DHS Supplemental Negotiations 2023-2025 Contract

Supplemental contact bargaining between the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the MAPE DHS Meet and Confer Team ended on May 26, 2026, with neither side accepting any of the other side’s proposals. This stalemate means current provisions in the DHS supplemental contract will sunset with the implementation of the 2023-2025 contract.

For a full review of supplemental negotiations, join DHS Meet and Confer members Thursday, June 8, at 12 p.m. for a Teams meeting overview.

Last year, DHS Management refused to discuss any proposals involving financial implications. Earlier this year, MAPE’s Meet and Confer Team informed management that all our proposals involved financial pieces, and Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) needed to be involved as it was in other agencies’ supplemental negotiations. Although no MMB representative participated in the DHS supplemental negotiations, MAPE received confirmation from both DHS and MMB that DHS was negotiating in consultation with MMB.

MAPE came to the table with a modest package of proposals; most of them asked that DHS employees be treated fairly and with some of the same considerations granted to other government employees. Topics included overtime, shift differentials, a multi-language pay differential and early retirement health insurance benefits for a small number of employees in certain high-risk positions (see MAPE Proposals A, B, C, D, F and G).

In addition, MAPE proposed greater protections and predictability around telework.

Unfortunately, even when telework was stripped of its financial pieces, Management refused to implement no-cost review processes that would have helped make a worker’s telework situation more certain. This would have enabled DHS to better compete, not only with the private sector, but also with other state agencies seeking to hire and retain employees.

DHS Management had only one proposal (Management 1) which asked MAPE to give Management complete discretion to develop “incentive” programs in consultation with MMB, but without any input from MAPE. Management did not define what the incentives could entail or how many MAPE members would be impacted. Management conditioned acceptance of any of MAPE’s proposals on MAPE’s acceptance of management’s proposal.

Too often, we hear about longtime employees training new employees who were hired in at a higher rate of pay with less experience and/or education. Adding discretionary bonuses to new hire pay erodes the framework of compensation fairness. A discretionary compensation system not subject to clear standards can result in nepotism and a process by which protected classes may not be protected. Finally, discretionary incentive payments will not fix the fact that State wages have lagged behind the private sector for years.

Negotiations between DHS MAPE Meet and Confer and DHS Management were cordial, MAPE looks forward to future negotiations with DHS Management regarding these important issues.