

Special Notice for FOP 43 PCSO LEO:

Next week, August 1-6, 2011, members of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Certified Law Enforcement Officers with a rank of Deputy through Lieutenant will be voting on a new contract.

We encourage all our members to be informed and to exercise their right to vote. Should you have any questions concerning portions of the contract or voting times/locations, please direct them to your respective Suncoast PBA rep.

In recent weeks I have had many of our members express concerns over portions of the proposed contract. I have taken these issues to the respective PBA reps. I thank the members of the PBA contract negotiation team for their openness and willingness to speak with all affected members. As of the final draft of the contract to be voted on, 3 of the concerns I heard most are still included. They are:

1. Three year contract with wage re-opener in year's two and three.

Concern: Past contracts have also included non-wage re-openers in subsequent years. This contract has no allowance for non-wage re-openers. The length of the contract is a concern as Sheriff Coats will be retiring at the end of the first year of this contract and members would like to negotiate with the new Sheriff.

2. Non-duty related injury and psychological fitness for duty timeframe has been drastically reduced from 270 days to 150 days in a 12 month period with a possibility of a 30 day extension granted by the Sheriff.

Concern: Members have questioned the reason for this drastic cut and are worried that if they are involved in an off duty mishap or a car crash to no fault of their own, their employment could be in jeopardy before they have a chance to fully recover. When I inquired of the PBA the reason for this drastic cut, I was informed that this was a huge concession in exchange for other benefits in the contract. The PBA could not give any specific data or abuse/misuse of the current policy to warrant such a drastic cut. Please read proposed GO 4-14.

3. Retirement and retiree benefits regarding healthcare.

Concern: If the new contract proposal is ratified, retirees will not be able to change eligible dependants. Only those dependants listed at the time of retirement will be covered. If a necessary life change or needed coverage for another family member is required after retirement, they will be unable to include them under the retired member's policy. Please read proposed GO 6-17.