

County of Ocean

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert A. Greitz, Director, Employee Relations

FROM: Debbie Silverman, Clerk of the Board's Office 

DATE: December 26, 2023

SUBJECT: Office and Professional Employees International Union,
Local 32, representing Engineering Employees

On December 20, 2023, the Ocean County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution authorizing entrance into a Collective Negotiations Agreement with the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 32, representing Engineering Employees for the term of 4/1/2023 through 3/31/2027.

Attached herewith, please find a copy of the resolution authorizing this action along with a copy of the Agreement for your use and files.

Thank you.

RESOLUTION

**AUTHORIZING ENTRANCE INTO A COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS
AGREEMENT WITH THE OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION, LOCAL 32, REPRESENTING ENGINEERING
EMPLOYEES FOR THE TERM OF APRIL 1, 2023 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2027**

December 20, 2023

WHEREAS, the County of Ocean is a party to a Collective Negotiations Agreement with the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 32 ("OPEIU") which expired on March 31, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the OPEIU represents engineering employees within the County of Ocean; and

WHEREAS, the County of Ocean has engaged in negotiations with the OPEIU for a successor agreement to the one that expired on March 31, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the negotiating teams of the parties have reached an understanding, which has been approved by a majority vote of the membership of the OPEIU.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, on this 20th day of December, 2023, that the Collective Negotiations Agreement between the County of Ocean and the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 32, representing engineering employees, for the period of April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2027, is hereby approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of the Board of Commissioners is hereby authorized and directed to execute a Collective Negotiations Agreement between County of Ocean and the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 32.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution, along with the executed Collective Negotiations Agreement, shall be forwarded to the County Administrator, Director of Employee Relations, Finance Department, County Engineer, and the appropriate OPEIU officials.

I certify the foregoing to be a
true copy of a Resolution adopted
by the Board of Commissioners
of the County of Ocean on the
20th day of December, 20 23

Michelle I. Gunther
Michelle I. Gunther
Clerk of the Board

CONTRACT
BETWEEN
THE OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AND
THE OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION
LOCAL #32
REPRESENTING
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

APRIL 1, 2023 – MARCH 31, 2027

AGREEMENT

This Agreement, executed this 20th of December, 2023 has been negotiated between the Ocean County Board of Commissioners, hereinafter referred to as "Board," and the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local #32, A.F. of L. - C.I.O. - C.L.C., representing Engineering Department employees hereinafter referred to as "Union."

ARTICLE 1 **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Agreement is to set forth herein all negotiable terms and conditions of employment.

ARTICLE 2 **RECOGNITION OF THE UNION**

The Board recognizes the O.P.E.I.U., Local #32, A. F. of L. - C.I.O.-C.L.C. as the exclusive representative of all Engineering Department employees. Said Union is permitted to negotiate with the Board for the purposes provided for under Chapter 303, Public Laws of 1968 and Chapter 123, Public Laws of 1974, with respect to salary, hours and those terms and conditions of employment permitted by said statutes.

ARTICLE 3 **MANAGEMENT RIGHTS**

A. The Board hereby retains and reserves unto itself, without limitations, all powers, rights, authority, duties and responsibilities conferred and vested in it prior to the signing of this Agreement by the laws and Constitutions of the State of New Jersey and of the United States; including, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following rights:

1. All management functions and responsibilities which the Board has not expressly modified or restricted by a specific provision of this Agreement.

2. The right to establish and administer policies and procedures related to personnel matters, Board control activities, training, operational functions, performance of services and maintenance of the facilities and equipment of the Board.
3. To reprimand, suspend, discharge or otherwise discipline employees.
4. To hire, promote, transfer, assign, re-assign, lay-off and recall employees to work.
5. To determine the number of employees and the duties to be performed.
6. To maintain the efficiency of employees; to establish, expand, reduce, alter, combine, consolidate or abolish any job or job classification, department or operation or service.
7. To determine staffing patterns and areas worked, to control and regulate the use of facilities, supplies, equipment, materials and any other property of the Board.
8. To determine the number, location and operation of divisions, departments, work sections, and all other work units of the Board, the assignment of work, the qualifications required, the performance standards and the size and composition of the work force.
9. To subcontract for any existing or future services as determined necessary by the Board.
10. To make or change Board rules, regulations, policies and practices consistent with the specific terms and provisions of this Agreement.
11. And otherwise to generally manage the affairs of the Board, attain and maintain full operating efficiency and productivity and to direct the work force.

B. The exercise of the foregoing powers, rights, authority, duties and responsibilities of the Board shall only be limited by the provisions of this Agreement.

C. In recognition of the rulings of the Courts of New Jersey the parties recognize that the exercise of managerial rights is a responsibility of the Board on behalf of the taxpayers and that the Board cannot bargain away or eliminate any of its managerial rights. Therefore, no grievance may be filed under this Agreement which in any way interferes

with, undermines or restricts the exercise of any managerial right by the Board or any of its authorized managerial executives.

ARTICLE 4 NO STRIKE CLAUSE

A. It is recognized that the need for continued and uninterrupted operation of the Board's departments is of paramount importance to the citizens of the community and that there should be no interference with such operations.

B. The Union covenants and agrees that during the term of this Agreement neither the Union nor any members of the Union, nor any member of the bargaining unit, nor any person acting in its behalf will cause, authorize or support nor will any of its members take part in any strike (i.e., the concerted failure to report for duty or willful absence of any employee from his/her position, or stoppage of work or abstinence in whole or in part from the full, faithful and proper performance of the employee's duties of employment), work stoppage, slow down, walkout or other job action against the Board. No lockout of employees should be instituted or supported by the County during the term of this Agreement.

C. The Union agrees that it will do everything in its power to actively discourage any strike, work stoppage, slow down or other aforementioned activity, including, but not limited to, publicly disavowing such action and directing all such members who participate in such activities to cease and desist from such activities immediately and to return to work, along with such other steps as may be necessary under the circumstances, and to bring about compliance with its order. The Union agrees that it will undertake any necessary actions at its own expense to terminate any of the above activity on the part of its members of the bargaining unit.

D. Any activity enumerated above on the part of a Union member or member of this bargaining unit will be deemed as appropriate grounds for the termination of employment from the Board.

ARTICLE 5
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. Definitions

- A. A "grievance" is an allegation by an employee or the Union that a specific provision of this Agreement has been violated. These grievances may only be submitted to binding arbitration as a final step in the procedure.
- B. All other allegations that there has been a violation, misinterpretation or a misapplication of policies, rules and administrative decisions may be submitted to all steps of the grievance procedure up to the County Administrator's level, and the County Administrator's decision on these matters will be final and binding. These non-contract grievances may not be submitted to binding arbitration.
- C. Nothing in this procedure shall preclude an employee from exercising his/her legal or Civil Service rights.
- D. A "grievant" is an employee or person party to this Agreement who files a grievance.
- E. "Representative" is a person or agent designated to represent either party in this procedure.
- F. "Day" means workday.
- G. "Class grievance" is a formal grievance by two (2) or more employees.
- H. "Group grievance" is the same or similar formal grievance by two (2) or more employees each in the same department.

2. Procedures

- A. Grievances shall be processed promptly and expeditiously.
- B. Formal grievances and appeals shall be filed in writing.
- C. Communications and decisions concerning formal grievances shall be in writing.
- D. A grievant shall be permitted a representative at all levels of the procedure and witnesses as determined by the hearing officer, provided request for such are filed two (2) days prior to the hearing.
- E. A grievance may only be advanced to Step 2 or higher by Union Officers or Shop Stewards.
- F. There shall be no additional evidence submitted during the grievance process once a grievance has been submitted to the County Administrator, unless same was unavailable, and is shared with the other party prior to a formal hearing at the next level of jurisdiction.
- G. Failure by a grievant to process a grievance within the specified time limits shall render the grievance as settled in favor of the Board.
- H. Class grievances shall be filed at Level 2 within fifteen (15) days of the occurrence of a class grievance.

3. Processing

A. Time Limit - The number of workdays indicated at each level should be considered as a maximum and every effort should be made to expedite the process. The time limit specified may, however, be extended by mutual consent of the parties. Time limits at Step 1 shall begin with the day of the event giving rise to the grievance or the day

the Union or grievant first became aware or should have become aware of the problem, whichever is last.

Informal Step – All grievances shall be discussed with the department head or representative prior to submission of a written statement as required below.

B. Step 1 - The grievant and/or his/her representative shall present a written statement of the alleged grievance to the Department Head. The grievant must file the written grievance within fifteen (15) workdays of the occurrence of the grievance. The Department Head will review the grievance and investigate the facts and submit a written answer to the grievant within seven (7) workdays of the submission date on the grievance form.

C. Step 2 - If the grievant is dissatisfied with the answer submitted by the Department Head during the Step 1 of this process, then the Union Representative may appeal the Department Head's written answer within seven (7) work days after receipt of the answer at the first step by the grievant.

The Employee Relations Director or his/her designee shall review the grievance appeal, investigate the facts and submit a written answer to the Union Representative within seven (7) workdays of the submission of the grievance at Step 2.

D. Step 3 - If the grievant is dissatisfied with the answer submitted by the Employee Relations Director at Step 2, the grievant and/or his/her representative may appeal the answer of the Employee Relations Director within seven (7) work days after receipt of the written answer at the second step of the process by the grievant. The employee may request that the County Administrator schedule a hearing. Should the Administrator determine that a hearing would be advantageous to the parties it shall be scheduled within seven (7) workdays after receipt of the grievance appeal from the County Employee Relation's Director's decision at Step 2 of the process.

The County Administrator will submit a written answer to the grievant within seven (7) workdays after the adjournment of the hearing. The hearing by the County Administrator will take place within twenty-one (21) workdays after the scheduled date is submitted to the grievant. Should the County Administrator not request a hearing, the Administrator shall submit a written answer to the Union Representative within seven (7) workdays of the submission of the grievance at Step 3. The decision of the County Administrator shall be final and binding on all matters except contract violations.

E. Step 4 - If the grievant is still dissatisfied with the answer received from the County Administrator and the grievance is a matter of contract violation, then the grievance may be submitted to arbitration in accordance with the procedure outlined below:

1. Within twenty-five (25) workdays of the decision of the County Administrator, the Union Representative may request arbitration of the grievance by requesting a list of arbitrators from the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC).
2. The arbitrator must first rule on the arbitrability of the grievance if so requested by either party.
3. The arbitrator shall have no power to add to, subtract from, or alter the language of this Agreement. He/She shall have no power to make an award inconsistent with law and shall have no power to entertain grievances that do not constitute violations of this Agreement. The arbitrator shall rule only on the interpretation of the clause of the Agreement involved.
4. The arbitrator shall have no power to make an award or, in any matter which is not within the Board's power to implement, including

monetary awards, require appropriations from governmental agencies other than the Board of Commissioners.

5. The arbitrator's decision shall be binding on all parties on matters regarding violations of the contract, except that if his/her decision requires legislative action, such decisions shall be effective only if such legislation is enacted.
6. The cost of the services of the arbitrator shall be shared equally by the parties in interest.
7. An arbitrator shall be empowered to hear only one grievance for each appointment he/she receives; provided, however, that in the event there is more than one grievance presented and the grievances arise out of the same set of facts or involve the same materially and substantially identical issues, a single arbitrator shall be empowered to adjudicate all such grievances. It is expressly understood and agreed that the grievance procedure shall be the sole and exclusive remedy for all grievances which are arbitrable under this Agreement. This provision is not a waiver of individual rights beyond this Agreement.

4. General Provisions

1. No prejudice will attend any party in interest by reason of the utilization or participation in the grievance procedure.
2. The filing, pendency or hearing of any grievance shall not impede the normal management of the work force or operation of any of the Board's agencies.
3. All records of grievance processing shall be filed separately.

4. Forms for grievance processing shall be mutually agreed upon by the parties to the Agreement. The Union and Employee Relations Director will distribute the forms as required.
5. Parties in interest will cooperate in investigating and providing pertinent information concerning a grievance being processed.
6. Notice of hearings shall be made to the grievant at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance and such hearings shall be held on the Board's premises.
7. The Board agrees that in the presentation of a grievance there shall be no loss of pay for the time spent in presenting the grievance by the grievant, and one (1) Union Representative and witnesses who are employees of the Board throughout the grievance procedure. However, no employees or officials will be permitted to investigate or process grievances during working hours without the approval of the Employee Relations Director.

ARTICLE 6 **EMPLOYEE MANUALS**

For informational purposes, Personnel Handbooks have been prepared and distributed by the Department of Employee Relations to all employees in the bargaining unit.

ARTICLE 7 **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The parties agree that they will comply with all State and Federal statutes regarding discrimination. For example, no employee will be discriminated against because of race, creed, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, union affiliation or age. No employee, because of sex, shall be denied or discriminated against in the employment of any job position within the bargaining unit of our Agreement.

ARTICLE 8 **SENIORITY**

A. Notice of job openings or vacancies within titles covered by this contract shall be posted prior to filling the position.

B. Seniority, which is defined as continuous, unbroken service with the employer, will be given consideration by the employer with respect to promotions, however, service will be considered broken for the purpose of this clause, if an employee who has served continuously with the employer for at least one (1) year:

1. Should resign his/her position and not be rehired by said employer within three (3) months of said resignation.
2. Should an employee retire.
3. Should an employee suffer a validated dismissal.
4. Should an employee request and receive a voluntary transfer out of the bargaining unit or out of the work force of the Board.

C. The employer shall fill permanent job openings by promoting employees from the next lower rated job titles, provided these employees possess the requirements enunciated by the NJ Civil Service Commission and who are subsequently certified by the NJ Civil Service Commission. In all instances, employees promoted must possess the skills, ability and knowledge to perform the duties required by the higher rated job.

D. If there are two (2) or more employees with equal skill and ability to perform work at the discretion of the administration, the employee with the greatest seniority shall be given preference. If the employee with the greatest seniority cannot perform the higher rated job, then the administration shall promote the employee which it deemed to be next eligible.

E. Vacations - Whenever more than one employee requests vacation at a job location at any particular time, the Board shall endeavor to honor all vacations as

requested. However, when vacations cannot be granted to all employees requesting vacations for a particular period, the employees with the greatest seniority shall be granted their vacations first. No employee will be permitted to take a vacation during the peak period of work for his/her department. Peak periods will be designated by the administration each year.

ARTICLE 9 **HOLIDAYS**

Each full-time employee covered by this Agreement shall enjoy the following holidays with pay, to be observed on the dates specified each January by the Board of Commissioners:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Day	Columbus Day
Presidents Day	Veteran's Day
Good Friday	Election Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day
Juneteenth	Christmas Day
Independence Day	

The County will grant a Holiday whenever the Board of Commissioners takes an official action to declare an extra Holiday. Any employee working on any of the above days shall receive overtime pay at a rate of time and one-half (1 1/2X) for all hours worked plus one (1) day straight time wages in addition to the time and one-half pay. Should the employee work beyond a normal eight (8) hour shift, he/she shall be paid double time and one-half (2 1/2X) for those hours continuously worked on the Holiday.

ARTICLE 10 **LONGEVITY PAY**

A. Longevity Pay for all classified permanent employees covered by this Agreement will be based upon the schedule set forth below:

7 years	3.0% of base salary
12 years	4.6% of base salary

17 years	5.7% of base salary
22 years	6.5% of base salary
27 years	7.3% of base salary
32 years	8.0% of base salary

This provision will be eliminated for all new employees hired on or after April 1, 2013.

- B. Effective January 4, 2024, the elimination of longevity for full-time engineering employees hired after April 1, 2013 set forth above in paragraph A shall be eliminated. Thus, as of January 1, 2024, all full-time employees covered by this collective negotiations agreement shall be eligible for Longevity in accordance with the following schedule:

5 years	2.0% of base salary
7 years	3.0% of base salary
12 years	4.6% of base salary
17 years	5.7% of base salary
22 years	6.5% of base salary
27 years	7.3% of base salary
32 years	8.0% of base salary

There shall be no retroactive effective of this reinstatement of longevity (or created new 2% level at 5 years). Thus, no back-longevity will be owed to any engineering employee.

ARTICLE 11 BEREAVEMENT PROVISION

All employees shall have up to three (3) days in the event of a death of a spouse, common-law spouse, child, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandchild, uncle or aunt of the employee, or any other member of the immediate household. One (1) day leave will be given to attend the funeral services of a spouse's aunt, uncle or grandparent.

Such leave will not be taken until the immediate supervisor is notified of the instance of bereavement. The employer may require proof of loss of a decedent whenever such requirement appears reasonable. Bereavement leave is specifically provided to allow eligible employees time to make necessary arrangements and attend funeral services. Therefore, bereavement leave must include one of the following days:

Date of death

Any day of viewing
Date of interment
Day of religious or memorial service

In no event shall any part of bereavement leave occur more than fifteen (15) days from the date of death, except for extenuating circumstances. Abuse of the Bereavement Provision shall be cause for disciplinary action unless there are extenuating circumstances.

ARTICLE 12 **PERSONAL LEAVE**

Each employee may be eligible for three (3) days Personal Leave which may be used for personal business which cannot be conducted after the work day. Use of personal days shall require forty-eight (48) hours notice, except in the case of any emergency. The employee must have the permission of his/her immediate supervisor before Personal Leave can be taken and Personal Leave time shall not be accumulative. Personal Leave shall not be unreasonably denied.

For new employees in their first calendar year of service, Personal Leave shall be earned as follows:

<u>Date of Initial Hire</u>	<u>Number of Personal Leave Days</u>
January 1 thru April 30	3 days
May 1 thru August 31	2 days
September 1 thru October 31	1 day
November 1 thru December 31	0 days

Employees hired on or after October 1 through October 31 of their first calendar year in service may use the one personal day to be awarded to them after two months of service but must use that day prior to the end of the calendar year. Except for employees hired on or after October 1 through October 31 of their initial calendar year of service, no employee shall be entitled to use Personal Leave until he/she has worked three months for the County.

Personal days shall not be carried over from one calendar year to the next. Effective with the execution of this Agreement, personal days may be taken in ½ day increments.

ARTICLE 13 **DUES CHECKOFF**

Following the successful completion of the first ninety (90) days of employment, the employer agrees to deduct from the earnings of each employee Union member dues, initiation fees and special assessments when said employee has properly authorized such deductions in writing. The Union will indemnify, defend and save harmless the County against any and all such claims, demands, suits or other forms of liability that shall arise out of or by reason of action taken by the County in reliance upon salary deduction authorization cards submitted by the Union to the County. The County will forward all dues deduction monies collected on a monthly basis to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local #32. A list of the names of deductees will be forwarded annually.

ARTICLE 14 **AGENCY SHOP**

The parties agree that for the term of this Agreement, in accordance with New Jersey Statutes, any employee in a title covered by this Agreement who is not a member of the Union shall pay an agency shop fee equal to 85% of the dues, initiation fees and special assessments of the bargaining agent. Such fees shall be deducted from the pay of employees affected following the successful completion of the first ninety (90) days of employment. The contract language shall serve as authorization for the deduction of these fees. The bargaining agent agrees to save the employer harmless from any and all actions it takes under this Article.

ARTICLE 15 VACATION TIME

Vacation leave will be granted to each full-time employee in hours on the following basis:

1. For an employee with no more than twelve (12) months of service...one (1) day, in hours, for each calendar month employed.
2. For an employee who has served one (1) year and one (1) day up to a total of four (4) years...twelve (12) working days, in hours, per year.
3. For an employee who has served four (4) years and one (1) day up to eleven (11) years...fifteen (15) working days, in hours, per year.
4. For an employee who has served eleven (11) years and one (1) day up to nineteen (19) years...twenty (20) working days, in hours, per year.
5. For an employee who has served nineteen (19) years and one (1) day...twenty-five (25) working days, in hours, per year.

New full-time employees, both provisional and permanent, shall earn, but are not permitted to use, vacation leave during the first three months of employment. Employees who are not retained at the conclusion of the three-month period shall not be entitled to any leave accumulated during that time.

Each employee shall be informed of his/her Vacation Time through utilization of the County's computer system. Any employee leaving the service of the County shall have unused vacation leave paid to him/her on a pro-rated basis. If separation of service occurs, unearned vacation leave used will be deducted from the employee's last pay along with any other unearned time that the employee has utilized.

ARTICLE 16
SICK LEAVE

Sick Leave shall accumulate at the rate of one and one-quarter (1 ¼) days per month credited in hours in the first year of service, commencing on the first month or major portion thereof from day of hire. It is assumed that the employee shall remain in the service of the County for the remainder of the calendar year, and the total number of sick days, pro-rated shall be credited to the employee in hours. If separation occurs, before the end of the year, and more Sick Leave has been taken than appropriated, on a pro-rated basis, the per diem rate of pay for the excess days shall be deducted from the final pay. Sick Leave shall accumulate from year to year with an additional fifteen (15) days credited in hours to the employee at the beginning of each successive calendar year. Sick Leave may be used as credited even though it has not technically been earned, provided that the employee has worked for the County, in good standing and without any pattern of sick leave abuse for a period of one (1) full calendar year after the calendar year in which employment began. Employees shall provide notification as prescribed by the County Engineer. Days lost due to injury or illness arising out of or caused by County employment for which the employee has a claim for Worker's Compensation, shall not be charged to Sick Leave. Paid holidays occurring during a period of Sick Leave shall not be charged to Sick Leave.

Employees in the bargaining unit are also eligible for coverage under the County's reimbursement policy for unused sick days at retirement. This policy provides for reimbursement for unused sick days at retirement on the basis of one-half (1/2) pay for each earned and unused sick leave hours to a maximum of \$15,000.00 (Fifteen Thousand Dollars) upon execution of the contract. Employees are responsible for following all of the conditions and controls of this policy and all pertinent forms must be submitted to the Department of Employee Relations at least sixty (60) days prior to the date retirement commences. Employees have a choice of selecting either a lump sum payment or payments spread over a three-year period.

In the event an employee is unable to report to work due to illness or injury he/she will call-in as soon as possible to appropriate supervisor.

ARTICLE 17 **UNION LEAVE**

Members of the bargaining unit may use up to a total of thirty (30) aggregate days for union business leave each year. Union Leave will be granted to those members who are authorized by the Union President or his/her designee to perform a sanctioned O.P.E.I.U. activity. Only the Business Manager of O.P.E.I.U. Local #32 can request Union Leave and he/she will make such request to the Director of Employee Relations in writing, at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the commencement of said leave. The Union must confirm to the Director of Employee Relations that the requested leave was utilized. Failure to provide the required notice will result in automatic denial of the requested leave. Union Leave must not impede the operation of the Engineering Department. Joint County/Union discussions, authorized by the Director of Employee Relations about matters of mutual concern, shall not be applied against this benefit.

ARTICLE 18 **PRODUCTIVITY**

The Union agrees that it will cooperate with the Ocean County Board of Commissioners and its agents in any productivity programs adopted by the Board of Commissioners concerning members of this bargaining unit. The Union agrees that it supports and will cooperate with all efforts of the Board of Commissioners to increase and improve productivity among members of this bargaining unit.

ARTICLE 19 **TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

A. Statement of Policy Conditions and Eligibility:

1. Permanent full-time employees may be eligible for tuition reimbursement of eighty (80%) percent of tuition cost up to One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.) per semester, not to exceed Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.) per year.

2. Under no circumstances shall an Employer be obligated to reimburse for any educational expense except tuition. Travel, fees, textbooks, materials and other non-tuition items specifically excluded.
3. The Department Head will approve of the courses in advance and certify that they are directly related to improving the performance of the County employee in his/her job classification and that the funds exist in the departmental budget for the expenses to be incurred. The signature on the purchase requisition will indicate their approval.
4. Only courses offered through accredited institutes of higher learning will qualify for reimbursement.
5. Reimbursement will be contingent upon successful completion of the course as evidenced by a certificate or grade report which will accompany the voucher. Successful completion is defined as a final grade of "C" or better, or in the case where grades are not used, a final result of "pass".
6. Except in unusual circumstances, approval will not be granted for courses which require the employees to be absent during the normal work day.
7. The candidate for an Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree or advanced degree who expects at least fifty percent (50%) of the expenses to be borne by the County will be required to sign an Agreement indicating that they will not leave the employment of the County for a one (1) year period after receiving that degree.

B. Procedures:

1. Tuition Reimbursement Request Form ER193 must be completed by the employee. A brief course description, itemized bill and proof of payment must accompany form.
2. Employee will indicate degree or non-degree program. If degree program, please indicate if contract is on file. If it is not, please contact Employee Relations for the necessary paperwork. Request will not be processed without signed Contract Agreement.
3. A purchase requisition must accompany the request form. The Department Head's signature on the purchase requisition indicates approval for the tuition reimbursement. Electronic purchase requisitions cannot be accepted.
4. The Tuition Reimbursement Form, purchase requisition and all necessary paperwork must be submitted to Employee Relations **PRIOR** to the start of the course. Requests may be denied if received after the start date.
5. Upon review and approval by Employee Relations, the purchase requisition will be forwarded to Purchasing for processing. Copies of the approved Tuition Reimbursement form will be forwarded to Finance and the employee's department.

6. Upon successful completion of the course(s), the employee shall forward the payment voucher and proof of successful completion to Finance for reimbursement.

ARTICLE 20 WORK RULES

The Board of Commissioners may at its discretion adopt work rules for the efficient and orderly operation of its respective departments. The bargaining agent will be given a copy of any work rules fifteen (15) work days prior to the imposition of those rules and the bargaining agent will be required to make any consultative comments it may have no later than ten (10) work days after receipt of the proposed work rules. The Board of Commissioners will consider the comments of the bargaining agent but the final adoption of the work rules will be a decision of the Board of Commissioners and the implementation of the work rules document will be left to the discretion of the Board of Commissioners and the County Administrator.

ARTICLE 21 WORK PERFORMANCE

All employees covered by this Agreement will be expected to perform all duties as assigned by their supervisor. This shall include, but not be limited to, the specific functions and duties enumerated in their individual job descriptions and any other such functions which may be assigned from time to time by their supervisors or through employer work rules, personnel regulations or other regulations. It is also recognized and agreed that employees in this bargaining unit recognize the authority of the Board to promulgate and implement work performance standards in accordance with the dictates and authority resident in the Board.

ARTICLE 22 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The Employer reserves the right to establish a performance evaluation system and to conduct the performance evaluations of all personnel covered by this Agreement. Performance evaluations will be conducted by the appropriate supervisor and the employee will be provided with a copy of his/her performance evaluation.

ARTICLE 23
VISION CARE

Vision Care benefits will be afforded to all members of the bargaining unit in accordance with the provisions set forth in the "Guidelines for Ocean County Vision Service Plan".

It is also agreed that replacement eyeglasses will be supplied for existing glasses broken on the job if the broken pair is surrendered and a County Incident Report is filed by the employee.

ARTICLE 24
JOB CLASSIFICATION/OUT-OF-TITLE PAY

A. An employee will work within his/her own applicable job classification in accordance with the specifications set forth for his/her applicable classification under NJ Civil Service Commission or County job descriptions.

B. If in the event an employee is assigned to perform work in a job classification higher than his/her title for one (1) or more complete work days, he/she shall be compensated based upon the minimum salary of the higher title, or the employee's regular base salary plus 10%, whichever is higher for all hours worked within the job location. Seniority by title within the job location shall prevail.

ARTICLE 25
UNIFORMS

On the first of the month next following three full months of employment, that employee shall be eligible for an initial uniform issue consisting of three (3) long sleeved shirts, three (3) short sleeved shirts, three (3) T-shirts, three (3) pairs of pants and rain gear.

All employees under this bargaining unit who are required to wear a uniform, as designated by the County Engineer, shall be responsible for purchasing and wearing the

appropriate style and color of uniform, including OSHA approved work shoes, if applicable. Failure to conform to the uniform code may result in disciplinary action.

ARTICLE 26 HOURS OF WORK AND OVERTIME

HOURS OF WORK:

1. The regular work week for all full-time employees shall consist of forty (40) hours, on a schedule of eight (8) hours per day, exclusive of the lunch period, as follows:

7:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. - Schedule "A" includes a 30 minute unpaid meal period.

8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. - Schedule "B" includes a 30 minute unpaid meal period. The County Engineer, may, on a temporary basis and with the consent of the employee, modify an employee's work schedule as deemed necessary and appropriate.
2. All employees shall receive two (2) fifteen (15) minute breaks, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.
3. All field employees when working in the field shall be granted a 15 minute wash up time immediately preceding lunch and at the end of the work day.
6. The Department of Employee Relations shall notify the Union, in writing, of any permanent change to the existing schedule of work hours.

OVERTIME:

Overtime at the rate of time and one-half (1 ½X) will be earned for all hours worked after eight (8) hours in a day or forty (40) hours in a week. With the consent of the County Engineer, compensation for overtime may be made in cash or compensatory time.

ARTICLE 27 HOSPITAL, SURGICAL, MAJOR MEDICAL, PRESCRIPTION AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS

All full-time members covered by this bargaining unit shall be permitted to enroll in health benefits two (2) months from their date of hire.

/1. The County of Ocean currently provides medical coverage to County employees through the New Jersey State Health Benefits Program as supplemented by the NJ Local Prescription Drug Program and Chapter 88 P.L. 1974, as amended by Chapter 436 P.L. 1981. The parties recognize that the State Health Benefits Program is subject to changes enacted by the State of New Jersey that may either increase or decrease benefits.

/2. The County shall not change the health insurance coverages referred to in paragraph A except for a plan that is equivalent or better. Provided, however, that the parties expressly recognize that the components of the HMO plans are changed periodically by the plan providers and that the County has no control over or any obligations regarding such changes.

3.

A. All employees, current and future, who retire on or after September 1, 2008 in order to be eligible for the lifetime health benefits upon retirement, must have served a minimum of fifteen (15) of the required twenty-five (25) years with the County.

Any member of the bargaining unit who retires after the execution of this agreement must have served a minimum of seven (7) years with the County (twenty-five (25) years total in the pension system) in order to be eligible for the lifetime health benefits upon retirement.

B. Effective September 1, 2008, the following changes will affect all new hires:

- Employees will be offered the NJ Direct 15 Plan, or its replacement. New hires may elect a higher level of coverage at their expense, in addition to the requirements of Chapter 78.
- Continuation of spousal coverage after the death of the retiree will no longer be offered at the County's expense.
- The County will no longer reimburse retirees Medical part B Premiums.

C. For all employees hired after the execution of this collective negotiations agreement:

- Employees will be offered the OMNIA plan, or its replacement. Such employees may elect a higher level of coverage by paying the difference between the cost of OMNIA and the selected plan, in addition to the requirements of Chapter 78.
- Continuation of spousal coverage after the death of the retiree is not offered at the County's expense.
- The County does not reimburse retirees Medical part B Premiums.

4. An eligible employee may change his/her coverage only during the announced open enrollment period for each year after having been enrolled in the former plan for a minimum of one (1) full year. Regardless of this election, employees are specifically ineligible for a deductive reimbursement.
5. When a member from this bargaining unit is granted the privilege of a leave of absence without pay for illness, health coverage will continue at County expense for the balance of the calendar month in which the leave commences plus up to three (3) additional calendar months next following the month in which the leave commences. After that time has elapsed, if necessary, coverage for an additional period of eighteen (18) months may be purchased by the employee under the C.O.B.R.A. plan.
6. In the case of consecutive leaves of absence without pay, it is understood and agreed that the responsibilities of the County to pay for benefits remains limited to the original period of up to four (4) months.

ARTICLE 28 **FAMILY DENTAL PLAN**

Members of this bargaining unit, after the first of the month following three (3) full months of employment, shall be eligible for a Family Dental Plan contracted for with Blue Cross/Blue Shield or other suitable dental care provider.

The Family Dental Plan will be made available to eligible employees, spouses, and children to age 19 and will be experience-rated. The maximum total cost for services per patient per benefit year is limited to \$2,000. There will be a \$25.00 deductible per patient per benefit year, to be paid by the employee, for up to the first three members of each family. However, this deductible is not applicable to preventive and diagnostic services as described below.

If the patient utilizes a participating dentist the percentage of coverage indicated next to each class of dental care will prevail.

Preventive and diagnostic
(x-rays, cleaning, check-up, etc.)..... 100%

Treatment and therapy (Fillings)	80%
Prosthodontics and periodontics, inlays, caps and crowns, oral surgery (ambulatory)	50%
Orthodontics (limited to \$800. per patient over a 5 year period)	50%

ARTICLE 29 JOB POSTING

- A. Notice of vacancies will be posted on the Engineering Department bulletin board with a copy submitted to all Shop Stewards of the Union by the Department Head or his/her designee. All postings will have a copy of the job description or NJ Civil Service Commission's job specifications.
- B. In the event a candidate is out on authorized leave, a Shop Steward may apply for a position on his/her behalf; however, the candidate must re-apply within five (5) days of his/her return to work.
- C. All postings must be presented to a Shop Steward prior to posting.
- D. All vacancies shall be duly posted and all bids considered.

ARTICLE 30 PROMOTIONAL REMUNERATION

Any employee who receives a promotion within the bargaining unit shall receive a promotional remuneration, six percent (6%) of base salary, or the minimum of the higher title, whichever is greater, effective on the date of promotion. The promotional remuneration shall be Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500). Effective April 1, 2014, the remuneration shall increase to Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000).

ARTICLE 31
SCUBA EQUIPMENT

The County agrees to maintain two (2) full sets of scuba diving equipment for use by the members of this bargaining unit while engaged in underwater inspections or other activities on behalf of the County.

ARTICLE 32
FIELD PERSONNEL SAFETY

It is the responsibility of the County to provide field personnel with available information of potential health hazards of their job on a regular basis and all safety equipment needed to perform duties as assigned by their Supervisor (ex. Haz-Mat equipment). Additionally, the County shall provide all immunizations for the protection of field personnel based on State or County Health Department mandates.

ARTICLE 33
MILEAGE

Employees in this bargaining unit who are required by the County or their immediate supervisors to utilize their vehicles on a daily basis on County business shall be reimbursed in accordance with the existing County policy of mileage at the time of usage and at the prevailing rate.

ARTICLE 34
NIGHT DIFFERENTIAL

Employees covered by this Agreement shall be eligible for an eight percent (8%) night differential if they are scheduled to work on any shift starting after 2:00 p.m.

ARTICLE 35
SEVERABILITY

If any part, clause, portion or article of this Agreement is subsequently deemed by a court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal, such clause, portion or article may be deleted and the remainder of the Agreement not so affected shall continue in full force and effect absent the affected clause. The County and the Union shall negotiate the impact of such change.

ARTICLE 36
PROFESSIONAL LICENSES/CERTIFICATES REMUNERATION

- A. Employees in this bargaining unit who possess a current professional license or certificate not required by their title shall receive financial remuneration in addition to their base pay annually, as follows:

		Effective 4/1/2025
Professional Engineering License	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
Land Surveyor License	\$ 750.00	\$1,500.00
E.I.T. Certificate	\$ 500.00	\$1,000.00
N.I.C.E.T. - Level 4	\$ 400.00	\$800.00
N.I.C.E.T. - Level 3	\$ 300.00	\$600.00
N.I.C.E.T. - Level 2	\$ 200.00	\$400.00
N.I.C.E.T. - Level 1	\$ 100.00	\$200.00

Employees in this bargaining unit possessing the following shall receive financial remuneration in addition to their base pay annually, as follows:

		Effective 4/1/2025
All I.M.S.A. Level 3 Courses Traffic Signals, Signs and Markings	\$ 450.00	\$900.00
All I.M.S.A. Level 2 Courses Traffic Signals, Signs and Markings	\$ 350.00	\$700.00
All I.M.S.A. Level 1 Courses Traffic Signals, Signs and Markings	\$ 250.00	\$500.00
Pre-Requisite Entry level Courses Work Zone Traffic Control	\$ 150.00	\$300.00
Traffic Signal Inspector Course	\$ 150.00	\$300.00
Professional Wetlands Scientist	\$ 400.00	\$800.00
Certified Environmental Professional	\$ 400.00	\$800

Note: The above license/certification payments shall be cumulative in nature. For

instance, an individual who has obtained a Level 1, 2 & 3 I.M.S.A. certification shall receive a total annual educational incentive of One Thousand Fifty Dollars (\$1,050.00). With the exception of the Professional Engineering License, maximum annual license/certification payments shall be One Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$1,350.00). The maximum shall increase to \$2,700 effective April 1, 2025. Certifications must be updated, when required, in order to maintain the stipend.

- B. This incentive will be paid in equal increments through the employee's regular bi-weekly pay. Compensation to commence within thirty (30) days after notification and required proof is made and submitted to the Ocean County Engineer and the Department of Employee Relations.
- C. Successful attainment of the license or N.I.C.E.T. certificate shall be evidenced by submission of a copy of the actual license or certificate.
- D. The County will reimburse the employee for the cost of the registration only upon passing the required test for each certification.

ARTICLE 37 **SALARY**

- 1. Effective April 1, 2023, and retroactive thereto, all members of the bargaining units shall receive an increase of 2.25%, but not less than Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500), or the new minimum, whichever is greater, to their March 31, 2023 base salary. Members working less than forty (40) hours per week shall have any flat dollar adjustments pro-rated.
- 2. Effective April 1, 2024, all members of the bargaining units shall receive an increase of 2.25%, but not less than Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500), or the new minimum, whichever is greater, to their March 31, 2024 base salary. Members working less than forty (40) hours per week shall have any flat dollar adjustments pro-rated.
- 3. Effective April 1, 2025, all members of the bargaining units shall receive an increase of 2.25%, but not less than Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500), or the new minimum, whichever is greater, to their March 31, 2025 base salary. Members working less than forty (40) hours per week shall have any flat dollar adjustments pro-rated.

4. Effective April 1, 2026, all members of the bargaining units shall receive an increase of 2.25%, but not less than Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500), or the new minimum, whichever is greater, to their March 31, 2026 base salary. Members working less than forty (40) hours per week shall have any flat dollar adjustments pro-rated.
- /5. The minimum salaries for all titles are set forth in Attachment A.

ARTICLE 38 **LEGAL AID**

The employer shall provide legal aid to all personnel covered by this Agreement as provided for in an Ocean County Resolution adopted by the Board of Commissioners on July 7, 1982; Indemnification of Employees.

ARTICLE 39 **FULLY BARGAINED CLAUSE**

The parties agree that they have fully bargained and agreed upon all terms and conditions of employment that were or could have been the subject of negotiations. This Agreement represents and incorporates the complete and final understanding and settlement by the parties of all bargainable issues which were or could have been the subject of negotiations. There shall be no new negotiations on any such matters during the term of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 40 **MINIMUM CALL-IN PAY**

Employees required to return to work on an overtime basis shall receive a minimum of four (4) hours of overtime pay at time and one-half (1-1/2X) rate for each instance in which the employee is called upon to return to work beyond the forth (4) hours per week, notwithstanding that the actual time worked may be less than four (4) hours. The four (4) hour call-in overtime guarantee shall only apply to those instances where the employee has completed his/her regular shift and is called to return to work after completion of their regular shift.

In the instance where the employee is required to return to work on an overtime basis and

has worked five (5) hours, the employee shall receive a minimum of eight (8) hours of overtime pay at time and one-half (1-1/2X) rate for each instance in which the employee is called upon to return to work beyond the forty (40) hours per week, notwithstanding that the actual time worked may be less than eight (8) hours. The five (5) hour call-in overtime guarantee shall only apply to those instances where the employee has completed his/her regular shift and is called to return to work after completion of their regular shift.

Notwithstanding the above, in no event shall the employee be paid at the overtime rate for working during the employee's regularly scheduled working hours. In other words, the four (4) hours minimum overtime pay shall only be paid when the four-hour period is outside the employee's regular shift. As an example, but not by way of limitation, if an employee is called upon to return to work at 6:00A.M. and the employee's regular shift commences at 8:00 A.M., then the employee shall only be paid at the overtime rate for two (2) hours.

An employee shall be required to maintain appropriate records for their overtime as required by the employer.

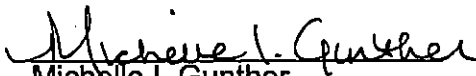
ARTICLE 41
DURATION

The terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement shall become effective on April 1, 2023 except for those Articles which contain specific dates to the contrary and shall continue in full force and effect until March 31, 2027 or until execution of a successor Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused these presents to be signed and attested to this 20th day of December, 2023.

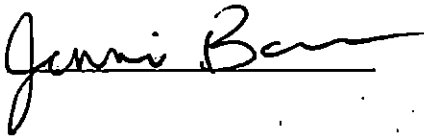
**FOR THE OCEAN COUNTY BOARD
OF COMMISSIONERS**

ATTEST:


Michelle I. Gunther
Clerk of the Board 12/21/2023


JOSEPH H. VICARI
Director

WITNESS



FOR THE O.P.E.I.U., LOCAL #32


BILL HENNING, Business Manager

**APPENDIX A
Engineering**

<u>Title</u>	<u>4/1/2023</u>	<u>4/1/2024</u>	<u>4/1/2025</u>	<u>4/1/2026</u>
Engineering Aide Traffic Enumerator Forestry Aide	\$37,440	\$39,000	\$40,040	\$41,600
Drafting Technician Inspector Road Openings Traffic Analyst Traffic Investigator	\$39,940	\$41,500	\$42,540	\$44,100
Bridge Construction Inspector/ Road Inspector Senior Drafting Technician Senior Engineering Aide Senior Inspector Road Openings Road Inspector	\$43,940	\$45,500	\$46,540	\$48,100
Engineer Trainee Principal Drafting Technician Principal Engineering Aide Senior Traffic Analyst Senior Road Inspector Bridge Construction Inspector/Senior Road Inspector Mechanical Engineer Trainee	\$50,940	\$52,500	\$53,540	\$55,100
Assistant Engineer Assistant Engineer Civil Assistant Engineer Environmental Environmental Specialist Senior Bridge Construction Inspector/Senior Road Inspector	\$60,940	\$62,500	\$63,540	\$65,100
Senior Engineer Senior Engineer Civil Senior Engineer Environmental Senior Engineer Hydraulic Environmental Specialist 1	\$66,440	\$68,000	\$69,040	\$70,600

Appendix A reflects a 40 hour work week. Employees working less than 40 hours shall have the above-referenced minimums Pro-rated.