NEXT STEPS: RN STRIKE FACTS!
What, Why, Who & How Union Nurses Strike

WHY DO NURSES STRIKE?
Strikes are union nurses’ most powerful tool when multibillion-dollar health systems refuse to listen to frontline caregivers and patients! The value of our work and ONA nurses’ strength in numbers make a strike a very significant form of leverage at the bargaining table. Health care workers with the highest contract standards—including Kaiser, Providence and, at times, OHSU—have used strike declarations and strikes to make substantial improvements in our local hospitals, including stronger patient safety standards, industry-leading wages, safe nurse staffing language, break RNs, comprehensive benefits packages, and other improvements.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO STRIKE FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES LIKE AT OHSU?
Unlike nurses at private hospitals who follow federal labor law, nurses who are public employees must follow the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA) in Oregon. PECBA has a set of requirements before a legal strike can take place. Our collective bargaining agreement must be expired. We must bargain for at least 150 days. We must meet with a state mediator and participate in mediation for at least 15 days. After declaring that we have reached an impasse in negotiations, we have to compile and submit our final offer and the costs associated to the Employment Relations Board and OHSU management within 7 days. Then there is a required minimum 30-day cooling-off period before a strike can occur and during which mediation may continue. Prior to any strike, we must give a 10-days advanced notice of the strike (which can overlap with the 30-day cooling off period). A strike will only occur if the members vote for it, and the bargaining team authorizes it for that date or a later date.

WHAT IS A STRIKE AUTHORIZATION VOTE?
When a bargaining team has worked at the bargaining table for many months, they can ask their coworkers to vote yes in supporting their bargaining team and declaring a strike if things don’t change. In the Pacific Northwest, St. Charles Medical Center nurses, Providence nurses in Oregon and Washington; along with Kaiser workers in OR, WA, and CA; have recently held successful strike authorization votes. Like those strike votes, our bargaining team began negotiating months ago, but are without a commitment on most of your top priorities, including safe staffing; recruiting, retaining and respecting RNs; stronger patient safety standards, and fair compensation.

HOW DO WE DECIDE TO GO ON STRIKE?
ONA-AURN is a democratic union and an overwhelming majority of represented nurses have to commit to going on strike. It includes your nurse bargaining team asking every represented nurse to pledge their support for a strike authorization. Then, we vote if the support is there. If an overwhelming majority of nurses vote for it, your bargaining team can declare a strike if management continues refusing to come to a fair agreement.

WHO GETS TO VOTE TO STRIKE?
Strikes are only effective if we’re all committed. Therefore, every represented nurse is included in a vote and asked to support their bargaining team's request to authorize a strike. Even if you haven't submitted an AURN membership form—this includes anyone hired into a position that is listed as an AURN-represented position. If you're unsure if your position is included, contact AURNLaborReps@OregonRN.org.

ARE OUR JOBS SAFE IF WE STRIKE?
It is illegal to terminate workers for striking. Thousands of health care workers have gone on strike across the West Coast and across the country and consistently return to their positions.

Learn more @ www.OregonRN.org/OHSU
ARE PATIENTS SAFE IF WE STRIKE?
If we go on strike, it will be to make sure our patients have better patient care, now and in the future. We will give OHSU plenty of notice of our intent to strike, so OHSU executives have time to meet and reach an agreement with us, or make arrangements for patients to receive care elsewhere. OHSU management has stated they have formed a committee for this purpose.

DO WORKERS RECEIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT DURING STRIKES?
Workers are eligible for support in cases of extreme hardship, however financial support will not equal wage replacement. Nurses can access strike funds and mutual aid support through ONA and AFT in cases of extreme hardship.

ARE MY HEALTH BENEFITS PROTECTED IF WE STRIKE?
Health care workers rarely face an interruption in health benefits for participating in a strike because workers pay their health benefits at the beginning of each month.

HOW LONG DO WE STRIKE?
Your bargaining team will determine when a strike would end based on how we can best attain the leverage to achieve the needs of every RN and our patients. With an open-ended strike, we could be out for a single day or many weeks. The length of the strike is often impacted by how many people go on strike. The more people that go on strike, the shorter the strike might be before management decides to reach a fair agreement.

CAN I STRIKE ON PROBATION OR DURING THE TRANSITION TO PRACTICE PROGRAM?
Yes, no one in an AURN-represented position can be retaliated against for standing with their coworkers during a strike.

WILL I GET PAID IF I'M ON AN APPROVED PAID LEAVE?
Yes, if you're on an approved leave (vacation, FMLA, etc.) when the strike begins, you should be paid per the approved request. If OHSU attempts to not provide compensation reach out to a union rep. If your leave commences after the strike begins, we believe OHSU will refuse to honor that leave request and you will not be paid for that time.

WHAT IF I HOLD ANOTHER OHSU POSITION OUTSIDE OUR BARGAINING UNIT?
If you hold an OHSU position outside our bargaining unit, such as OHSU Adventist, you would continue working in those positions during a strike. If you hold a position at OHSU Hillsboro, it's likely you would continue working during a strike, unless you are in a position represented by AURN but still located at OHSU Hillsboro. Check with a labor rep to find out at aurrlaborreps@oregonrn.org. Only your shifts in your position under AURN would be impacted. If you hold a non-bargaining unit position at OHSU (ex. relief house supervisor), we'll want to discuss the specifics of your situation in more detail. Please contact ONA staff.

Class is in Session! Attend a Strike School to Learn More
Strike Schools will be held on campus August 15-21. It's time to come together and realize our collective vision of making "Oregon's #1 hospital" a place where we retain, recruit, respect, and recognize nurses and our needs in the workplace!