Benton County Update – June 24, 2021

RATIFICATION VOTE ON NEW CONTRACT OPENS JULY 2

Thanks to your attendance at bargaining, we successfully negotiated a contract that creates a fair and equitable wage scale back to Benton County.

On Tuesday, June 22, we reached a tentative agreement on a contract. Our team unanimously recommends a YES vote to ratify.

If ratified, we will no longer have a pay-for-performance system, but will have a true wage scale. We moved the employer to a 12-step wage scale; the other two labor unions at Benton County have six-step wage scale.

In the first year of our contract, nurses will average 5.65 percent pay increases, if ratified. Each nurse will immediately move to the step above their current wage rate. During the first year, nurses will receive pay increases between 2.0 to 8.45 percent of current wages. No nurse will take a pay cut in this process.

At their next anniversary date, each nurse will then move to the next higher step in our wage scale. Eight nurses whose anniversary date is July 1, will move up two steps on that date. Within six months, another nine nurses (whose anniversary date is January 1, 2022, or earlier) will move to the next higher step. If ratified, our four-year contract would expire June 30, 2025.

Other major highlights of this agreement:

- The County will pay $40 per month for AFLAC Short-Term Disability Premium
- Annual personal leave of 64 hours
- The County can create leadwork role with 5% differential
- Exceptional pay performance, up to $2,500 at request of Director, once per fiscal year. 12-month lookback starts immediately with new contract.

Separately for our contract, we are close to agreement on a side letter to enliven a Nurses Labor Management Advisory Committee whose first task would be to review excessive workloads among nurses. The twin goals would be to empower nurses to communicate with their supervisors and change the organization culture so that individual assignments create work boundaries.

The complete redline contract and a handy summary of changes are available on our webpage under Bargaining Documents.

The online ratification vote will open Friday, July 2, at 8:00 a.m. We will send the link via email message and post it on our webpage. It will close on Friday, July 9, at 8:00 a.m.
Only dues-paying ONA members may cast a ballot in a ratification vote. If you are not a member yet, please join us by completing this form www.oregonrn.org/apply. Submitting it will automatically generate an email to your personal address. To complete the application process, one must click through on that email.

For more information, contact any member of our bargaining team (Angela Edwards, Niki Kelley, or Terry Deeds) or our labor rep, Gary Aguiar via text/call 503-444-0690 or email Aguiar@OregonRN.org.