Six New Stewards Trained!

On May 11, six Mid-Columbia bargaining unit members were trained to be stewards (the position formerly referred to as unit reps). While a few of them have done some work for our bargaining unit before, they felt that it was time for a retraining.

Your new stewards are as follows (left to right): Aliesha Wright (Emergency/Staffing Co-Chair), Jacque Roberts (Celilo), Kathy O’Meara (Endoscopy and acting bargaining unit chair), Shannon Morgan (Home Health/Charge), Lacey Lloyd (Home Health), and Jolene Bird (Same Day Surgery). We also had two observers attend and a new steward from Providence Hood River.

The group learned about the importance of membership density and how to cultivate an active and engaged membership, what “Right to Work” means (hint: it’s not about protecting your rights or your work!), the protected status of union stewards, their role as communicators, Weingarten Rights (your legal right to representation), just cause discipline, protected concerted activity, and more! The training took two hours and the group was provided dinner. The “Right to Work” presentation was a video from University of Oregon Associate Professor Gordon Lafer, PhD, explaining what this initiative means, and how Oregon not being a “Right to Work” state is beneficial for nurses. Members can log into our Online Continuing Education Activities for Nurses (OCEAN) portal to view the video here. It only takes ten minutes and it is very informative.

These six nurses will be further mentored and supported in the field by your Labor Representative, Jocelyn Pitman. If you are called into an investigatory meeting, have a question about membership, or think there’s an issue occurring that our union should address, you are welcome to contact anyone of us and we will work together...
Six New Stewards Trained!

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to resolve the concern.

We know that others expressed interest in this training but they were either scheduled to work or had other obligations that night, and we definitely want to set up another steward training.

If you are interested in becoming a steward, please contact Jocelyn Pitman at pitman@oregonrn.org.

Unpaid Overtime & “Combination Work Agreements”

We need to hear from YOU!

On May 17, Steward Shannon Morgan and Labor Representative Jocelyn Pitman met with the hospital administration to discuss the ongoing grievance of missed overtime for 36-hour employees. This was a Step 3 meeting. Thus far, we have four grievants who have not been properly compensated for any hours they worked above 36 hours on the fourth or fifth day they worked. For example, if you are a nine-hour employee and you are scheduled four days per week, you should get overtime above 36 hours on the fifth day worked. If you are a 12-hour employee and you are scheduled three days per week, you should get overtime on the fourth day worked. In both instances, the overtime should start when working beyond 36 hours. From what we have seen, the employer is compensating correctly for daily overtime and above 40 hours, which is state law. Please see Article 7.B in the contract for further explanation.

It appears as if most of the affected grievants are on “Combination Work Agreements.” These are agreements signed by nurses who have been asked to work different positions (that are oftentimes also two different shift lengths) at the request of the employer. Some people on these agreements have one ONA position and one non-ONA position, and others have two ONA positions. The agreement waives important contractual rights to overtime, which negates the contract and was not previously vetted with ONA. This practice is considered unlawful under the National Labor Relations Act and is a violation under federal labor law. Arrangements of this nature are also known as direct dealing.

Unfortunately, we were informed too far after the fact to file an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) on behalf the nurses affected by this grievance. However, we are sure that there have been more recent agreements signed in the last six months, which is the statute of limitations for filing a ULP. We have filed an information request with the employer for all of the Combination Work Agreements and the employer is required by the NLRA to provide that information in a timely manner.

The employer is required to respond to our grievance within seven days of our meeting. If the grievance is denied, the next step is arbitration, which is final and binding. A panel of ONA leaders then decides whether the case should advance to arbitration.

If you are a 36-hour FTE and/or you have signed a “Combination Work Agreement” in the last six months, we need to hear from you now!