



North Coast Regional Newsletter

April 2025

Welcome to the 1st North Coast Regional Newsletter! Our Local union is divided into 5 regions. Your chapter is 1 of 37 in Region B, which stretches from Marin County up the coast to the Oregon border. There's plenty going on in our region; below are issues we'd like to highlight for you this month...

Federal Attacks & Our Response

Hands Off Medicaid!

For 60 years, states and the federal government have shared responsibility for Medicaid. Now Congress is planning to cut federal payments to states by as much as \$2.5 trillion over the next 10 years to pay for tax cuts for billionaires and large corporations.

To absorb this loss, states will have to cut services for people who depend on them, reduce payments to hospitals and other providers, and likely borrow from other parts of the budget, affecting support for vital services such as schools, housing, and childcare.

What Is Medicaid?

- Provides health insurance for nearly 40% of all kids.
- Pays most home-and community-based long-term services that enable seniors and those with disabilities to live as independently as possible at home or in their communities.
- Covers 6 in 10 nursing home residents.
- Supports schools that provide Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and other health and mental health services to kids.
- Provides health insurance for 15 million working adults who have low-wage jobs that do not offer other affordable coverage.
- Helps more than 10 million seniors afford their Medicare premiums, and covers some health costs for low-income people enrolled in Medicare.
- Is the largest payer for mental health services in the U.S., including treatment for substance use disorder.

If Congress cuts Medicaid:

- Millions of people will lose healthcare.
- Seniors will lose home care.
- Nursing homes will be understaffed.
- Rural hospitals that depend on Medicaid funding will close.
- Our healthcare crisis will get even worse because there will be less funding for healthcare jobs
- Kids with learning and developmental disabilities will not have support so that they can learn and thrive.
- Deep Medicaid cuts have a devastating impact on state budgets, reducing funds not only for Medicaid services but also for other areas. State and local governments will have to make cuts to make up the difference. This means hiring freezes and stagnant wages. Dirty, overcrowded schools and fewer community services like pools, libraries, and parks.

We will all feel the impact of Medicaid cuts.

The Threat Is Real

The threat to Medicaid and our healthcare is real and we need to take it seriously.

Last month, Congress passed a budget framework with \$880 billion in proposed cuts to Medicaid.

Now, Republicans in Congress are considering many different proposals to achieve these cuts.

It's time for those who care about Medicaid to *speak up* and *fight back*.

How You Can Help: *Talk with your U.S. Senators & Representatives!*

We need people to meet with, call, and email their U.S. Representatives and Senators.

Tell your Representatives and Senators how important Medicaid is for our community!

Who are my Congress Members?

Before contacting a legislator, make sure you are their constituent using [Congress.gov: Find your Legislator](https://www.congress.gov/locate).

A **constituent** is someone who lives in the place that their legislator represents. Constituents are the ones who vote for their legislator. That's why legislators should care about what their constituents have to say.

Request an In-Person Meeting with your Congress Members

You can ask for a meeting to talk to your legislators about Medicaid!

Face-to-face meetings with legislators are one of the most important tools because they can't ignore people who are right in front of them talking about a problem. It also helps them put a "face" to a particular problem or law. Legislators could think of you and your story when they make decisions about Medicaid which will hopefully affect the way they vote.

Call Your Congress Members

When many constituents call about a particular problem it shows how many people care about it and influences how they vote about it. That is why it's important to keep calling your legislators about Medicaid: to remind them that funding Medicaid is important to the people they represent.

You can call the [Capitol switchboard \(202\) 224-3121](tel:2022243121) to be connected with your Congress Member's office.

Tip: Members of Congress have both DC and district offices. Oftentimes, district offices have a lower call volume, so you may be more likely to speak with a staff member from their local district office than if you were to call their DC office. Or you can call both!

Email Your Congress Members

Legislators get a lot of emails. The staff who work for Congress do not always read the emails people send them. If you can meet with your legislator or call them, it is more likely your legislator will get your message. If you cannot meet with your legislator or call them, emailing your legislator is still useful!

Show your solidarity by [emailing your Congressperson](#) or use the following QR code:



Supporting Immigrant Workers and Community Members

As union members we build worker power to protect our working conditions. We can use the same approach to help protect each other and our community by learning our rights, educating others, and standing in solidarity together.

ICE Arrested a Person in the *Sonoma County* Probation Lobby

A [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement \(ICE\) agent arrested a person in the lobby of the Sonoma County Probation Department on March 13th](#).

A person who was released from jail was reporting to Probation per their court order. An ICE agent entered the Probation lobby around 2:00pm wearing plain clothes and did not identify himself to staff. The agent placed the person in handcuffs, then drove away in a white van with federal plates with the detainee inside the vehicle. The incident marks the only known arrest by ICE of an individual at an employer in our region.

Know Your Rights Training: Immigration & ICE

What would you do if ICE entered the lobby at your work site, approached your client or your coworker?

What are you allowed to do at work to protect yourself and your clients? What aren't you allowed to do? To protect ourselves and our clients, we first have to understand our basic rights.

Please join us via Zoom to hear presentations from [VIDAS Legal](#) and the [North Bay Rapid Response Network](#) that will explain your rights in these situations.

There are 2 training courses scheduled this month:

- [Join the April 17 @ 6:30pm Know Your Rights Training via Zoom](#) or by [Phone at 669-444-9171](#).
- [Join the April 29 @ 6:30pm Know Your Rights Training via Zoom](#) or by [Phone at 669-900-6833](#).

How are we addressing this for our Sonoma County Chapter?

Sonoma County Chapter leadership has met with & lobbied County management to implement the following essential steps to protect County employees and our clients:

- Create a physically separated section in each lobby with restricted access for clients only. ICE agents cannot enter private areas of buildings unless they provide a valid warrant.
- Provide signs to distinguish between public and private spaces within building lobbies. Signs indicating Law enforcement cannot enter without a warrant help people feel more secure, encourage clients to come for services and staff to feel safer at work.
- Modify existing protocols for when an ICE agent is at our workplace to include calling the [North Bay Rapid Response Network](#) using their [24-hour Hotline 707-800-4544](#).
- Provide Know Your Rights training for every employee.
- Distribute boxes of [red & yellow cards](#) from the North Bay Rapid Response Network for all staff.

March In Review

SEIU 1021 Executive Board Officers Sworn In

During the March 22nd SEIU 1021 Executive Board meeting the [newly elected Executive Board officers were sworn in](#) by SEIU President April Verrett.

The [Official Election Results](#) contains the full list of members elected during this Executive Board Election.

The following members were elected to the Executive Board from our North Coast region:



David Cameron & Travis Balzarini being sworn in

Executive Board Position	Winning Candidate	Chapter
Vice President of Region B	Travis Balzarini	Sonoma County
Del Norte County Area Representative	{vacant}	
Marin County Area Representative	Mariette Shin	Marin Water District
Mendocino County Area Representative	{vacant}	
Sonoma County Area Representative	Sandy Sigala	Santa Rosa Junior College
County Industry Council Representative	David Cameron	Sonoma County
Budget & Finance Committee	Steven DeSalvo	Sonoma County
Budget & Finance Committee	{vacant}	

Congratulations to the candidates who were elected, we look forward to working with them on the SEIU 1021 Executive Board for the next 3 years!

Help Wanted: 1 Position Available on the Budget & Finance Committee (BFC)

The Budget & Finance Committee (BFC) provides oversight & transparency on how money from our dues is spent. The BFC works with union staff to develop the annual budget for review & adoption by the Executive Board. The BFC is responsible for reviewing, approving & monitoring the Local's financial reports, budget, investments, expenditures, and spending to ensure financial stability. The BFC also establishes fiscal policies that are adopted by the Executive Board.

We have 1 vacancy at the Budget & Finance Committee (BFC) that needs to be filled ASAP.

If you're interested in this position, please contact our Regional Vice President, Travis Balzarini by phone [\(707\) 480-7961](tel:7074807961) or email travis.balzarini@seiu1021.org.

Member Internship Program Update

Congratulations to **Jeff Weston** for being accepted into the SEIU 1021 Member Internship Program!

Jeff was recently elected to serve on the **Mendocino County** Chapter Board as the At-Large Chapter Officer. Jeff works as an Eligibility Specialist Supervisor for Mendocino County's Family and Children's Services.

The [SEIU 1021 Internship for Leader Development program](#) empowers and develops the next generation of leaders to gain knowledge and real-world union experience. This program is for new and aspiring member-leaders who can come out on full Union Lost Time, which means they work for our union full time for 3 months; our union reimburses the employer for your time away from work.

During this 3-month internship, member interns experience firsthand learning opportunities, including:

- Contract negotiations and enforcement

- Issue-focused campaigns
- Building workplace leadership structures
- Expanding our political power
- Organizing new workers

The internship period is from April 7 to June 27, 2025.

We look forward to working with Jeff and the rest of our member interns as they help in our region and across our Local union.

Sonoma County Library staff deliver 180 petitions to Library Commission

During the November 2024 election, SEIU 1021 members across Sonoma County helped secure over the 2/3 majority votes needed to pass Measure W, which extends an existing library fee and utilizes a sales tax previously approved by voters in 2016.

Although we helped secure the tax revenue needed to keep Sonoma County Library adequately funded, management refuses to hire necessary staff positions.

During the Library Commission meeting on March 5th, SEIU 1021-represented branch managers, librarians, and library support staff who keep Sonoma County libraries running [delivered 180 petitions demanding adequate staffing](#).



Whistleblower Complaint Filed for Wasteful Spending in Sonoma County

On March 11th, [SEIU 1021 filed a whistleblower complaint](#) regarding the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors' proposed purchase of the American AgCredit building at 400 Aviation Blvd., Santa Rosa. The whistleblower complaint was filed through the county's Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Whistleblower Hotline Program.

According to the County's own hired expert appraiser, the County has **proposed overpaying** for the building by as much as **\$19 million**. These are funds that could be better spent on road repairs, homeless services, affordable housing, and other support for our communities.

The [Press Democrat covered this story](#) as well.

April Events

April 4: Field Representative Michael Vilorio's Retirement

We appreciate Michael's many years of service to our members and wish him a well-deserved retirement. In the meantime, the following chapters will be re-assigned to Field Staff as follows:

Chapter	Field Staff	Email	Phone
Sonoma County	Joel Evans-Fudem	joel.evans-fudem@seiu1021.org	707-380-5804
City of Sonoma	Joel Evans-Fudem	joel.evans-fudem@seiu1021.org	707-380-5804

[Now Hiring for a Field Representative!](#) We have an opening in our Santa Rosa office if you, or someone you know, is interested in becoming a Field Representative with our Local union.

April 17 @ 6:30 – 7:30pm: Know Your Rights Training: Immigration & ICE

Zoom presentation from VIDAS Legal and the North Bay Rapid Response Network that will explain your rights when U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) confronts you, your coworker or your client.

Zoom: [Join the Know Your Rights Training on April 17 @ 6:30pm](#)

Meeting ID: 834 0693 1636

Passcode: 462216

Phone: [669-444-9171](tel:669-444-9171)

April 29 @ 6:30 – 7:30pm: Know Your Rights Training: Immigration & ICE

Zoom presentation from VIDAS Legal and the North Bay Rapid Response Network that will explain your rights when U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) confronts you, your coworker or your client.

Zoom: [Join the Know Your Rights Training on April 29 @ 6:30pm](#)

Meeting ID: 88915809629

Passcode: 682926

Phone: [669-900-6833](tel:669-900-6833)

Benefits

SEIU 1021 is offering Healthcare Tuition Support

We're very excited to announce that SEIU 1021 has partnered with [The Education Fund](#) to provide financial assistance for members who work in healthcare (including social work & mental health) to further their career through additional education or to pay for certifications necessary to perform their job.

Currently we're offering **up to \$5,250** in reimbursement for tuition & fees to members enrolled in **qualifying Healthcare & Social Service education programs**: license renewals, continuing education, prerequisite classes and degree/certificate programs.

Tuition Support is provided through reimbursement. Members who are approved for the program & have already paid eligible program costs may submit receipts for reimbursement.

Please note acceptance into the program is not guaranteed & space is limited.

How to Apply

- Have receipts showing payments made toward education at the time of application.
- Be enrolled in a degree/certificate program with a completion or graduation date between September 1, 2022 – July 1, 2025 or completed CEU or license renewal between September 1, 2022 – June 1, 2025.
- If you've already received this reimbursement of \$5,250 you are not eligible for additional funding.

To apply for Tuition Support:

- [Register for MyEdFund](#), the Education Fund's secure member portal.
 - When asked to "Please select your Employer", select from the bottom drop down list.
 - You need to enter your Employee ID number to register.
- Schedule an appointment.

For questions, please contact **Huda Khalil**: [Call \(310\) 985-7620](tel:310-985-7620) or [Email hkhalil@theedfund.org](mailto:hkhalil@theedfund.org).

SEIU Member Benefits

[SEIU Member Benefits](#) is a benefit program exclusively for SEIU members!

As an SEIU Member, you work hard to improve yourself, your family and the communities you serve. You deserve something special too. We're proud to bring you an assortment of great benefits, at no cost or obligation, just for being an SEIU member!

See how the buying power of millions of SEIU members helps you:

[Manage Your Finances](#): Get competitive rates on everything from credit cards to personal loans.

[Protect Your Family](#): Benefit from group rates on a growing portfolio of insurance products.

[Cut Your Cost of Living](#): Get special discounts at thousands of stores and favorite merchants.

[Travel For Less](#): Enjoy specially negotiated rates and travel programs.

[Affordable Education](#): Achieve your education goals while managing costs.

There's no cost or obligation, simply register on the website to get started saving today.

Know Your Rights

The Right to Due Process During Questioning of your Citizenship

The United States' Constitution provides many of the same rights to *all workers*, documented or not.

Everyone should know what they can and need to do if they are ever in a position where their citizenship or immigration status is questioned.

Here are just a few immigration-related rights:

- You have a right to remain silent.
- You have a right to refuse to be searched.
- You have the right to call your country's consulate.
- You have the right to demand copies of your immigration papers.
- You have the right to speak to an attorney.

[SEIU released a video explaining these rights in further detail.](#)

The Right to Representation ("Weingarten Rights")

If you are called into an interview meeting with your supervisor or manager so they can investigate a situation which might result in discipline, you have specific representational rights:

1. You have the right to have a Union Steward and/or SEIU 1021 Field Representative (staff) present.
2. If you want a Steward / Field Representative there, ***you must ask for them.***
3. If you do not know why your manager wants to meet with you, ask them if the meeting could result in discipline.

This statement could save your job:

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, I respectfully request that my Steward / Field Representative be present at the meeting. Without representation present, I choose not to respond to any questions or statements."

4. If your manager refuses to allow you to bring a Steward / Field Representative, repeat your request in front of a witness. Do not refuse to attend the meeting, but do not answer any questions either. Take notes. Once the meeting is over, call your Steward / Field Representative immediately.
5. You have the right to speak privately with your Steward / Field Representative before and during the meeting.

6. Your Steward / Field Representative has the right to play an active role in the meeting. They are not just witness.

These are called "**Weingarten Rights**" based on a 1975 Supreme Court decision (NLRB vs. J. Weingarten).

As with all rights, if we do not use them, we lose them.

Stewards' Corner

What Does a Union Steward Do?

Stewards are the face of the union at the worksite and are critical to building a strong, engaged and active membership. Stewards' roles and responsibilities include: ongoing training; welcome and orientation of new members; mobilize, educate, and inform members on union activities and other issues; resolve worksite issues; process grievances; provide timely and effective representation of the members; attend Steward Council meetings.

A steward is a trusted colleague that can answer questions and counsel fellow workers. You don't need an extensive knowledge of Union Practices or Fair Labor law. In fact, you can be the conduit to a more knowledgeable union member or Field Representative (union staff) that can help.

Having stewards in each building also keeps management more ethical. When management knows that there is fair representation in the workplace, they are less likely to take shortcuts when it comes to communication, scheduling or discipline.

"I have enjoyed being a steward and I always learn from each experience. At times it may require doing some research and that has always continued to inform me and be of better service to others."

~ Valerie Schlafke, Steward from Sonoma County's Community Development Commission

How Do I Become a Union Steward?

The process for becoming a Steward varies for each Chapter. Refer to your Chapter Bylaws for details.

However, there are 3 basic requirements to become a Union Steward:

1) Being a Union Member

You must be a dues-paying union member to become a Steward.

2) Attend Basic Steward Training

Here are the instructions to take the **Basic Steward Training** online through our SEIU 1021 Member Resource Center (MRC) website:

1. Find your **Union Member ID** by either:
 - a. Calling the Member Resource Center at [877-687-1021](tel:877-687-1021).
 - b. Contacting your [Field Representative](#).
2. Go to mrc.seiu1021.org and follow the self-registration process using your Union Member ID and the email address you have on file with the union. This will be the email address on record with Sonoma County.
3. Once logged into the portal:
 - a. In the top horizontal menu, click DIGITAL LEARNING
 - b. ONLINE LEARNING will appear in a drop-down: Click it.

4. Create an Account / Login

If you haven't created an account: Click CREATE AN ACCOUNT and follow the instructions.

If you have already created an account: Enter your login credentials.

5. This should automatically take you to the available COURSES online, which are found located under CATALOG

in the vertical left-hand menu.

- To take a course, find it and click the yellow START button at the bottom of the course panel. This will take you to the COURSE MATERIAL tab.
- Click the title of the course and it will launch in a new window for you.

3) Submit a Union Steward Nomination Petition

Fill out the [SEIU LOCAL 1021 Union Steward Nomination Petition](#) form.

Fellow union members must sign your petition in support of you becoming their onsite Steward.

Once complete, send the form to your Chief Steward or Field Representative.

If you feel called to represent your fellow employees, complete the steps above to join our amazing Stewards!

SEIU 1021 Region B Information

If you have questions or need help, contact your Executive Board Officer or your assigned Field Representative anytime. All communication is confidential. We're here to help!

Executive Board Elected Leaders

Position	Name	Email	Phone
Vice President of Region B	Travis Balzarini	travis.balzarini@seiu1021.org	(707) 480-7961
Del Norte County Area Representative	{vacant}		
Marin County Area Representative	Mariette Shin	mariette.shin@seiu1021.org	
Mendocino County Area Representative	{vacant}		
Sonoma County Area Representative	Sandy Sigala	sandy.sigala@seiu1021.org	
County Industry Council Representative	David Cameron	david.cameron@seiu1021.org	
Budget & Finance Committee	Steven DeSalvo	steven.desalvo@seiu1021.org	
Budget & Finance Committee	{vacant}		

Field Staff

We have **6 Field Representatives** (union staff) assigned to our region:

Name	Primary Office	Phone	Email
Aaron Burton	Santa Rosa	707-234-9737	aaron.burton@seiu1021.org
Jana Blunt	Novato	707-478-6497	jana.blunt@seiu1021.org
Joel Evans-Fudem	Santa Rosa	707-380-5804	joel.evans-fudem@seiu1021.org
Patrick Hickey	Ukiah	707-386-8457	patrick.hickey@seiu1021.org
Phil Ybarrolaza	Santa Rosa	707-906-8763	phil.ybarrolaza@seiu1021.org
Will Ward	Santa Rosa	707-519-0174	will.ward@seiu1021.org

The **Field Director** for our region is **Andrea Zanetti**: andrea.zanetti@seiu1021.org or [707-290-4888](tel:7072904888).

If you can't reach anybody listed above, please contact the **Member Resource Center** (MRC) [877-687-1021](tel:8776871021).

Field Offices

Novato

[384 Bel Marin Keys Blvd](#)

[Suite 155](#)

[Novato, CA 94949](#)

Available by Appointment Only

Santa Rosa

[600 B St](#)

[Santa Rosa, CA 95401](#)

Phone: [707-293-2858](#)

Ukiah

[655 Kings Ct #100](#)

[Ukiah, CA 95482](#)

Phone: [707-376-2403](#)

Bylaws

[SEIU Local 1021 Bylaws](#): This is the official document that governs how our Local union is run.