

# HOSPITAL-WIDE EFFORT TO DEMAND SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS

On January 18, for the very first time during the entire two years of the pandemic, hospital staff received notification via Tenet email of hospital-wide employee-positive cases. While other hospitals have consistently notified staff of employee exposures, FVRMC had not been notifying the entire staff as required by California law AB 685.

## How did this finally happen? We organized!

In early January, the RN/Professional Organizing Committee and NUHW Shop Stewards met as a team to discuss concerns about COVID safety. After talking to staff across every department, it was clear that the Employer had not been fulfilling its obligation to notify employees.

Following that meeting we took 3 additional steps:

1. On January 7 NUHW Shop Stewards met with the Director of Employee Health and followed up with a letter on January 13 demanding a response to our concerns.
2. On January 14 NUHW filed a Class Action grievance for all NUHW members on the issue and was preparing to file a complaint with OSHA.
3. We held several conversations with hospital leadership where they committed to communicate and work to address this notification issue.

**This is the most information the hospital has ever provided. And it's because of all of us!**

**This is an important step but not quite enough.** We need to know which specific departments the exposures are occurring to further enhance our safety. Right now, due to employee exposures 286 staff in Labor & Delivery, ICU, Emergency Department, and Respiratory Therapy are under a mandatory testing ordered by the OC Health Care Agency.

(continued on back)



*"When there's a problem in the hospital, like the failure to notify employees of workplace exposures, NUHW springs into action. In early January I was on a call with other members of the RN/Pro Organizing Committee and NUHW Stewards where we discussed the hospital's failure to notify us of employee workplace COVID exposures. As a result of our actions, for the first time, the hospital provided information about workplace exposures. It's a good first step, but we need to keep pushing to get more detailed information about which units are affected."*

— MAKENNA MUSSON, M2 RN



*"Over the last two years we've learned that things only change and improve when NUHW members act together. It was clear that staff around the hospital were being exposed with many having to quarantine at home, leading to a staffing crisis in many units. When we learned that the hospital wasn't giving us any notification we knew that we had to push for better safety measures. As soon as we identified the issue, we held a joint call between NUHW Stewards and the RN & Professional Organizing Committee to make a hospital-wide plan to address it."*

— BINH PHAN, PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

## Class action grievance for NUHW members: pay for missed shifts

On January 14 NUHW filed a class action grievance for the hospital's repeated failure to notify employees of potential COVID-19 exposures in the workplace. Additionally, the hospital has failed to properly compensate employees for missed shifts due to quarantining as a result of workplace exposures. We believe the hospital is in violation of Article 15 and Article 31 of our new contract that provides for pay for missed shifts due to exposures at work. The Employer is also in violation of Tenet's own policy providing employees who have no PTO available up to \$1,400 per week for illness and/or quarantine due to COVID-19.

In order to settle the grievance we are demanding that for all NUHW Bargaining Unit members who were off schedule due to illness and/or quarantined due to workplace exposure and/or contact, that the Employer shall provide back pay for scheduled shifts missed through one of the three pay provisions outlined in Article 15 and/or Article 31 and/or Tenet policy.

If you are an NUHW member and you have quarantined due to a workplace exposure, between October 1, 2021 and today, contact your union organizer.

## Potential COVID sick pay for California workers

On January 10th, Governor Gavin Newsom asked lawmakers to take quick action and approve a new COVID Sick Pay policy for all California workers. The new policy would require the hospital to provide up to two weeks of paid supplemental paid sick leave, much like the law in 2021. We hope to see new Covid sick pay rules rolled out soon and we will keep everyone informed of any developments.

## Free At-Home Covid-19 Tests

Starting on Wednesday, January 19, anyone in the U.S. with a residential address will be able to order four (4) at-home COVID-19 tests. The USPS is responsible for delivering the tests to your home. There is currently a maximum of four tests per residence. Order your tests today to have them available in the future! **Visit [covidtests.org](https://covidtests.org) now to order your test.**

## RN & PROFESSIONAL ELECTION UPDATE

We're expecting to know the date of the election within the next week or so and your RN/ Professional Organizing Committee member will be in touch as soon as we know the date.

The Organizing Committee has received reports that UNAC has been sending strangers to our homes to try to get us to vote for them. Nurses have expressed being offended that strangers are being given our home addresses and violating our privacy and time with our families. If anyone shows up at your home claiming to be from UNAC please report it to your Organizing Committee member.

