

# Austin Works

AFSCME Local 1624 | 1812 Centre Creek DR., #310, AUSTIN, TX 78754  
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January 2023

## CONGRATULATIONS Elected Candidates!



Congressman Greg Casar with Local 1624 organizer  
Krissey O'Brien and labor advocates in Washington, D.C.

### 2023 AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

#### Mayor

Kirk Watson

#### New Council Members

José Velásquez  
District 3

Ryan Alter  
District 5

Zohaib "Zo" Qadri  
District 9

#### Returning Members

Natasha Harper-Madison  
District 1

Vanessa Fuentes  
District 2

José "Chito" Vela  
District 4

Mackenzie Kelly  
District 6

Leslie Pool  
District 7

Paige Ellis, **Mayor Pro Tem**  
District 8

Alison Alter  
District 10

## Labor Wins in November Elections

Congratulations to the AFSCME-endorsed candidates who were elected in November. We are especially proud of longtime AFSCME Local 1624 member and former Austin City Council member Greg Casar, who was elected to the U.S. Congress.

Locally, we are excited to begin working with our newly elected mayor, Kirk Watson, who has a history of working with Local 1624 and a track record that has earned our support.

Congratulations to new City Council members José Velásquez and

Ryan Alter and returning Council members Natasha Harper-Madison and Paige Ellis, Mayor Pro Tem. We supported these candidates because we know they will be great advocates for Labor. Finally, we'd like to welcome Zohaib "Zo" Qadri, Council member, District 9, who has already reached out to us and is ready to work for City employees.

Though she did not win her election, we want to recognize and thank Linda Guerrero for her years of community service in Austin.



Kirk Watson takes oath of office.



## TALKING

## POLITICS



Krissy O'Brien, Local 1624 organizer, in Washington, D.C.

## Krissy Goes to Washington



Happy New Year, Local 1624!

I hope you had a restful holiday break. I want to give our essential employees who worked through the holidays a shout out for keeping our city and county running. In whatever space I am advocating for our members, I am always thinking about our essential employees and working to uplift your voices.

I was honored to go to Washington, D.C. to see Congressman Greg Casar be sworn into the U.S. House of Representatives and attend his inauguration party. He couldn't take the oath of office that day because of the House Speaker election fiasco, but I got to celebrate with him and show Local 1624's support.

We ended the year with good organizing numbers; our union is growing! Big thanks to all who help us grow stronger and stay engaged in their union. We cannot do this work without you. You are Local 1624!

If you have not seen an email or text from us recently, please update your contact information to stay connected with us. We must do this work together. Please call me with any questions about organizing or politics at 512-350-8498.

## IT PAYS TO BE UNION

# Did You KNOW?

### Spotlight on Parental Leave in 2023

Travis County is ahead of the City of Austin when it comes to parental leave. In May the County expanded parental leave to 8 weeks for eligible employees, while the City of Austin still offers only six weeks.

We are working with Council Member Fuente's office to push the city manager to move forward on a resolution the Council passed in May, directing the city manager

to "assess a phased approach" to increasing paid parental leave to 8 weeks by 2023, 10 weeks by 2024 and 12 weeks by 2025 or sooner.

Our sights are now set on another resolution that will direct the city manager to begin implementation of the expansion this year.

Look for updates and calls to action soon.

### Inactive or No Membership = No Representation



We've had an increase in calls for representation from employees who have not yet joined or who have dropped the union. Local 1624 has a longstanding policy of limiting representation to members who have issues or concerns that arise after, not before, they join or rejoin the union, much like an insurance policy. As our union continues to grow and the demand for individual representation increases, we've had to strictly enforce this policy. Ensure you're protected; keep your membership active!



## Local 1624 Scholarships

It's that time. Now accepting college scholarship applications.

### Who can apply

Graduating high school senior whose parent or legal guardian is a member of AFSCME Local 1624

### Requirements

Complete and submit application, attend interview in May, and be enrolled in a university, junior college or trade school at the time the scholarship is awarded.

### Application deadline

May 1, 2023

### How to apply

Visit [afscme1624.org](http://afscme1624.org) to complete an application or email [info@afscme](mailto:info@afscme) to request an application.



MLK DAY, JAN. 16



Martin Luther King, Jr. famously marched with AFSCME sanitation workers as a leader in the fight for equal rights. Local 1624 honors his legacy by participating annually in the Community MLK March and Celebration.

## HOLIDAY PARTY 2022

It was great to see you in 2022! As our union grows, so does our holiday party, and 2022 was our biggest turnout yet. As usual, members enjoyed prizes galore, dancing, and great food in great company.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we made adjustments – including a new venue – to accommodate the increased number of party attendees after a two-year hiatus. We hope to see you all again in person this year and in the years to come!





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#### INJURED AT WORK OR IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT?

The Physicians in Doctors' Council are leading medical service providers treating members with their job injuries or auto accidents. Along with providing the best treatment for the injured worker, the staff can also assist you with the necessary paperwork required for your injury claim. This is critical element in the process and one that too many facilities tend to overlook. We are here to serve you with the utmost compassion and the best quality healthcare possible as we strive to improve the health of the patient toward a pain-free life. If you are injured, please call Sara Santiago to assist you with your claim.

**Call Sara Santiago 281-923-3886**  
**For Free Assistance with your Claim**

YOU CAN COUNT ON YOUR UNION PHYSICIANS FOR QUALITY CARE AND  
ASSISTANCE-WE WORK FOR YOU!

