need not be consecutive.

Employees are encouraged to take leave in accordance with existing laws, regulations, and policies unless specified otherwise in a Memorandum of Understanding.

Legal Framework:

This new policy, established in response to [Senate Bill 848](#) (Chapter 724, Statutes 2023), adds [section 12945.6](#) to the Government Code.

By acknowledging the impact of reproductive loss and providing a framework for compassionate leave, the policy aligns with the evolving landscape of employee rights and well-being.

To access the complete Reproductive Loss Leave Policy, please follow the CalHR link below:

[CalHR Manual Section 2129, Reproductive Loss Leave](#)



OIG reports critical flaws in the CDCR's approach to handling allegations of staff misconduct

In a recent review, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has brought to light significant lapses in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's (CDCR) handling of incarcerated persons' allegations of staff misconduct. The OIG, tasked with providing CDCR oversight, uncovered a decision that violated departmental regulations and policies and led to wasteful duplication of efforts and misallocation of resources.

Background

The CDCR's process for investigating allegations of staff misconduct underwent a significant overhaul in 2020 following concerns about the adequacy and independence of internal investigations. The OIG explained that before 2020, prison staff would investigate allegations of staff misconduct at the same prison where the alleged misconduct occurred.

Establishing the Allegation Inquiry Management Section (AIMS) was a crucial step towards ensuring independence in handling such allegations. However, a subsequent review in 2021 by the OIG revealed persisting issues, prompting recommendations for further restructuring to enhance fairness and independence.

The Problematic Decision

The main issue highlighted by the OIG lies in the CDCR's decision to redirect a backlog of over 900 grievances, determined by the screening team to contain allegations of staff misconduct, to prison grievance offices for processing. More specifically, the department closed 595 grievance cases containing staff misconduct allegations as "routine grievances" and redirected them to pris-

on grievances offices. This decision, made in July 2023, violated regulations requiring all staff misconduct allegations to undergo an allegation inquiry or investigation, with reports reviewed by the newly established Allegation Investigation Unit (AIU). By reclassifying these cases as "routine grievances," the CDCR circumvented control measures and allowed potentially biased prison staff to respond to serious allegations without adequate oversight.

Resulting Consequences

After exposing how the CDCR violated its regulations pertaining to inmate allegations of staff misconduct, the OIG detailed several resulting consequences. First and foremost, it led to a wasteful duplication of efforts, as departmental staff had already identified the grievances as containing misconduct allegations. The redirection also caused a significant misallocation of resources, undoing the progress made with the \$34 million allocated to restructure the staff misconduct process.

Moreover, the OIG found that the CDCR allowed the statutes of limitations to expire in 127 cases before redirecting the grievances, hindering the department from initiating disciplinary actions. In 22 of those cases reviewed by the OIG, the OIG found allegations, if substantiated, could have resulted in adverse actions ranging from letters of reprimand to staff dismissals.

"Eight of the 22 grievances alleged misconduct such as fabricating evidence and forging documents, which could have resulted in dismissals," OIG reported. "Twelve of the 22 allegations could have resulted in suspensions or salary reductions, while two could have resulted in letters of reprimand."

The OIG's detailed analysis of 71 redirected grievances revealed additional shortcomings in the CDCR's response time and investigatory process. Grievance office staff, lacking the necessary training in staff misconduct investigations, inadequately addressed complex issues in 23% of cases. Serious allegations such as discrimination, harassment, and retaliation were left unaddressed in several instances, violating regulations requiring a response to each claim in a grievance.

Additionally, the department failed to initiate timely investigations, with an average processing time of 346 days for the 71 cases reviewed.



Beyond Wages

Understanding and Maximizing Compensation for BU 18 Psych Techs

As Bargaining Unit 18 (BU 18) employees, we often assess our compensation by looking at our base wages, which are determined by our state civil service classification. However, relying solely on wage comparisons, such as between private and public sector jobs, can be misleading. Total compensation, which includes wages and benefits, provides a more accurate picture of the value of our employment.

Total compensation includes wages, supplemental pay, paid leave, insurance, and retirement savings. These elements collectively determine the overall value of our employment package.

According to the 2022 Report to the Governor and Legislature by the California Department of Human Resources, full-time state-employed Psychiatric Technicians (PT) received an average annual compensation of \$126,928 in 2020 (the most recent reported data). This figure was notably higher than the market average by 30.9%, exceeded local government compensation by 21.4%, and surpassed private sector compensation by 48.7%.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Psychiatric Technician BU 18 outlines several provisions and opportunities to enhance compensation through base wages and supplemental pay. Additionally, state employment offers the security of various premium benefits, such as income protection in cases of work-related and non-work-related accidents and illnesses, participation in a Defined Benefit Retirement Plan ensuring a retirement income based on a benefit formula, and access to Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), including healthcare benefits for eligible state retirees.

This article delves into a comprehensive exploration of our compensation, detailing the various components of our overall package. It also provides insights into understanding, appreciating, and maximizing specific economic provisions to increase earnings. Understanding the scope of our compensation package empowers us to make informed decisions regarding our employment and financial well-being, both presently and into retirement.

-  Wages
-  Supplemental Pay
-  Paid Leave
-  Insurance
-  Retirement



Wages

Classes, Safety Designation, Adjusted Pay Ranges, Salary Ranges, and Range Changes

Let's break down the basics: classification, safety designation, and salary range. The wage and salary structures for licensed and non-licensed BU 18 state employees vary based on the PT classifica-

tion, each with an associated salary range. Within BU18, there are 11 PT classifications with corresponding salary ranges.

PT Classes

Below, you'll find the PT classifications accompanied by links to the California State Personnel Board Specifications for each class, along with their respective maximum monthly base wages, as of July 1, 2023.

Class Title/Code	Max. Monthly Base Salary
Psychiatric Technician Trainee (Safety) Code 8238	\$3,613
Psychiatric Technician Apprentice Code 8229	\$3,891
Psychiatric Technician Assistant Code 7425	\$4,070
Psychiatric Technician Assistant (Safety) Code 8236	\$4,070
Pre-Licensed Psychiatric Technician Code 8233	\$4,145
Pre-Licensed Psychiatric Technician (Safety) Code 8254	\$4,145
Psychiatric Technician Code 8232	\$6,970
Psychiatric Technician (Safety) Code 8253	\$7,322
Senior Psychiatric Technician Code 8231	\$8,153
Senior Psychiatric Technician (Safety) Code 8252	\$8,560
Psychiatric Technician Instructor Code 8226	\$8,564

"Safety" Designation

In addition to the various classifications, licensed and unlicensed PTs can have a "safety" designation that influences their salary. In California state employment, the "safety" designation typically applies to positions involving direct interaction with individuals who may pose a risk to themselves or others or to situations and materials that could potentially be hazardous. This designation is commonly found in law

enforcement, corrections, healthcare, and other fields where employees may face heightened safety concerns during their duties.

Adding "safety" to a PT classification indicates that the position involves working in environments with increased risk of violence or injury, such as psychiatric hospitals or correctional facilities.

Employees in safety-designated roles often undergo specialized training in de-escalation tech-

niques, self-defense, or managing potentially volatile situations. They may also have access to specific safety protocols, protective gear, and support resources to help mitigate risks associated with their job duties.

Adjusted Pay Ranges

Let's delve into the details of wages, beginning with Article 4.2, Adjusted Pay Ranges. A General Salary Increase (GSI) is a wage and salary adjustment intended to align pay with changes in the cost of living. GSIs can be either fixed or percentage increases applied to an employee's base salary. When the California Association of Psychiatric Technicians (CAPT) negotiates a GSI, it applies universally to all state employees within the bargaining unit, irrespective of their classification. Historically, these increases have averaged around 3 percent annually.

In contrast, a Special Salary Adjustment (SSA) differs from a GSI in its scope and timing. For instance, the July 2023 and 2024 SSAs had a distinct application. These SSAs applied to all classifications and salary ranges within BU 18, with a qualification: the 4% increase was allocated exclusively to the top step or maximum salary rate within each salary range. Moreover, it was implemented over a specified time frame, affecting PTs who had reached the maximum salary rate and remained at that level for at least 12 months.

While all eligible BU 18 employees were entitled to receive the SSA, the timing of the increase was staggered, allowing for phased implementation across the bargaining unit. Such approaches aim to make the expenditure more agreeable to the employer.

Salary Ranges

The salary ranges for both licensed and non-licensed PTs and PT Apprentices establish minimum and maximum salary rates authorized for each class. New PT hires typically begin at the minimum rate of the salary range for their class and may progress to earn the maximum salary for the class through Merit Salary Adjustments (MSA), as outlined in Article 4.4.

PTs are eligible for a 5 percent MSA after every 12 months of satisfactory performance. This adjustment continues until they reach the maximum salary for their class. Each salary range consists of three steps: bottom, middle, and top. However, it's important to note that a PT can only receive an MSA up to the top step of their salary range.

Range Changes

For PTs who have reached the top step of their class salary range, their salary range can only be increased through specific means:

1. Through a bargained GSI or SSA, already discussed.
2. By promotion to another class, say from PTA to PT or PT to SPT.
3. By transitioning to the next salary range designated for their licensed class, which requires completing educational courses and submitting an application.

Licensed PTs can boost their earnings by advancing through salary ranges, as outlined in Article 4.3. This progression is contingent upon demonstrating satisfactory credit and meeting performance benchmarks by departmental policies and procedures. Upon fulfilling these criteria, PTs can apply for entry into the next educational salary range, thereby accessing potential salary increases through new MSAs.

It's important to note that the Psychiatric Technician Instructor classification does not offer further range advancements beyond the highest salary range already established, which spans from \$6,147 to \$8,564. The PTI classification is the highest earning classification within BU 18.



Supplemental Pay

Overtime and Premium Holiday Pay, Pay Differentials, Retention, Bonus Payments, and Reimbursements

In employee compensation, supplemental pay is an additional form of wage or salary payment beyond the regular earnings. Employers often leverage supplemental pay, employing bonuses or incentive pay to foster employee motivation or reward exceptional performance. Examples of supplemental pay include signing, referral, and retention bonuses.

For state employment contexts, supplemental pay encompasses various forms of additional compensation. Within the PT MOU, numerous opportunities for premium pay exist. These encompass overtime, premium holiday pay, various pay differentials, retention pay, and bonus payments.

Overtime and Premium Holiday Pay

The BU 18 MOU provides comprehensive guidelines for state-employed PTs' work hours and overtime, as outlined in Article 5.1. This includes provisions governing voluntary and mandatory overtime. In this context, overtime refers to any hours worked beyond the standard 40-hour work week or seven consecutive 24-hour periods. The specific workweek schedule is accessible in each facility's Personnel Office.

PTs receive compensation at one and a half times their regular pay rate for each hour of overtime worked, rounded to the nearest fifteen minutes. This compensation can be either cash or compensating time off (CTO). There's a cap of 100 hours of CTO that employees can accrue per fiscal year. Additionally, the State retains the authority to buy down 60% of accrued CTO annually, leaving employees with 40 hours of available CTO.

In terms of holiday pay, state-employed PTs are entitled to compensation for 11 observed holidays and one personal holiday, totaling 12 holidays, outlined in Article 6.1. Out of these, six holidays are designated as 'premium' holidays, entitling employees to premium pay at one and a half times their regular rate. Based on the hourly pay rate of \$40.20 for PTs in Range U, the annual value of premium holiday pay is \$2,894.40.

Pay Differentials

Pay differentials are crucial in acknowledging the diverse factors that impact work schedules and employee skillsets within the scope of employee compensation. The pay differentials provided in the BU 18 MOU include shift, weekend, bilingual, and longevity.

Our shift and weekend differentials offer additional compensation for employees working non-standard schedules. The PM shift differential (Article 4.5) provides an extra \$1.50 per hour for shifts between 6 pm and 12 midnight. The NOC shift differential awards an additional \$1.75 per hour for shifts between 12 midnight and 6 am.

The Weekend Differential (Article 4.14) grants an extra \$0.50 per hour for regular shifts scheduled over the weekend, from Friday's PM to Monday's NOC shift.

It's worth noting that while the Shift Differential is PERSable, the Weekend Differential is not.

The Bilingual Differential Pay (Article 4.6) applies to roles where such skills are utilized for at least 10% of the time. Employees must be certified by the department and approved by the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) to receive this pay, which varies between \$100 monthly (or pro rata), \$0.58 per hour, or \$4.61 per day. Deductions, leave benefits, and termination payouts factor into these payments.

The Longevity Pay Differential (Article 4.15) provides additional monthly pay to employees based on their full-time years of service within specific timeframes. For example, effective July 1, 2024, employees with 23 or more years of state service will receive a 4% increase. The increase reaches 5% on July 1, 2025, with 25 or more years of

state service. The percentages vary over subsequent periods, with higher percentages for longer service years (see differentials listed below). The percentages are not cumulative; employees receive the highest rate applicable to their years of service. This pay differential is PERSable.

17 years or more of State Service 2%

Effective July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024:

17, 18, 19 years of State Service 2%

20 years or more of State Service 3%

Effective July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025:

17, 18, 19 years of State Service 2%

20, 21, 22 years of State Service 3%

23 years or more of State Service 4%

Effective July 1, 2025:

17, 18, 19 years of State Service 2%

20, 21, 22 years of State Service 3%

23, 24 years of State Service 4%

25 years or more of State Service 5%

Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and Retention (R&R) payments are targeted incentives offered to certain PTs in specific departments or facilities where staffing shortages exist. These payments aim to attract and retain Psych Techs for challenging positions due to various factors such as geographic location or high living costs. While R&R payments can provide a welcome boost to income, it's essential to understand that they are not considered part of the retirement benefits (PERSable) and are subject to standard withholdings.

It's worth noting that the department reserves the right to withdraw R&R payments at any time, provided they give 30 days' notice to CAPT.

The current monthly R&R differentials for our bargaining unit are as follows:

Classification	Location	Amount
PTIs (8226)	DSH & DDS facilities	\$300 or \$3,600 annually
PTs (8253) and Sr. PTs (8252)	DSH: Atascadero	\$400 or \$4,800 annually
	DSH: Coalinga	\$200 or \$2,400 annually
	DSH: Metropolitan	\$200 or \$2,400 annually
	DSH: Napa	\$200 or \$2,400 annually

Bonus Payments

Bonus payments represent lump-sum payments offered instead of traditional wage increases. In our recent contract negotiations with the State, CAPT secured two significant bonuses for eligible Psych Techs under Articles 4.16 and 4.17.

Firstly, Article 4.16 introduced the Health Care Facility Retention Payment, granting eligible Psych Techs a one-time bonus of \$1,500 for their dedication and service during the COVID-19 pandemic. This payment aimed to recognize and incentivize frontline workers for their extraordinary efforts during challenging times.

Additionally, under Article 4.17, BU 18 employees received the 2022 Mental Health and Wellness Stipend. This stipend provided \$2,400, distributed in four equal installments of \$600 each.

These nonproduction bonuses provide tangible financial support to employees and demonstrate the value and appreciation placed on their contributions by both CAPT and the State.

Reimbursements

For employees in BU 18, our MOU offers several provisions to facilitate license renewal and educational advancement.

Under the License Renewal Fees provision (Article 7.14), BU 18 employees mandated to uphold professional licensure are entitled to reimbursement for the actual costs of license renewal, currently \$300.00. This reimbursement extends to specific job classifications, including Senior Psychiatric Technicians, Psychiatric Technicians, and others. Part-time employees receive pro-rated reimbursement, ensuring equitable access to this benefit.

Moreover, the State recognizes the importance of Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) certification for certain classes of employees, such as Psychiatric Technician Assistants. Reimbursement is provided for initial certification and subsequent renewals, with payment capped at \$15.00 for first-time certification and \$20.00 for renewals afterward.

Complementing these provisions is the Educational Reimbursement Program (Article 7.16), which supports the educational pursuits of newly licensed Psychiatric Technicians. Upon successful completion of their initial probationary period, these employees are eligible for a one-time reimbursement of \$840.00. This reimbursement covers tuition, books, and fees incurred during the licensure process, reinforcing the State's commitment to fostering continuous learning and professional development.



Paid Leave

Holiday, Vacation, Sick, and Professional Development Days

Paid leave refers to time off from work for which an employee is compensated by their employer. It typically includes various types of leave, such as vacation, sick, and holidays. Paid leave policies are designed to provide employees with time away from work while ensuring they continue to receive their regular pay.

Holiday

State-employed Psych Techs receive compensation for 11 observed holidays and an additional personal holiday, totaling 12 holidays per year, as outlined in Article 6.1. Among these, six holidays

are designated as 'premium,' entitling employees to receive time and a half for their work. The compensation for premium holidays is detailed under 'Supplemental Pay.' The annual value of holiday pay amounts to \$1,929.60* for the six non-premium holidays.

*Based on the hourly pay of \$40.20, the wage of a Psych Tech in Range U.

Vacation

Provided below is the dollar value of our vacation at different lengths of state service time.

Service Time	Vacation Hours Earned (per month)	Monthly Value*	Annual Value*
7 months to 3 years	7	\$281.40	\$3,376.80
37 months to 10 years	10	\$402.00	\$4,824.00
121 months to 15 years	12	\$482.40	\$5,788.80
181 months to 20 years	13	\$522.60	\$6,271.20
241 months and over	14	\$562.80	\$6,753.60

According to the BU 18 contract, PTs can carry over a maximum of 640 accrued vacation hours to the subsequent calendar year. Upon employment termination, the State must compensate employees for their accrued vacation credits.

In this scenario, the accrued vacation would amount to \$25,728.20*.

*Based on the hourly pay of \$40.20, the wage of a Psych Tech in Range U.

Sick

State-employed Psych Techs accrue eight hours of paid sick leave every month. This equates to a monthly value of \$321.60* and an annual total of \$3,859.20*. Importantly, sick leave credits accumulate without any maximum limit.

*Based on the hourly pay of \$40.20, the wage of a Psych Tech in Range U.

Professional Development Days

The Professional Development Days provision in Article 7.16 (H) offers two days per fiscal year without loss of compensation, encouraging employees to engage in activities conducive to their professional or personal development. Whether attending professional association events or participating in seminars, employees can choose activities aligned with their goals. The annual value of our PDDs is \$634.20*.

*Based on the hourly pay of \$40.20, the wage of a Psych Tech in Range U.



Insurance

Consolidated Benefits (CoBen) Program, Non-Industrial Disability Insurance (NDI), Industrial Disability Leave (IDL), and Enhanced Industrial Disability Leave (EIDL)

Consolidated Benefits (CoBen) Program

State-employed Psychiatric Technicians receive these benefits through the Consolidated Benefits (CoBen) Program (Article 7.1). The CoBen Program provides healthcare allowances to state employees based on their enrollment in CalPERS-approved health plans. The allowance amounts vary depending on the number of dependents covered under the plan. For instance, an eligible employee receives \$697 monthly for self-coverage, \$1,377 per month for themselves and one dependent, and \$1,790 per month for themselves and two or more dependents. The annual monetary value of your CoBen is \$8,364, \$16,524, or \$21,480, respectively.

Additionally, the State contributes a flat dollar amount equal to 80% of the weighted average of health plan premiums for employees enrolled in Basic health benefit plans. These contribution amounts are adjusted annually in January. The 80% contribution by the employer applies to the premiums of the Basic health benefit plans and is calculated separately. This contribution helps cover a portion of the state employee's healthcare expenses in addition to the allowances provided under the CoBen Program.

Non-Industrial Disability Insurance

Non-Industrial Disability Insurance (NDI) (Article 7.6) is a program designed to support State employees who are disabled due to non-work-related conditions. Eligible Psych Techs can receive 60% of their total pay, up to a maximum of \$135 per week, for up to 26 weeks per disability benefit period. If used, the total monetary value of this benefit per disability benefit period is \$3,510. There is a ten-day waiting period before NDI payments begin, during which accrued vacation or sick leave can be used if available. Employees can use accrued leave credits before receiving NDI payments and switch between NDI and other types of leave once NDI payments commence. Additionally, employees certified as unable to return to full-time work may work reduced hours, combining NDI benefits with partial work pay, subject to approval and medical examination.

Industrial Disability Leave

Industrial Disability Leave (IDL) (Article 7.8) is a critical support mechanism for workers facing industrial injuries or illnesses. Here's a concise breakdown of how IDL works and its significance:

Employees who sustain industrial injuries or illnesses and qualify for temporary disability benefits under the Labor Code are entitled to IDL benefits as outlined in the Government Code. Eligible employees receive IDL payments equivalent

to their total net pay for the first 22 workdays following the reported injury, ensuring financial stability during the early stages of recovery.

If the disability persists beyond 22 workdays, the employee transitions to receiving 66 and 2/3% of their gross pay from the 23rd workday until the end of the 52nd week of disability. IDL payments cease after two years from the initial disability date.

Employees can supplement their IDL payments from the 23rd workday onward by utilizing accrued leave credits, such as annual leave, vacation, sick leave, or compensating time off (CTO), to bridge the gap to their total net pay. However, adjustments to supplementation levels are prospective and subject to certain limitations.

State employees affiliated with the CalPERS retirement systems are ineligible for Temporary Disability benefits with supplementation during the initial 52 weeks following the onset of disability within a two-year period. Should the employee remain disabled after exhausting IDL benefits, they remain eligible to receive Temporary Disability benefits as outlined in the Labor Code, ensuring continued financial assistance during recovery.

Enhanced Industrial Disability Leave

In high-risk professions where employees face the potential for injury in the line of duty, the concept of Enhanced Industrial Disability Leave (EIDL) (Article 7.9) stands as a crucial pillar of support. EIDL helps BU 18 employees navigate the challenges of a high-risk work environment, offering financial support and reassurance during injury and recovery.

For those who sustain injuries directly related to the performance of their official duties, EIDL offers a financial augmentation to the existing Industrial Disability Leave benefits. Eligibility for EIDL hinges on injuries incurred in the official performance of duties, particularly those directly caused by assaults or the restraining of assaultive individuals using approved interventions. EIDL is tailored to serious physical injuries and their direct medical complications resulting from assaults or related incidents, excluding presumptive illnesses or stress-related disabilities. The Department Director holds the authority to waive certain restrictions on a case-by-case basis.

EIDL benefits are capped at 52 weeks within a two-year period, aiming to maintain the employee's take-home pay while considering tax implications and retirement contributions. Claims for EIDL benefits must be filed within one year from the incident date, emphasizing the importance of timely action. EIDL extends beyond the point of a physician declaring the employee's condition as "permanent and stationary," provided the disability retirement process has been initiated.



Retirement

California Public Employee Retirement Savings (CalPERS)

CalPERS

As a member of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS), employees are entitled to a range of benefits to provide financial security during retirement and in case of disability or death. Some of the key employee benefits of CalPERS membership include:

Retirement Pension: CalPERS provides a defined benefit pension plan, which offers a guaranteed monthly income to retirees based on their years of service, age at retirement, and final compensation. Members can choose from various retirement formulas depending on their employment start date and membership tier.

Health Benefits: CalPERS offers comprehensive health insurance options for retirees and their eligible dependents. These health plans cover medical, dental, and vision expenses, providing peace of mind during retirement.

Disability Benefits: In case of a disabling injury or illness, CalPERS members may be eligible for disability retirement benefits. These benefits provide a monthly income to replace lost wages due to disability.

Survivor Benefits: CalPERS provides survivor benefits to eligible beneficiaries in the event of a member's death. These benefits may include monthly allowances for surviving spouses, children, or other dependents, helping to maintain financial stability after the member's passing.

Sick Leave Conversion: CalPERS allows members to convert unused sick leave into service credit, which can increase their pension benefits upon retirement.

Retirement Planning Resources: CalPERS offers various tools, workshops, and educational resources to help members plan for retirement effectively. This includes retirement planning seminars, online calculators, and personalized counseling services.

Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs): CalPERS provides periodic COLAs to retirees to help their pensions keep pace with inflation, ensuring their purchasing power is maintained over time.

Deferred Compensation Plans: CalPERS offers optional deferred compensation plans, such as 401(k) and 457 plans, to help members save additional funds for retirement on a tax-advantaged basis.

CalPERS membership offers valuable benefits that support employees throughout their careers and into retirement, promoting financial security and well-being for civil service employees and their families.

Understanding the full scope of our compensation is crucial for BU 18 employees. While base wages determined by state civil service classifications provide a foundation, considering total compensation, which encompasses wages, benefits, and supplemental pay, offers a more accurate reflection of our employment value.

By delving into the details of our compensation, we empower ourselves to make informed decisions about our employment and financial futures. This knowledge allows us to maximize the benefits available, ensuring we receive fair compensation for our contributions while planning for our long-term financial security.



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED