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September 6, 2019

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Municipal Clerks: Please forward to your Mayor, Governing Body and Department Heads.

I. State Issues

a. State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) Recommended 2020 Rates Decrease.

At yesterday's State Health Benefits Commission Rate Renewal meeting AON, the Commission's consultant, recommended premium rates for plan year 2020. The recommendations include a 4.3% decrease for Active Employees, no increase or decrease for Early Retirees or Medicare Retirees. In the aggregate, the recommended rate represents an **overall rate decrease of 3.8%** for the Local Government Group State Health Benefits program. If you participate in the State Health Benefits Program, we suggest you review the [Plan Year 2020 Rate Setting Recommendation Report – Local Government Employer Group](#). We are currently reviewing the report and will be providing additional updates.

Contact: Lori Buckelew, Senior Legislative Analyst, lbuckelew@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x112.

b. Looking Forward: The Week Ahead

We expect that time between Labor Day and the election to be a relatively slow period for legislative activity. The Assembly, with all 80 seats on the ballot in November, is not expected to quorum again until after the election.

We do expect, however, the State Senate to meet from time to time through the fall, including next week. On Tuesday, the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee will meet to take testimony from invited guests on the implementation of [P.L. 2017, c. 133, the "Water Quality Accountability Act."](#) The Committee is not expected to take action on any bills.

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee will also meet [to consider a number of bills](#). The League does not have a public position on any of these bills, but we are monitoring several. Likewise, the Senate Judiciary Committee will also meet and is anticipated to take action a number of nominations.

The full Senate is scheduled for a voting session on Thursday, September 12. No board list has been released yet.

The League's Government Affairs team will be at the Statehouse, acting as your eyes and ears and the League will advise you of any interesting developments.

Contact: Michael F. Cerra, Assistant Executive Director, mcerra@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x120.

II. Federal Issue

a. Congress Returns to Work as Fiscal Year Nears End

The Federal Government's Fiscal Year ends at the end of this month. Both Houses of Congress will reconvene for legislative action next week. We expect to see timely action on appropriations, which will prevent, or at least postpone, yet another government shut-down.

Prior to the Summer Recess, the House of Representatives passed ten of its twelve annual appropriations bills. The Senate Appropriations Committee is slated to begin action on its twelve bills on September 12. After each House completes that process, differences will need to be reconciled by a Conference Committee. Then, the President will need to complete the process.

Given the amount of work that will need to be done, and given the shortness of time in which to do it, those closest to the matter expect the Government to be kept in operation with a Continuing Resolution, giving Federal lawmakers an additional 60 days to resolve outstanding issues.

We will keep an eye on the process and on the particulars as they might impact municipal operations, and advise you on the outcomes.

Contact: Jon Moran, Senior Legislative Analyst, jmoran@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x121.

III. Annual League Conference

a. 104th Annual League Conference Pre-Registration Opened Aug. 1

Pre-Registration for the 104th Annual League Conference has begun! Costs for pre-registration are \$55 for government officials and \$105 for non-government officials. Pre-registration runs through October 1. After the pre-registration period has ended, attendees must pay for their registration onsite at the Atlantic City Convention Center. On-site registration rates are \$65 for Government Officials and \$125 for non-government officials.

For more information on pre-registration, please visit the [Conference website](#).

Contact: Johnnifer Harris, Assistant Financial Administrator, jharris@njlm.org x119.

b. NJLM Annual Conference Exhibit Booth Registration is Open!

Invite your vendors to exhibit at the 2019 NJLM Annual Conference and showcase their product or service to other municipalities. Exhibit space is over 90% sold out so contact your vendors today – or send us a note and we'll reach out to them! The [2019 Exhibitor and Sponsorship Prospectus \(PDF\)](#), [Interactive Floor Plan](#) and [other exhibit information](#) can be downloaded on the League website.

Contact: Kristin Lawrence, Director of Exhibition and Sponsorships, 609-695-3481 x125, klawrence@njlm.org.

c. Reserve Your Hotel for the Annual League Conference

Preparations for the Annual League Conference, November 19-21, are underway and the hotel reservations system is open for attendees and exhibitors at the [League Conference webpage](#). There you will also see a preliminary schedule of conference sessions.

Staying in Atlantic City for the Conference is a great way to get the most from your attendance at the Conference. Staying over will maximize your time and opportunities to participate in the educational, informational, and networking opportunities offered throughout the Annual League Conference.

d. Unauthorized Hotel Reservation Services

Every year unauthorized firms solicit housing and hotel reservations from attendees at the Annual League Conference. We assure you that the only firm authorized to handle our conference housing reservations is AC Central Reservations. This information is on the top of the [official conference housing form](#) sent to all municipal clerks and posted on the League website.

Using unauthorized reservation services creates real problems for you and the conference as a whole. You cannot be assured your credit card information is secure and your room reservation may not actually be made. Using unauthorized services means your room will not be part of the official conference housing block and you will not get emergency housing information (which happened in both 2011 and 2012), nor will there be adequate shuttle bus services to your hotel.

As always, the League is available to answer your questions on any aspect of the annual conference and we strive to make your participation both enjoyable and highly productive.

Contact: Michael J. Darcy, CAE, Executive Director, mdarcy@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x116.

IV. Also of Interest

a. The League is Now Accepting Applications for the Innovation in Governance Program!

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities will again acknowledge and promote Innovation in Governance through our annual recognition program. This is a great opportunity to showcase innovative solutions to any problems that have cropped up – either suddenly or overtime – in your municipality. It can also be an opportunity to let your peers in on innovations that prevented problems from even arising.

Visit our awards page to see previous years of impressive ideas created by our winning municipalities as well as the [full invitation and application](#) to this year's program.

Contact: Ciara Bradley, Legislative Administrator, CBradley@njlm.org, 609-695-3481 x128.

b. 17th Annual Michael A. Pane Award Nominations Are Now Being Accepted

In honor of the memory of Michael A. Pane, the 17th annual award will be presented to a professional (attorney, engineer, or planner) that personifies outstanding ability, integrity, and a high standard of ethics in his or her dealings with local government. This award includes a \$500 honorarium.

Mr. Pane personified and promoted integrity in local government, and it is the purpose of this award to recognize an individual who has over a period of years demonstrated the same professional commitment to service and, who by so doing, has set high standards that all involved in local government should strive to match.

The award ceremony will be held during the League's Annual Conference in Atlantic City, on Thursday, November 21, during a session of the New Jersey Institute of Local Government Attorneys. Nominations for this award will be accepted through September 15, 2019.

Please mail, fax, or email your nomination to:

Johnnifer Harris
c/o NJLM Educational Foundation, Inc.
222 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08608
Fax: 609-695-5156, Email: jharris@njlm.org

A list of past award winners can be found on the [League website](#).

For additional information, contact John Gillespie at 856-985-4083.



New Jersey State League of Municipalities

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