

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO GEO CONTRACT

The following is a summary of the tentative agreement reached between GEO and the university. "Tentative agreement" is a technical term for when the parties agree about an issue during bargaining and set it aside, agreeing not to talk about it anymore at the table. It is also the term for the complete set of agreed-upon changes in a contract, which are subject to ratification by the union's membership. None of these TAs will be implemented or have any force or effect until the contract is ratified by a vote of the membership.

Wage increases:

- AY24-25: 3% added to minimum stipend, then an additional 9% added to all stipends, including minimum (~12.27% raise to minimum, new minimum of \$36.67/hr)
- AY25-26: 1% added to minimum stipend, then an additional 5% added to all stipends, including minimum (~6.05% raise to minimum, new minimum of \$38.89/hr)
- AY26-27: 1% added to minimum stipend, then an additional 5% added to all stipends, including minimum (~6.05% raise to minimum, new minimum of \$41.24/hr)
- ARDs no longer pay for housing (they will be brought up to the base GEO minimum rate)
- General increases apply to CPE/UWW instructors

Retro pay:

- \$1500 for grad students who had appointments last fall or spring
- "Signing bonus" of \$500 for all current grad workers with appointments
- Raises retroactive to the date of agreement (September 27th) not ratification

Tuition and Fees:

- Full waiver of graduate service fee for grad workers effective AY24-25
- 75% waiver of engineering fee for grad workers effective AY24-25; 100% waiver of engineering fee for grad workers effective AY25-26
- Tuition credits now apply to UWW courses

Housing

- Creation of an emergency housing fund with \$250,000 in seed funds and ~\$550,000 added yearly (administration of fund TBD by joint union/university committee)
- GEO representation on any strategic planning committee regarding housing
- UMass housing presentation for incoming grads regarding off-campus housing

Health and Welfare Trust

- Retro contribution to Health and Welfare Trust - equivalent of an additional \$3/FTE/week for '23-24 into the HWTF
- Dental and Vision
 - Contribution increases to \$22/FTE/week for '24-25
 - Contribution increases to \$24/FTE/week for '25-26
 - Contribution increases to \$26/FTE/week for '25-26

- Childcare reimbursement
 - \$185,000 increase annually (new total: \$400,000, ~30 additional families)
 - One-time \$100,000 contribution in 2024

Pilot Emergency Loan Program

- \$1,200 no-interest loan, repayable through payroll deduction, can be reapplied for by grad workers starting each fall

Discrimination and Harassment

- Failure to provide ADA accommodation now explicitly a form of discrimination
- Inclusion of physical and mental health as protected categories
- Expanded definitions of sexual harassment and harassment
 - Explicit protection of members from unwanted transphobic and homophobic comments
- Use of university process such as workplace bullying procedure pauses timelines for filing a grievance about harassment
- UMass agrees to reopen negotiations if affirmative action laws change in a way that impacts GEO

Health and Safety

- Free testing for grad workers in case of any public health emergencies as recommended or required by public health institutions
- More robust joint health and safety committee
- New requirement to provide grad workers with a safe and accessible teaching and working environment
- Memorandum of understanding with agenda for first committee meeting including list of major issues in need of address by UMass

Working Conditions

- Improvement of detailed job descriptions for grad student employees
- Required notice (as part of JD) for possibility of needing to work outside of contracted weekly hours during some part of a position
- Best efforts will be made to provide all GSEs with workspaces that are outside of a lab
 - Workspaces will be a “reasonable distance” from labs, ideally within the same building
- Committee to address the issue of unpaid preparation time during the summers, with a deadline of May 25, 2025 for a solution.

International Student Rights

- New committee to develop recommendations about issues facing non-resident and non-citizen graduate workers, in particular the issue of remote work from outside of the country

Expanded Grievance Procedure

- Appointment and reappointment, job descriptions, and changes in assignment are now grievable under the GEO contract via expedited grievance procedure
- Updated language regarding filing for binding arbitration (to conform with current practice)

Time Off

- Personal leave accumulated with a multi-year GEO assistantship will now carry over between semesters

Union Rights

- Streamlined information about grad workers from university
 - FERPA no longer needs to be proactively waived, it is waived as a condition of signing your GFAF
- Improved access to departmental bulletin boards (including electronic boards)
- GEO/UMass to split the cost for first-year mailers for new grad students