



An Act to provide fair working conditions for public higher education adjunct faculty

MTA Legislative Agenda, 2021-2022

Lead Sponsors: Sen. Pat Jehlen (D-Somerville) | Rep. Paul Mark (D-Peru)

Increases the benefits and protections for adjunct faculty at Massachusetts public higher education institutions, including health care, retirement benefits, and fair wages.

Currently, adjunct faculty teach the majority of courses at many of the Commonwealth's public colleges and universities. However, despite their vital role in educating our students, adjuncts often work for low pay, have little job security, and generally do not have access to employer-sponsored health insurance and other basic workplace benefits.

This bill would address the unjust conditions under which many of our adjunct faculty work by:

- Providing adjunct faculty who teach the equivalent of half time or more with access to health insurance and state pension options.
- Requiring per-course pay parity with full-time non-tenure track faculty of comparable qualifications for adjunct faculty.
- Establishing a minimum of a 7.5 percent state contribution to the SMART Plan retirement account for faculty who work less than half time.
- Creating a fund and mechanism for increasing the number of tenure-track faculty on public college and university campuses and giving current adjunct faculty notice and priority consideration for new full-time positions.

Passing An Act to provide fair working conditions for public higher education adjunct faculty means:

- 2,456 adjunct faculty members will be eligible for employer-sponsored health insurance through the GIC.*
- Adjunct faculty will no longer lack the basic security of health insurance, retirement benefits or fair wages to support themselves and their families.
- Adjunct faculty will be given greater opportunities for full-time positions in higher education.
- Students and the Commonwealth will benefit from an adjunct workforce that is treated justly.

* Source: Pre-pandemic figure based on data from the Dept. of Higher Education and the MA State College Association.

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