



NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

Petaluma Valley • Santa Rosa Memorial
Queen of the Valley • Redwood Memorial • St. Joseph Eureka

MARCH 2017

Around the union

Here are the latest developments in the union, including grievance victories and bargaining updates:

After a months-long evaluation process, the public Petaluma Health Care District selected El Segundo-based Paladin Healthcare to operate **Petaluma Valley Hospital**. The decision will have to be approved by district voters in a special election in June. NUHW members have urged the hospital's elected board to be transparent in searching for a new hospital operator and will continue to monitor this process.

Dietary workers at **Queen of the Valley** forced management to respond to their concerns about the kitchen renovation and secured a strong agreement that protects their jobs and provides a fair process for arranging schedules and assignments during and after the renovation. Despite management keeping workers in the dark about their renovation plans, NUHW members demanded to bargain over the impact and prevailed.

About 250 pharmacists, social workers, mental health clinicians, physical therapists and other professional workers at **UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland** voted overwhelmingly January 24 to join NUHW. These new members are coming on board as the union negotiates a new contract for approximately 900 technical, business/office clerical, and service workers at the hospital.

Members at **Sutter-California Pacific Medical Center** in San Francisco won a path to staffing relief moments before they were scheduled to testify at a hearing about Sutter's refusal to honor our contract. After dragging its feet

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QUEEN OF THE VALLEY

STERILE PROCESSING TECHS DRUM UP SUPPORT, SEND DELEGATION TO MANAGEMENT

With chronic understaffing at an all-time low and poor communications from management impacting patient care throughout the hospital, sterile processing techs organized their department to start holding management accountable.

After management and HR failed to answer numerous individual complaints, sterile processing techs, armed with a petition from co-workers in different departments and joined by employees from seven departments, marched to their director's office and demanded a meeting.

In the meeting, they outlined serious issues in their department and asked management to take specific, concrete steps to resolve them. The techs' recommended solutions included re-instituting regular departmental meetings, increasing staffing, and developing and enforcing clear safety procedures. Management committed to deal with the imminent staffing issues by hiring and strategically utilizing more per diems, and to respond within a week with plans to deal with outstanding communication and safety issues.

"We are the ones on the front lines, doing the work every day, which gives us a patient-care perspective that management may not have," said Jesse Perla, a sterile processing tech and NUHW bargaining team member. "It was important to us to approach management with a list of solutions instead of complaints. We really care about the team and about our patients, and we just want things to work well."

SONOMA & HUMBOLDT

UNDERSTANDING PAID TIME OFF

PTO covers vacation time, sick days, and holidays

Whether you're full-time or part-time, you can use PTO to take vacations, recover from illness, or celebrate holidays.

Accrual Policy: Eligible employees earn PTO hours each pay period, starting on the first day of work. You may use PTO hours as you accrue them.

You accrue PTO: 1) On hours worked up to a maximum of 80 hours in a pay period. 2) While PTO is being utilized. 3) During jury duty. 4) during bereavement leave. 5) on scheduled days taken off because of hospital census. 6) While working extra pay for extra shifts/cold call.

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Around the union

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on the staffing issue for two years, Sutter finally conceded that an arbitrator can decide whether our nursing units are understaffed.

More than a dozen stewards and members at **Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital** attended a training on Weingarten rights. Participants reported that the interactive training was helpful, and they plan to bring this knowledge to their worksites.

A steward from **Los Alamitos Medical Center** in Orange County saved a member's job when she noticed that management was incorrectly counting tardy days that had already been overturned by a grievance victory. The steward succeeded in getting management to rescind the member's termination notice.

An EVS worker at **Los Alamitos** won the right to start work at 6:30 a.m. instead of 7 a.m. to help take care of her grandchildren in the afternoon.

After members at **Kindred Hospital Brea** in Orange County repeatedly raised concerns about low staffing and its impact on patient care, management finally agreed to staffing solutions proposed by members, including creating a turn-and-lift team, developing a response system to call lights, and allocating time before each shift for an informal huddle to discuss workload.

Bargaining is underway at eight facilities: UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland, Queen of the Valley, Mission Neighborhood Health Center in San Francisco, Kindred Hospital Bay Area in San Leandro, Fountain Valley Regional Hospital in Orange County, Norris Cancer Hospital of USC, and Brios Healthcare's San Rafael Health & Wellness Center and Novato Healthcare Center.

WORK-FREE BREAKS NOW MANDATORY

How many times do our breaks get interrupted by a ringing phone, or by a supervisor or manager asking us to help out with something?

As the California Supreme Court ruled recently, "during rest periods employers must relieve employees of all duties and relinquish control over how employees spend their time.... A rest period, in short, must be a period of rest."

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- If you are required to be on call during a break, it's not a break.
- If you get called to work during a break, you must be given another break or paid an hour's pay for not receiving your full break.

If you or your co-workers are expected to be on call during your break, please contact your shop steward or union organizer, as your employer may be violating California law.

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UNDERSTANDING PAID TIME OFF

You do NOT accrue PTO: 1) During on-call hours (unless those on-call hours result from a day off because of hospital census). 2) During unpaid leaves of absence. 3) On hours that exceed 80 in a pay period.

Accrual rate for full-time employees (pro-rated for part-time employees):

- **0 – 4 Years of Service:** 184 hours per year (cap is 276 hours)
- **5 – 9 Years of Service:** 240 hours per year (cap is 360 hours)
- **10 – 14 Years of Service:** 280 hours per year (cap is 420 hours)
- **15 + Years of Service:** 280 hours per year (cap is 420 hours)*

* All eligible employees with 15+ years of service as of August 27, 2016 will be grandfathered to accrue up to 312 hours per year with cap at 468 hours (312 hours based on full-time eligibility)

Cap: You can stockpile paid time off, but you can't exceed the cap listed above based on your years of service. So, if you get 184 hours of paid time off every year, you'll stop accruing once you hit 276 hours. The only way to start accruing again is to take time off and get back below the cap. Or cash out extra hours. See below for more info on that option.

One-time cash-down: If you have a PTO accrual balance at the maximum accrual, you will receive a one-time cash-down to keep you 75 percent below the accrual caps so that you will continue to accrue PTO. That means that if you are at the maximum of 276 hours, after the cash-down you will retain 69 hours, or 25 percent of your PTO, in your bank. Then you can continue to accrue PTO.

Voluntary cash-out: If you have at least 80 hours in your PTO bank, you can cash out your PTO during the cash-out election period.

For more information about your PTO policy, review Article 22 of your contract or contact a steward or union organizer.

For more information, contact your NUHW organizers.

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