

## THE BASICS

### **Why go on strike?**

Ultimately, stand up for our patients. St. Joseph's cuts to staffing levels and employee benefits directly and indirectly harm our ability to recruit and retain quality employees and provide the best possible patient care.

### **When would we strike?**

In NUHW, members decide if and when we strike. Before our bargaining committee calls for a strike, we will hold a democratic vote to authorize them to make that call. Even after a vote, our committee will only call for a strike if and when they decide it's absolutely necessary. A public petition in support of a strike is not authorization.

### **How long would we strike for?**

The first strike would be for only as long as the vote authorizes – usually one day.

### **Can we be "locked out" for striking?**

It is illegal for the employer to lock out workers who are engaged in an Unfair Labor Practice strike, though some employers will do it anyway.

### **Do I get paid or can I use PTO during a strike or lockout?**

Unfortunately not – this is part of the reason a strike is a tool of last resort.

### **What's going on at the other NUHW-represented St. Joseph hospitals?**

All four hospitals (Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Eureka, and Redwood) are preparing to strike at the same time.

### **Why is it important that I participate in the strike?**

To stop St. Joseph's unfair labor practices and change their position at the bargaining table, we need the active participation of all of our members. This means being willing to strike and join your co-workers on the picket line. Solid participation shows St. Joseph, the media, and the public that we are united to achieve our goals. Staying home or crossing the picket line sends the message that St. Joseph can continue to cut benefits and staffing to the detriment of patients.

## OUR RIGHTS

### **Do we have the right to strike and picket?**

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and California state law both protect our right to peacefully picket. In addition, our contract clearly allows it.

### **Can I be fired or disciplined for striking?**

No. Employees have the right to engage in concerted, protected activities under the National Labor Relations Act. Strikes and pickets are protected activities.

### **Can I strike if I'm per diem, or still in my probationary period?**

Yes. You have the same rights and protections under federal law as any other employee.

### **I'm an intern, a Traveler/Registry/ Agency worker, or in another position outside NUHW, but I don't cross picket lines. Can I honor the strike?**

Federal law, upheld by the United States Supreme Court, gives all employees the right, as a matter of conscience, to honor a picket line. However, you should also look at your union contract, if you are in a union job.

### **Do I have the right to distribute information to patients and members of the public on St. Joseph property?**

Yes. Section 7 of the National Labor Relationships Act states, "Employees shall have the right to self-organization to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection." Distributing information to patients or members of the public is protected concerted activity. You must make sure not to interfere with patient care or conduct these activities in patient care areas. St. Joseph knows this is the law.

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## **PATIENTS AND SCHEDULING**

### **How can we ensure our patients are cared for?**

Ultimately, going on strike may be the best way to take care of patients in the long term. In the short term, it is management's job to figure out how to care for patients while we are on strike. We are required by law to give St. Joseph 10 days notice of a strike so that they have time to arrange proper care for patients.

### **Do I have to personally notify my manager that I won't be coming to work on the day of the strike?**

No. Our delivery of the legal 10-day notice document will inform St. Joseph that all NUHW members will not be reporting to work. There is no need to call in.

### **What if my manager asks me, "for scheduling purposes," if I'm coming to work?**

You do not have to answer, although the best answer is, "No, I am standing with my co-workers." It is unlawful for your manager to ask you further questions about your plans or to try to discourage you from participating. If they do so, please notify your steward or union rep.

### **Should I discuss the strike with my patients?**

At your discretion, provided no pressure whatsoever is imposed on any patient to support the strike. You may inform your patients, but you should not lobby them. You may provide factual answers or materials in response to patient questions regarding the strike, the issues, and how patients can help, but with no pressure, request, or expectation that they participate in or support the strike.

## **IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER**

### **Do not feel guilty about striking!**

You are standing up for your patients, your community, and your co-workers. St. Joseph management is the party responsible for placing us in the position where we have to protect our patients, our values, our benefits, and our co-workers. St. Joseph wants to cut benefits and they refuse to seriously address chronic understaffing. And we know they are making a significant profit — tens of millions in Northern California in the last several years alone!