ONA Files Unfair Labor Practice Charge

Employer's Decision to Lock ONA Out of Negotiations Aug. 19 May Have Been Illegal

Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center (GSRMC) executives unilaterally canceled negotiations on Aug. 19, in a blatant attempt to keep nurses, staff and community members from showing their support at our planned welcome wagon event. This action constitutes a violation of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) which requires both the employer and the union to "bargain in good faith".

Good faith bargaining generally refers to the duty of the parties to meet and negotiate at reasonable times with willingness to reach agreement. When GSRMC executives locked us out of negotiations without notice—after refusing to provide information we requested and failing to provide any economic proposals—this constituted a violation of the law.

ONA filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against GSRMC on Aug. 28 stating that "within the previous six months, the Employer failed and refused to bargain in good faith with the union as the collective bargaining representative of its employees". Our ONA Labor Representative, Christine Hauck has been working closely with legal counsel to provide the Regional Director of the NLRB all relevant documentation to prove our case!

Where We Stand on Paid Time Off (PTO)

Our bargaining survey clearly showed PTO accrual and access as high-priority issues.

We have proposed and maintained the following changes to Article 6:

- Elimination of the two-tiered PTO system in favor of an equitable system of accrual for all.
- No more forced use of PTO for mandatory absences and/or when the unit is closed for a holiday.
- PTO requests allowed just one week in advance rather than three weeks in advance.
- Paid time without using PTO for holidays when the department is closed on a regularly scheduled day.
- Double time paid for working on a holiday for regular and per-diem nurses.

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Paid Time Off (PTO) (continued from page 1)

- PTO cannot be denied for insufficient accrual at time of the request, only if there will be insufficient accrual by the time of the leave.
- PTO that is rescinded or denied due to insufficient accrual will be offered to the next RN with a PTO request for that date(s).
- Allow nurses to rescind a scheduled PTO at any time prior to the schedule for that time period is posted with or without approval from management. A manager would still need to consent to a rescission request made after the schedule for that time period has been posted.
- If the hospital fails to respond in writing within ten days of a PTO request being made, the request will be deemed approved.
- Reduce maximum accrual to 900 hours and restore automatic cash out of accrued PTO beyond 900 hours.

The Hospital has proposed or agreed to the following changes to Article 6:

- PTO may be rescinded by a nurse prior to the schedule for that time period being posted only if sufficient PTO cannot be accrued to cover the requested absence.
- Agreed that the hospital will not rescind PTO unless sufficient PTO cannot be accrued by the time of the absence.
- Eliminate the current language allowing a nurse to re-submit PTO requests to the scheduler when the hospital fails to respond in writing within ten days.
- Requests for rescission of PTO already approved must have the manager’s consent whether the rescission request is made before or after the schedule for that time period has been posted.
- Reduce PTO accrual rates for Tier 1 nurses (hired before Sept. 6, 2013) but maintain the two-tier system of inequity.
- Reduce maximum accrual to 700 hours on Jan. 1, 2021 and maintain Samaritan Health System (SHS) PTO Cash Out Policy rather than automatic cash out.

As we enter into mediation we will continue to fight for improvements to our PTO accrual and access. We will stand against GSRMC’s proposed takeaways but we need your support! The hospital needs to know how important this issue is to all of us, not just our bargaining team. Look for specific actions you can take to demonstrate your support coming from our Contract Action Team (CAT) soon!

Correction to Bargaining Progress
To Date Article 7 TA

Last week, we inadvertently stated that our tentative agreement (TA) on Article 7 Leaves of Absence included language which would allow us to utilize PTO at our discretion – this is incorrect! We agreed to maintain the current status quo where we will be required to use our PTO down to two weeks of PTO for any leave of absence. We apologize for the error!

Open Forum Meeting Today, Wednesday, Oct. 2

Join the bargaining team and CAT for an informative session open to all GSRMC nurses from 5 - 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 2 in the Ancillary Education Room.

Drop in for the latest information about bargaining, to ask questions and to hear about ways you can get involved in the fight for a fair contract!

Join the Contract Action Team (CAT)

The ONA CAT at GSRMC has been hard at work supporting our bargaining team in their efforts for a fair contract. The CAT works to make sure our members are informed about negotiations. They help spread the word about actions we can take to support our priority proposals at the bargaining table. We are always seeking more CAT members! If you’re interested, please contact Melinda Colon, CAT Chair, at mcolon97333@gmail.com.