

The Next Level

Our Newsletter, Our Voice

Oregon Nurses Make A Difference

Bargaining Unit Officers



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Nurses Vote Unanimously to Ratify Our First ONA Contract

In a unanimous vote on May 5, with 82 percent participation rate, PMH RNs ratified our new Contract and our Bargaining Unit Bylaws. The new Contract is a three (3) year agreement, and implements a wage scale with step increases. Increases for the first year average 8.9 percent; eligible RNs are also will receive annual step increases on their anniversary date. In the third year, the wage scale will increase by 1.5 percent. PMH RNs will have the same health insurance as Bend ONA members.

The Contract also recognizes a new PNCC and creates an education fund (\$9,000 annually) administered by the PNCC. In addition, the Agreement includes fair share, dues deduction, just cause, and a grievance procedure ending in arbitration.

Great job everyone. The work of the team and activists over the last two years, high turnout and vote results all demonstrated incredible solidarity. Well done!

BENEFITS CHANGES/OPEN ENROLLMENT

With our new contracts, benefits change, and we now have a date the changes will be effective: **June 1, 2011**. Insurance benefits will change to the same health insurance as the other ONA represented RNs (and all other employees), with three tiers of benefits and a 25 percent discount for Hospital provided services. All nurses who are benefit eligible will have the opportunity to elect STD or choose to remain in the current EIB plan. Nurses who are scheduled one (12-hour) day per week will be moved to part-time status and will be placed in the EIB program; they will accrue ETO and EIB based on all hours worked.

Important dates:

May 18, 7:30 – 4:30 p.m. Benefits Open Forum (Juniper Room at PMH)
Representatives from SCHS benefits department will be available to answer questions and will have open enrollment forms.

May 25 - Deadline for returning open enrollment forms

May 31 - Last day on former insurance plan; last day for EIB accrual (for those RNs switching to STD)

June 1 - First day on new plans; first day on STD (for those RNs who switch from EIB)

SCHS is also mailing notification and form for STD/EIB to each RN at home.

ONA Membership applications are now online. Fill one out today!

http://www.oregonrn.org/associations/10509/files/PIONEER_MEMORIAL_App.pdf

When Is A Good Time to Join ONA? NOW!

Membership applications are online.

http://www.oregonrn.org/associations/10509/files/PIONEER_MEMORIAL_App.pdf

Current members will stop paying by credit card or checking electronic transfer, and start paying through payroll deduction if you previously indicated that you wanted payroll deduction. If you haven't, please fill out the payroll deduction portion of a new membership application. Thank you!

EIB or STD: WHICH SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?

Some RNs have had questions about STD, and which option (STD or EIB) is the better choice. Here are some factors to consider in making your choice:

EIB: Extended Illness Benefits

EIB can be used for either the employee's illness, or to care for sick/injured dependents. EIB is earned fairly slowly (five (5) calendar days a year maximum) and is paid after 24-hour elimination period (ETO must be used for the first 24-hour absence from scheduled hours at work). The elimination period is waived if you have a surgery with an expected recovery period of seven (7) calendar days or longer. You earn benefits while on paid EIB, but once the EIB is gone you have no payments and are on unpaid time. (If you are on approved family medical leave the employer will continue to pay their required share of the premium). EIB can be used for the full period you are off for a parental leave, provided you have accrued that much time. The maximum amount you can accrue is 1040 hours.

STD: Short Term Disability

STD covers only the employee. Once you are covered (after three (3) months employment) you are eligible for benefits, which are paid for the period the employee is sick or injured for up to 13 weeks for each injury or illness. After 13 weeks, the employee is covered by long term disability. There is a seven (7) CALENDAR day elimination period (ETO must be used for the first seven (7) **calendar** days missed from work); the elimination period is waived if you are HOSPITALIZED for 24-hours or more.

Benefits are paid at these rates:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • 3 months through 3 years of service | 66.67 percent of weekly earning |
| • 4 years through 9 years of service | 75 percent of weekly earnings |
| • 10+ years of service | 100 percent of weekly earnings |

The payment is an insurance benefit for the employee only, so STD is not paid for time off to care for sick dependents, and you don't earn benefits on the insurance premiums that are paid to you by UNUM. If you are on approved family medical leave the employer will continue to pay their required share of the premium. If you are having a baby, STD payments are only paid for the period of time that you are disabled due to the pregnancy (determined by your physician).

Existing EIB Balances

Employees who switch to STD during this open enrollment period will keep their EIB balances, and will be required to use EIB under the EIB rules until EIB is exhausted. After EIB is gone, they will be eligible for STD benefits. If a RN chooses to stay on EIB and later wants to switch to STD, he/she will only be able to enroll during the annual open enrollment and will **not** be able to keep the accrued EIB balance when he/she switches to STD.

Which Should YOU Choose?

Each RN's situation will be different. If an RN have lots of EIB and may need to use EIB to care for a sick family member; then he/she may better off staying with EIB. Many of our RNs have little or no EIB; with STD their own illness/injury would be covered. Some nurses have no dependents and have enough seniority to be in the 100 percent STD coverage level; STD may be their better choice. All new hired employees (after May 1) will go into the STD plan. And our nurses who are regularly scheduled for one day a week will automatically be enrolled in the EIB plan and do not need to make an election. At our other hospitals (Bend and Redmond) over 90 percent of the RNs have chosen STD – but YOUR CHOICE should reflect your own needs and your own situation!