

PCAs Show Up, Demand Change & Make Voices Heard

HARTFORD, Conn. -- Dozens of Personal Care Attendants gather outside the Department of Social Services offices Friday with tents and cars to represent the struggles with housing and other necessities many are facing. Over 600 PCAs continue to deal with payroll issues, from unpaid hours going back as far as October 2025 to missing hours in their most recent paycheck.

Amarilis Cruz speaks with members of the CT media about her struggles.

[Watch Amarilis LIVE interview](#)

Members stepped up and made sure they were heard, spending hours marching outside the building drawing the attention of local media. Despite media coverage and notification to officials at DSS, employees refused to allow members into the building to submit grievances. Instead PCAs were met with locked doors and security guards.

Tamir Capehart attempts to deliver grievances while security guards refuse access to DSS building.

But it didn't knock members down, instead it light a new fire inside of them. Members like Kara O'Dwyer who shared her very personal struggle of being evicted and losing her apartment. Kara, who has been living out of her car or on the couch of friends, found the courage to share her story because she knows she is not the only person dealing with this. Her check in October was short and she hasn't received the backpay she is due. In addition her most recent check in the January was short once again, despite her consumer being under their allotted hours.

"The anxiety of wondering whether or not I'm going to be paid in full or on time. It's already not enough [pay] to support, you know, basic living expenses and then when it's short then I get overdraft fees, I get late fees. This is not okay and I'm just one of many going through the same things."

Kara O'Dwyer, PCA, SEIU 1199NE Member

Kara O'Dwyer stands outside the car that she also calls home after being evicted.

[Watch Kara's interview](#)

This message isn't anything new we know. Members were at DSS just a couple months ago with the same issues, the good news is the media is listening and so the public is hearing us. The CT Insider was unable to be there Friday, but spoke with Diedre Murch, Vice President and director of Homecare. In the article, which was published earlier

in the week, it highlighted the struggles with the system that tracks hours and how DSS and GTI expect consumers and PCAs to be their own human resources, payroll agents and case managers all while managing their own household budgets, dealing with health struggles and more.

"They don't just work paycheck to paycheck. They really work a paycheck or two behind so one missed payment really very quickly snowballs into a crisis for many of these families."

Diedre Murch, Vice President and Homecare Director, SEIU 1199NE

CT Insider Full Article

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ABOUT SEIU 1199NE

District 1199 SEIU New England represents 29,000 health care and service workers in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Southeastern Massachusetts. In Rhode Island, 1199 SEIU NE represents almost 5,000 members. 1199 SEIU NE is affiliated with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) - a union of over 2 million members across the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada. SEIU has been a national leader in pushing the growing Fight for \$15 and a Union movement.