ONA Nurses Agree to AFSCME Wage Settlement for 2015-17

The State of Oregon recently settled contract negotiations with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) which affect registered nurses (RN) working at the State of Oregon Hospital. The settlement included wage increases as follows:

<table>
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<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Effective Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.25%</td>
<td>12/1/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.75%</td>
<td>12/1/16</td>
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In addition, the day after Thanksgiving was added to the contract as a holiday with pay.

According to the contract extension that was agreed upon between ONA and the State, which was unanimously passed by voting ONA RNs April 24, 2015, any salary and benefits changes negotiated with the RNs at the Oregon State Hospital for the 2015-2017 contract period would also be offered to ONA represented RNs. The State followed through on this agreement.

ONA represented RNs had the right to request additional bargaining, but opted to go with the amounts negotiated for State Hospital RNs.

All of the other provisions in the current contract, from scheduling to vacation, to health care and other benefits, remain the same until this new contract expires June 30, 2017, with the exception of deleting references to the now-closed Blue Mountain Recovery Center and changing references to the State Operated Community Program to reflect the new name of that program, the Stabilization and Crisis Unit.

ONA Unit Representative Training
Saturday, Jan. 16 and Jan. 23 – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
ONA Offices – 18765 SW Boones Ferry Road, Tualatin

ONA unit representatives are nurses who help other nurses navigate employment with the State of Oregon. ONA unit representatives help new nurses get acclimated to life on the job, answer questions about employment and contract issues, organize unit nurses around issues of concern, disseminate information about ONA activities, and assist nurses with grievances and disciplinary issues. ONA unit representatives help our units function more efficiently by helping to solve problems and resolve issues in an orderly and professional manner. Our contract recognizes the value of all nurses' right to come to each other's mutual aid and assistance. You can turn to your unit representative for assistance in a wide variety of

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situations concerning your career, your unit or nursing in general. No one knows what you’re going through like the nurse who works on your unit! We’d like to have more unit representatives to support the needs of our membership. We’d like to have a unit representative available on each unit and every shift! If you see the need on your unit and want to help, please reply today.

ONA will provide a 4-hour unit representative training program for State of Oregon nurses Jan. 16 and 23 at its offices in Tualatin. The training takes place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Morning refreshments and a lunch are provided. If you are interested in attending one of the training sessions, please contact our ONA labor relations representative, Sam Gieryn, at ONA (gieryn@oregonrn.org).

YOUR RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

State of Oregon nurses have a right to representation, known as “Weingarten rights,” when they reasonably believe that questioning by supervisors or administrators may lead to discipline. When you invoke this right, you do not have to respond to any questioning until your ONA/STOR representative arrives. An ONA labor relations representative or ONA/STOR nurse representative is usually available within 48 hours.

If you are concerned that questioning by, or an upcoming meeting with, a supervisor may lead to discipline, ask the question directly:

"Is there any chance this questioning (or meeting) may lead to discipline?"

If the answer is not an unequivocal “no,” you have a right to be represented. We recommend asking the question via email so that you have a written response. If you don’t get a response, assume discipline is a possible outcome and request representation.

It is important to know that if you do not ask for representation, administration has no obligation to provide it or even tell you that you are entitled to it. Most State of Oregon nurse managers are good enough to proactively tell you that a meeting may lead to discipline, and that you should obtain representation. You should be aware of the circumstances which activate this right.

What situations give rise to Weingarten rights?

Where the nurse has a reasonable expectation that discipline may result; for example, where a meeting is part of the employer’s disciplinary procedure.

Where the purpose of the meeting or any questioning is to investigate a nurse’s allegedly inadequate work performance or other misconduct, and where discipline of any kind is a possible result.

Where the purpose of questioning is to elicit facts, the nurse’s "side of the story," or obtain admissions or other evidence either to determine whether or not a disciplinary investigation or discipline is warranted OR to support a disciplinary decision already made.

Where the nurse is required to explain or defend his/her conduct in a situation which the nurse reasonably fears could affect his/her working conditions or job security (this could include post-event debriefings and other reviews).

What situations DO NOT give rise to Weingarten rights?

Where the meeting or discussion is merely for the purpose of conveying work instructions, training or needed corrections.

Where the purpose of the meeting is simply to inform the nurse about a disciplinary decision that has already been made and no information is sought from the nurse.

Where the employer has clearly and overtly assured the nurse prior to the interview that no discipline or adverse consequences will result from the interview.

Where any discussion that occurs after the employer has notified the nurse of the discipline has been initiated by the nurse rather than the employer.

Who will represent you?

It is up to our local union to decide who actually represents a nurse at an investigatory meeting. At the State of Oregon we usually call on a local ONA/STOR officer or unit representative who is acceptable to the nurse to be investigated or in some case our ONA labor relations representative.