

BARGAINING UPDATE



PROPOSALS FROM THE TABLE:

- We proposed that Mount Hood nurses be paid the same wages and differentials as the nurses at OHSU.
- We proposed a 3% cap on annual health insurance premium increases.
- We proposed increased APL to bring us up to the same amount as OHSU nurses.

In our bargaining session with the Legacy team on April 4, we presented them with our economic proposals. You can read them in full here:

- **Compensation:**
https://www.oregonrn.org/resource/resmgr/legacy_mount_hood/2024-4-4_ona_lmh_art6.pdf
- **Annual Paid Leave:**
https://www.oregonrn.org/resource/resmgr/legacy_mount_hood/2024-4-4_ona_lmh_art7.pdf
- **Health and Retirement:**
https://www.oregonrn.org/resource/resmgr/legacy_mount_hood/2024-4-4_ona_lmh_art12.pdf
- **Committees:**
https://www.oregonrn.org/resource/resmgr/legacy_mount_hood/2024-4-4_ona_lmh_art27.pdf

Before we presented our proposals, we read the statement below to explain our rationale. The Legacy team did not have an immediate reaction to our proposal, but we are confident that these proposals will be at the heart of our bargaining going forward.

You can join us at our next session on April 18, from 1-5 p.m. in the Cascade Rooms. We hope to hear their response then.

OUR STATEMENT:

Between the certification of our union and our first meeting, Legacy announced that they were exploring the possibility of merging with OHSU. This was an exciting announcement for Legacy as a system, the nurses and employees of Legacy, ONA, and Mount Hood United.

The first and foremost question nurses had was whether they were going to be employees of OHSU. ONA's official stance, and what we have been telling people, is that we do not know. All details had to be worked out between the two hospital systems, then the state and federal government, and then, ideally, with us. It will be a complicated and ever-evolving situation.

The follow up question from almost every nurse is "Can we have the OHSU contract?"

To answer that question, this bargaining team read up on the OHSU contract. It is a great contract. It is, however, written for the nurses at OHSU. It is written for a 3,200 nurse bargaining unit, and it has evolved and grown over time. It was our shared opinion that it would not be possible to take the OHSU contract, drop it on the table, and say "This is what we want." It would not work for Legacy Mount Hood.

As you know, our approach has been to start with the Silverton contract, and work to adapt that document to serve the needs of the nurses at Mount Hood.

Which is not to say that we forgot about the OHSU contract altogether. There are provisions in there that are adaptable to Legacy Mount Hood. Our proposal on Health and Safety is a good example of where we were able to take language from OHSU, and make it work here.

Three of the four proposals we have for you today are modeled or borrow from the contract at OHSU. To be clear, given that we are not just adapting from OHSU because of the merger, we think these proposals would be appropriate even if the merger were called off tomorrow.

In Article 6 – Compensation, we will be proposing to adopt the OHSU wage scale for Mount Hood nurses. Our research shows that while the current Legacy wages are competitive with Kaiser and Sacred Heart, they are not competitive with OHSU and Providence Portland.

In response to complaints that we are operating with the bare minimum nursing staff, we frequently hear that all hospitals are short-staffed right now. There are many reasons Mount Hood is short staffed; difficult working conditions and high patient loads among them. Our unionization effort is but one response to the problem. While we work to improve Mount Hood, OHSU has announced that they are going to be hiring hundreds of nurses in order to comply with the new staffing ratios and their contractual agreement to provide meals and break nurses on most shifts. OHSU is the big fish in our pond, and they have announced that they have every intention of getting bigger.

RECRUIT AND RETAIN:

If Mount Hood wants to compete with OHSU to recruit and retain nurses, we have to offer competitive wages. Anything less than the OHSU wage is handing them an advantage. We believe that everyone—staff, nurses, managers, and administrators—have all worked hard, especially during the pandemic, to make Mount Hood an excellent care facility. We dread the thought of all that work going to waste if OHSU is able to offer a compensation package so tempting that people move up the hill.

Our proposal for differentials also tracks the differentials offered by OHSU for the most part. We didn't see any reason our differentials should not compete with theirs. When nurses are looking at competing job offers or looking to leave a hospital, they make sure to compare differentials, as well as salaries.

In our annual paid leave (APL) article, we are proposing to increase the number of APL hours to match those at OHSU. We are not, however, proposing to match their structure. They have separate sick and vacation/holidays, but we did not want to propose a whole new structure here. We have heard that having different structures of benefits at your different hospitals is not something you want to have. Although we should note, this separate sick, vacation, holiday, and mental health days is something our survey showed that nurses very much want. We could not think of a reason why we should have fewer sick, vacation, and holiday hours than they do at OHSU.

Finally, we adapted the committee structure they have at OHSU. In our proposal, you will see that we have three types of committees – a Labor-Management Committee, unit-based committees, and a professional nursing care committee (PNCC). We are proposing these committees not because OHSU has them, but because we think they will be beneficial to our hospital. We already have unit-based committees. We want those to function, and keep functioning, much like they do now. A labor-management committee (LMC) will help us identify and fix potential shared problems before they can have a deep impact on our work. We also believe a labor-management committee will be beneficial during the merger process. Finally, a PNCC will help us distribute the professional development funds and act as a resource for the unit-based committees should they need assistance. Again, this is not what they have at OHSU, but their model adapted for Legacy Mount Hood.

As always, we offer these proposals as our best idea on how to improve Mount Hood hospital. These proposals focus on wages and benefits with an eye toward recruiting and retaining the best nursing staff we can in an increasingly competitive market.