

# Memorandum



**Date:** MAR 10 2010

**To:** All County Employees

**From:** George M. Burgess  
County Manager

**Subject:** Status of Collective Bargaining

In meeting the challenges of our financial situation and adjusting to the FY 2009-10 budget, Mayor Alvarez and I have tried to keep you informed of the changes and the impacts to our workforce. I last sent a memo about this topic on October 30, 2009, and we discussed these issues during a virtual meeting on December 14, 2009. Today I want to provide you with an update on the current status of collective bargaining proceedings and how it applies to you.

As you are aware, the County budget adopted in September 2009 required a salary reduction of five percent and eliminated funding for merit increases, longevity bonus awards, flex dollars, and premium pay. In October 2009, longevity bonus awards and merit increases were suspended for one year for non-bargaining unit employees. In November 2009, Mayor Alvarez imposed a five percent wage reduction and suspended flex dollars and premium pay on non-bargaining unit employees under his purview. Members of the Board of County Commissioners and others who oversee non-union employees implemented reductions in various ways to provide the same savings to their budgets.

As we continue to work with all unions and their representatives on finalizing negotiations, equity among employees continues to be one of my top priorities. To that end, through labor negotiations, we have been able to provide all unions with an alternative to the five percent pay reduction: a five percent contribution from base wages toward the County's group health insurance. This means that each employee would contribute five percent of his/her base pay toward the County's overall cost of providing group health insurance.

While the savings to the County remain the same, employees will benefit in several ways. Any future salary increases (cost of living adjustments, merit raises, etc.) would be based on the employee's base rate of pay and would not be negatively impacted by the five percent contribution. The same would apply to retirement contributions and leave payouts upon separation from the County. Lastly, the five percent contribution will be applied on a pre-tax basis for those employees with County health insurance. Applied across the organization, this approach permits us to maintain equity while still achieving the necessary budget savings. Further, applying the reduction uniformly in this manner will preserve the relationship among job classifications and pay ranges in the pay plan.

On February 18, 2010, the Board ratified the following contracts:

- IAFF Local 1403 (Fire)
- AFSCME Local 1542 (Aviation)
- AFSCME Local 199 (General)
- AFSCME Local 3292 (Solid Waste)

On March 2, 2010, the Board ratified contracts for the Police Benevolent Association (PBA) Supervisory and Rank and File Units.

In addition to the five percent contribution toward group health insurance, there will be a one-year suspension of the following for bargaining-unit employees and for non-bargaining employees under the Mayor's purview.

- Merit increases
- Longevity bonus awards
- Flex payments
- \$50 biweekly Premium Pay (for those who currently received this payment)

The one-year suspension period will be a rolling year; it will last for 12 months, beginning when the suspension is imposed. The unions listed above have voted to accept the five percent contribution towards group health insurance. Reductions for the first four unions began on February 22, 2010 and will be reflected in paychecks beginning March 12, 2010. Reductions for the PBA will begin on March 8, 2010 and will be reflected in their March 26, 2010 paychecks. These adjustments will not be retroactive.

In similar fashion, we will discontinue the five percent reduction to base pay implemented in November 2009 for non-bargaining unit employees under the Mayor's purview and apply the deduction toward group health insurance going forward. These changes will also be reflected beginning with the paycheck of March 12, 2010. Since employees will now contribute five percent towards group health insurance, the five percent pay reduction will be restored. However, the pay reductions for these employees that were implemented from November 2009 to March 2010 will not be retroactively restored.

For non-bargaining unit employees not under the Mayor's purview, each agency's appointing authority will determine what, if any, changes will be implemented.

At this time, we are uncertain as to the timing of the implementation of budget reductions for AFSCME Local 121 (Water & Sewer) and Transport Workers Union Local 291 because an agreement has not been reached with either union. We continue to work with these unions towards successful resolution of outstanding issues.

Finally, while the Government Supervisors Association of Florida (GSAF, OPEIU Local 100, both Supervisory and Professional Units) has had ratified contracts since July 23, 2009, employees covered by these unions may also be subject to the five percent contribution towards group health insurance. We must wait to finalize each of the outstanding contracts in order to determine which provisions are applicable to the GSAF employees.

The size and scope of these cuts are unprecedented, but unfortunately we have no choice but to make these reductions. As the Mayor and I have said repeatedly throughout this process, neither of us have ever witnessed such a difficult economic situation.

I will continue to keep you informed of further developments. If you have any questions as to how these reductions apply to you, or have a question as to which union you are covered by, please contact your departmental personnel representative or the Human Resources

Department. You may also refer to information provided in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding these reductions at <http://www.miamidade.gov/hr/>.

c: Honorable Carlos Alvarez, Mayor  
Honorable Dennis C. Moss, Chairman  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners  
Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Clerk, Circuit and County Courts  
Honorable Joel Brown, Chief Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit  
Honorable Katherine Fernandez-Rundle, State Attorney  
Honorable Carlos Martinez, Public Defender  
Honorable Pedro Garcia, Property Appraiser  
Robert A. Cuevas, Jr., County Attorney  
Dr. Eneida O. Roldan, President and Chief Executive Officer, Public Health Trust  
Robert Meyers, Executive Director, Commission on Ethics and Public Trust  
Christopher Mazzella, Inspector General  
County Executive Office Senior Staff  
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor  
Department Directors  
Collective Bargaining Unit Representatives