



## Coalition of Santa Monica City Employees Newsletter - Summer 2008

Administrative Team Associates\* Executive Pay Plan \*Municipal Employees Association \*  
Public Attorneys Legal Support Staff Union \*Public Attorneys Union \*Management Team  
Associates \*Rent Control \*Supervisory Team Associates \*United Transportation Union

### Coalition Unveils New Website

The Coalition now has it's own website, go to [www.CSMCE.org](http://www.CSMCE.org) for up-to-date info on upcoming events and general information.

### Deferred Compensation (457) Plan New Options

Karen Bancroft, Human Resources Director announced that as of March 1, 2008, the City's deferred compensation (457) plan was amended to provide participants with these options:

#### **Purchase of "Airtime" Service Credit with CalPERS:**

457 plan participants are now able to use their 457 plan funds to purchase additional service credit for periods of time when no service was performed (i.e., 'airtime' credit) to increase the participant's service credit with CalPERS. CalPERS allows retirement plan members who vested in CalPERS (i.e., have at least 5 years of active service) to purchase up to 5 additional years of service credit in (1) one year increments. If you wish to purchase airtime, you should contact Pandy ext. 8206 or Martha ext.2234.

#### **Modification of Hardship Withdrawal Rules:**

Hardship and unforeseeable emergency distributions (withdrawals) from the 457 plan were only permitted for hardship situations of the participant's spouse or dependent. As now amended, the plan may permit hardship or unforeseeable emergency distributions because of hardship of the participant's **beneficiary** under the 457 plan, even if the beneficiary is not a spouse or dependent.

For example, if you had listed one of your parents as your 457 beneficiary, an emergency distribution would be allowed if your parent had a hardship or unforeseeable situation for which the funds would be used.

For retirement information go to the CalPERS website  
<http://www.calpers.ca.gov>

Coalition e-mail address  
[CoalitionSMCE@verizon.net](mailto:CoalitionSMCE@verizon.net)

### Medical Trust Quarterly Meeting News

On May 7, 2008 the Medical Trust Board of Trustees held its annual benefit level setting meeting. This is when the Board meets with its actuaries (outside financial consultants) to determine how much the Trust can pay to its beneficiaries per month for the following year. A computer spread sheet program is used to determine the benefit based upon different variables like interest on investments, number of current retirees, number of future retirees, and most significantly, future contributions to the fund.

After careful consideration and weighing of all these different factors, the benefit level was set at \$250 per month or \$3,000 per year. The actuarial report was very positive, but due to the impossibility to accurately project City contributions beyond the term of the City's Umbrella Agreement with the Coalition (3 years) the Trustees voted unanimously to maintain the current benefit level.

As of May 2008, the Trust is reimbursing insurance premiums for 85 retired City employees. The fund, which is now over \$23 million, is still maintaining an overall earning rate of 7% since inception despite the general lack of vitality in the stock market last quarter.

If you are planning on retiring or need any information regarding this benefit please get in touch with the Trust's administrator Cindi Forbes ([cindiforbes@delapro.com](mailto:cindiforbes@delapro.com)) or one of the Trustees. If you change your address, marry, divorce or add family members be sure to let Cindi know. It's important that you update your personal information in the Trust's records. You don't want to miss out on this important benefit that the Coalition has worked so hard to provide for you.

**The Coalition Works To Maintain and Enhance YOUR  
Medical Insurance & Retirement Benefits**

**3 reasons why YOU should support & get involved in the  
Coalition's Political Action Committee (PAC)**

In November four City Council seats (a Council majority) are up for grabs. Your PAC must work to maintain a council majority that appreciates us, its employees, and that understands the importance of our medical insurance and retirement benefits.

**We need to educate voters about OUR issues before they cast their ballots.**

The strength of our Coalition rests within our membership. The more members we have participating with the PAC in the election process—the more impact we can have on the issues that are important to US.

**It is well documented that organized workers earn more (\$) and enjoy better benefits.**

Get involved or just keep informed!

Sign up for e-mail alerts & news @ [coalitionsmce@verizon.net](mailto:coalitionsmce@verizon.net)

[www.CSMCE.org](http://www.CSMCE.org)

**Check out the  
Coalition's NEW website:  
[www.CSMCE.org](http://www.CSMCE.org)**

**Coalition Board of Directors**

**ATA**  
Rod Merl 458-8706  
Liz Bar-El 458-5068  
**EPP**  
Greg Mullen 458-8661  
**MEA**  
Lauralee Asch 458-8618  
Robert Griffin 458-8693  
Art Lopez 458-2297  
**MTA**  
Carole Curtin 458-8556  
**PAU**  
Marty Tachiki 458-8340  
Tony Serritella 458-8361  
**PALSSU**  
Claudia Brick 458-8365  
**Rent Control**  
Keith Kresge 458-8790  
**STA**  
Bill Bollinger 458-8963  
**UTU**  
Adhi Reddy  
Martin Guerrero

**Coalition Accomplishments**

- ◆ Health Benefits Agreement with built-in cost of living increases
- ◆ Established a Medical Insurance Trust for Retirement
  - ◆ Collaboration with City to avoid layoffs
- ◆ Collaborated with the City in the implementation of a flexible 125-plan to permit employees to set aside pretax earnings to pay for out of pocket medical costs
  - ◆ Revised evaluation forms
  - ◆ Enhanced PERS Death Benefits
- ◆ Renegotiated the umbrella agreement between the Coalition and the City for its continuing monthly contributions to the medical insurance trust and for the composite cap for health insurance premium costs that will address the needs of the employees
- ◆ Enhancement of PERS Retirement formula to 2.7% @ 55

**AETNA Medical Information Phone Numbers**

AETNA HMO Member Services 877-402-8742  
AETNA Open Access Plan 877-204-9186

**Other Benefit Numbers**

KAISER Member Service Number 800-464-4000  
VSP (Vision) 800-877-7195  
Delta Dental DPO Plan 888-335-8227  
Delta Dental Delta Care Plan 800-422-4234  
Value Options/Employee Assistance Program 800-638-2769