

Caregivers ratify contracts at three Tenet Healthcare hospitals in Southern California

Workers at Fountain Valley Regional Hospital, Los Alamitos Medical Center and Lakewood Medical Center agreed to contracts one month after authorizing a strike

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. — More than 830 healthcare workers at three Southern California hospitals have voted overwhelmingly to ratify contracts that will boost pay, improve benefits and make the hospitals safer for workers and patients.

The settlement involves multiple three-year contracts. One contract covers more than 610 respiratory therapists, nursing assistants, medical technicians and other caregivers at Tenet Healthcare's Fountain Valley Regional Hospital. The other contracts cover approximately 225 housekeepers and dietary workers at Fountain Valley and two other Tenet hospitals — Los Alamitos Medical Center and Lakewood Medical Center — whose jobs Tenet has subcontracted to Compass Group.

The caregivers, represented by the National Union of Healthcare Workers, had authorized a strike for all three hospitals last month as part of a unified campaign to improve staffing, pay, benefits and COVID-related health safeguards.

The contract for the more than 610 Fountain Valley workers will boost salaries by an average of 15 percent in the first year, with additional raises in the subsequent two years. It also includes additional pay for working late shifts as well as a new health plan that will lower premium costs by thousands of dollars per year.

"This contract shows what we can achieve as caregivers when we stay united and fight for our patients," said Ron Rosano, a surgical technician. "We're proud of the raises we've earned and the provisions we won that will protect the health and safety of patients and ourselves."

The contract also enshrines pandemic safety protocols at Fountain Valley, which was [cited last year](#) by the California Department of Public Health for violating state safety guidelines after workers filed a complaint through their union. The new contract includes provisions requiring that the hospital maintain a three-month supply of PPE and notify workers when a patient they are in contact with is suspected of having a highly-infectious disease. The contract also requires that the hospital pay for any missed shifts during a quarantine period for up to 14 days.

The contracts for subcontracted housekeepers and food service workers at all three hospitals set a minimum hourly salary of \$18.20, which is the same minimum salary for non-subcontracted workers at the three hospitals. As a result, most of the subcontracted workers, who previously did not have a salary floor, will receive immediate raises ranging from 17 to 30 percent. The workers will also get additional 3 percent raises in the second and third years of the contract.

"After a brutal last 18 months, this contract is a huge victory," said Johnenfer Larry, a housekeeper at Lakewood Medical Center. "We won respect for the work we do and big pay increases that will make a big difference in our lives."

The contracts were ratified with 97 percent of workers voting in favor.

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The National Union of Healthcare Workers is a member-led movement that represents more than 15,000 healthcare workers in California and Hawaii, including more than 612 caregivers directly employed by Tenet's Fountain Valley Regional Hospital and 225 subcontract housekeepers and food service workers who work at Tenet hospitals in Fountain Valley, Lakewood and Los Alamitos.

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