Providence Portland COVID-19 MOU Update

Dear ONA Providence Portland nurses,

Based on the unprecedented health crisis created by COVID-19, the Oregon Nurses Association and Providence Health discussed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to address these new conditions. ONA is recommending that each bargaining unit agree to this interim MOU and begin negotiations on a comprehensive MOU. Each bargaining unit has the choice to agree to the MOU or not. We are recommending the MOU because it provides immediate critical relief to nurses giving care on the front-line of this pandemic.

It’s not a perfect solution. ONA believes Providence can and should do more to protect ONA nurses, their families, and their patients. However, right now ONA Nurses will benefit from this agreement. We will keep fighting together to ensure that Providence—and all Oregon health care employer—ensure the safety and well-being of nurses and their patients.

In summary, this recommended MOU contains the following terms:

- Providence will make 80-hours of Paid Emergency Time Off available for benefits-eligible caregivers that will remain in place for use by or before May 31, 2020;
- Providence will allow benefits-eligible caregivers who have either already utilized all of their PTO/EIT/grandfathered vacation/sick leave, or have not been employed long enough to have accrued enough to cover a long-term illness, to use up to 80 hours of Paid Emergency Time Off to cover additional time off necessary for recovery from illness or injury, now until May 31, 2020;
- Providence will allow benefits-eligible caregivers who don’t have any more accrued leave, and new caregivers without accrued leave, to use up to 80 hours of Paid Emergency Time Off to be
utilized for their own COVID-19 related illness and recovery (ministry specific rules regarding time off apply) or self-exclusion.

- After all paid time is exhausted for these caregivers, if there is a need for continuing leave and the caregivers do not have access to Providence-provided short-term disability benefits, Providence will provide caregivers with income replacement in an amount equal to 65% of pay until they can return to work in the event of their own COVID-19 related illness and recovery.

- Providence will allow benefits-eligible caregiver who are not ill, but cannot work for a variety of other reasons related to the COVID outbreak (for example, daycare or eldercare needs), may use accruals, should the caregiver have this time in his or her bank. The caregiver may also use their Paid Emergency Time Off to supplement this time, through May 31, 2020.

- If a part-time or full-time caregiver works in a department which has been shut down due to the COVID-19 crisis, and that caregiver cannot do their job from home, the Hospital is committed to paying paid administrative leave from the date of this Agreement until April 30, 2020 (assuming the ministry cannot redeploy the caregiver during that time). Providence will prioritize redeployment within the facility, but may reassign to other facilities or remote work (e.g., telehealth/home monitoring) that offer opportunities to utilize the skills and experience of the nurse to meet the needs created by the COVID-19 emergency.

The above agreements represent critical improvements to working conditions, but they do not represent all that Providence must do to provide a safe workplace, nor to honor the incredible heroism of ONA Nurses who are putting their own health and their family’s health at risk during this pandemic.

Please contact your labor representative if you have any questions. Additionally, please remain on the lookout for additional communications as ONA continues to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on nurses and their patients.

If you have any questions, please contact your ONA labor representative, Jaime Newman, at Newman@OregonRN.org.