COVID-19 has been a significant challenge for nurses, but it has also presented an opportunity to coordinate in ways we never have before. Since the opening weeks of the pandemic, we have held discussions with Providence to address this unprecedented challenge through coordinated, system-wide efforts. We have held more than ten meetings with Providence management to discuss system-wide issues since the first week of March.

These discussions were initially focused on clinical issues and included Larlene Dunsmuir, ONA’s Director of Professional Practices; Tom Doyle, ONA General Counsel; Jennifer Burrows, Chief Nursing Officer; Lisa Powell, Providence VP and Chief Human Resources Officer; and Dan Mueller, VP Senior Labor and Employment Counsel. Initially, we addressed inadequate PPE, inadequate COVID-19 testing, protocols for quarantining nurses, and patient care protocols.

In addition to clinical issues, our discussions have provided a means to address labor issues. This led to our groundbreaking interim memorandum of understanding (MOU) which provided relief through 80-hours of paid emergency leave and paid administrative leave for nurses in closed, partially-closed, and low censused units due to COVID-19, along with child care support and other key protections.

We quickly moved to expand our weekly calls with Providence to include bargaining unit leaders and labor representatives from each of our Providence bargaining units. In conjunction with the weekly calls with management, bargaining unit leaders have also been meeting weekly to plan a systemwide strategy.

This planning by our statewide leaders has been done with the support of our labor, practice, legal, organizing and communications staff. Although Providence management has sought to reduce or end these meetings, we have successfully pushed to keep these important meetings going. They have a great value to ensure clear lines of communication and address system-wide issues.

We will continue pressing Providence management to continue our weekly clinical discussions and system-wide bargaining to extend many of the benefits we won in our first COVID-19 MOU.

Our goal is simple: a united group of bargaining units across the state fighting for safe workplaces, safe patient care and fair wages and benefits.

Contact us at memberservices@OregonRN.org today about how we can help if you are struggling financially because of COVID-19.
Nurses across the country are losing hours due to COVID-19. We led the nation by winning critical COVID-19 contract protections including 80 hours of sick leave and administrative pay. However, Providence has let those protections expire. We are working through bargaining to restore key COVID-19 provisions like protected sick leave, COVID-19 safety precautions and COVID-19 State of Emergency Leave.

Nurses deserve to be made whole. We’re exploring every option we can to support you, including encouraging nurses to apply for unemployment benefits or pandemic unemployment assistance. If you’re being low censused you may qualify for either benefit. Here’s what you need to know.

There are two types of benefits you may be eligible for: unemployment benefits or pandemic unemployment assistance.

Find out if you qualify for either and apply as soon as possible. Benefits are not normally retroactive but due to the pandemic, after applying you can call the employment division and request retroactive benefits under a special pandemic exception.

**UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

**Am I eligible for Unemployment Benefits?**

If you are losing hours and worked at least 500 hours last year OR earned more than $1,000 last year and worked throughout the year, you may be eligible for unemployment benefits. For most nurses, if you were paid less than $648 in a week, you’re likely eligible.

Note: Unemployment is not a substitute for paid leave. If you used paid leave to fill in for hours you would normally be working, unemployment benefits will not cover those hours.

**HOW MUCH HELP DO UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS PROVIDE?**

Benefits range from $151/week to $648/week per person. Individuals are eligible to receive 1.25 percent of your yearly earnings per week.

**How Do I Apply?**

Apply for unemployment benefits here: https://secure.emp.state.or.us/ocs4/index.cfm?u=F20200526A135940B171886.585008&lang=E

**PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE**

**Am I eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance?**

Even if you don’t qualify for regular unemployment benefits, people out of work due to COVID-19 are eligible for pandemic assistance.

**How Much Help Does Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Provide?**

Assistance ranges from $205/week to $648/week. You can receive 1.25 percent of your yearly earnings per week.

**How Do I Apply?**

Apply for pandemic unemployment assistance here: https://govstatus.egov.com/PUA

**BUT WAIT THERE’S MORE!**

The federal CARES Act automatically adds $600 to any unemployment benefit payments for eligible weeks March 29 to July 25, 2020. That means if you receive any unemployment benefit or pandemic assistance that week, you’ll receive an additional $600.

**Can you give me some examples?**

Yes! Here are three examples of how unemployment benefits work in practice.

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1Please note that this is not legal advice. This summary is based on our understanding of Employment Department rules. If you have a legal question, you should speak with an attorney. ONA members received a half-hour consultation with a local law firm as a member benefit. Contact information is available at the ONA website. https://www.oregonrn.org/general/custom.asp?page=485
You May be Eligible for Unemployment Benefits (continued from page 2)

Ex. 1 Let’s say you’re a per-diem nurse who earns $40/hour and usually works 24 hours a week. Now you’re only working one 12-hour shift every two weeks. Here’s how your benefits would look.

Normal year earnings = $46,080 (24 x 4 x 12 x 40)
Weekly benefit = $576 (0.0125 x 46080) + $600
Reduced hours earnings:
   Week 1 = $0
   Week 2 = $480 (12 x 40)

For week 1, you’ll receive your full weekly benefit, $1,176.

The math: $576 + $600 = $1,176

For week 2 you’ll receive a partial weekly benefit: $888

The math: $576 > $480, so you do qualify for unemployment benefits.
   Benefit for week worked:
   576 x 0.333333 = $192
   480 - 192 = $288
   576 - 288 = 288
   $288 + $600 = $888

Ex. 2 Let’s say you’re an IV nurse who earns $40/hour and usually works 36 hours a week. Now you’re only working one 12-hour shift/week. Here’s how your benefits would look.

Normal year earnings = 69,120 (36 x 4 x 12 x 40)
Weekly benefit = $648 max (0.0125 x 69120 = 864) + $600
Reduced hours weekly earnings = $480 (12 x 40)
Your weekly benefit is $984

The math: 648 > 480, so you qualify for unemployment benefits.
   Benefits:
   648 x 0.333333 = 216
   480 - 216 = 264
   648 - 264 = 384
   So, weekly benefit = $384 + $600 = $984

Ex. 3 You’re a med/surg. nurse who earns $40/hour and usually works 36 hours a week. Now you’re only working two 12-hour shifts/week. Unfortunately, you wouldn’t be eligible for benefits, but you can still apply for pandemic unemployment assistance.

Normal year earnings = 69,120 (36 x 4 x 12 x 40)
Weekly benefit = $648 max (0.0125 x 69120 = 864) + $600
Reduced hours weekly earnings = $960
$960 > $648, so you don’t qualify for unemployment benefits, but you can still apply for pandemic unemployment assistance.

DON’T MISS IMPORTANT ONA EMAILS

Common Reasons for Not Receiving ONA Emails

1. Mislabeled: Emails from ONA are being flagged as junk or spam by your email service provider.
2. No Email: ONA does not have an email on file for you.
3. Bad Email: ONA has an incorrect or outdated email on file.
4. Blocked: Due to several failed delivery attempts, our system has stopped attempting to send emails to your email address.
5. Opted Out: You have opted out of receiving emails.
6. Work Email Filters: Some health care systems filter out ONA emails so nurses don’t receive ONA-related emails. This is why we encourage nurses to use their personal email addresses instead of work emails.

Fixing Problems to Receive ONA Emails

1. Check your junk/spam/clutter folder for ONA emails: Flag ONA emails as “not junk/spam” and add News@OregonRN.org to your safe sender list.
2. Email ONA: To fix reasons 2-6, simply email ONA at News@OregonRN.org, and include your name, personal email and facility you work at in the body of the email.
Updates from Across the State

ONA AT PROVIDENCE MEDFORD

After Providence refused to negotiate any financial proposals, our nurse team made the difficult decision to extend our current contract at Providence Medford until March 31, 2021. The extension offers some contract stability while we navigate COVID-19, but more importantly it gives us time to build a strong steward structure, contract action team (CAT), professional nurse care committee (PNCC) and staffing committee to push for real changes in our next negotiations, which are now contractually obligated to restart in October.

This pause also gives us time to further evaluate Providence’s profitability and assess their financial situation during and after COVID-19’s peak periods.

ONA AT PROVIDENCE HOOD RIVER

We are waiting for dates to return to the table while reviewing Providence’s no-no contract proposal.

Providence has proposed a contract with no salary increases, no changes to sick leave, steps for those eligible, and the inclusion of minor language we’ve already tentatively agreed to. Our collective bargaining agreement expired December 31, 2019.

ONA AT PROVIDENCE NEWBERG

Providence has also asked if Hood River would be willing to agree to an MOU similar to the one nurses at Providence Medford accepted. Nurses are discussing the issue. No future negotiation dates have been set.

Our priorities at Providence Newberg are:

- Cap on low census
- Overtime after 36 hours
- Increased call compensation
- Clearer incentive shift language
- Wage increases
- Adding break relief nurses

We are looking at implementing new paid time off and short-term disability programs in July if nurses receive the same extended illness time usage plan as nurses at Providence Portland and other facilities. Our fourth bargaining date is Tuesday, June 16.