



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 23, 2024

HGEA Wins Temporary Hazard Pay Arbitration Award Against the Department of Education

In our largest temporary hazard pay award to date, the Hawaii Government Employees Association won our long-standing arbitration against the state Department of Education, securing payment for employees who risked their health and safety throughout the pandemic.

A significant number of the 7,800 employees of the public school system organized into Units 2, 3, 4, 9 and 13 have been awarded hazard pay at the highest rate, amounting in many cases to 25% of their base salary for the duration of Gov. David Ige's emergency proclamation from March 4, 2020 to March 25, 2022.

"Those working in the DOE were some of the most exposed among public service employees, putting their own health – as well as that of their loved ones – at substantial risk to keep services running in Hawaii's schools. The arbitrators in this case and others thus far have been unanimous: our members faced severe hazards over the course of the pandemic to sustain government operations, and they deserve compensation. This victory is a clear signal to the state and counties that it's time to get serious about how they will cover the hefty price tag of THP payouts," said HGEA Executive Director Randy Perreira.

In October 2022, HGEA prevailed against Maui County in our dispute for hazard pay for more than 1,300 workers. Our members in that case have already been paid out by the county. In October 2023, an arbitrator in our case against Kauai County conceded that our members in that jurisdiction faced a hazard. A pending follow-up case will determine payout eligibility. HGEA has numerous outstanding arbitrations, including in Hawaii County and the state executive branch.

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About HGEA: HGEA was founded in 1934 to ensure fair and equitable representation for government employees. HGEA is the largest labor union in Hawaii, with more than 37,000 members. HGEA represents state and county employees in eight bargaining units. HGEA also serves a large associate membership of retirees, other state and county employees and officials, and federal and private sector employees.

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