Providence Seaside Strike Prep Update – June 18, 2023

Less than 24 hours before our strike
In less than 24 hours, PPMC nurses, Providence Seaside nurses and nurses and clinicians from Providence Home Health and Hospice will walk out on strike. 1,800 people. This historic strike will be the first nurses’ strike in Oregon in more than 20 years.

We expect that our strike will be incredibly powerful and empowering for all who take part. There’s no doubt that the week ahead will have its challenges, so please provide support, encouragement, and grace to each other. We will get through this together.

We want to run over a few logistics for Monday morning and beyond:

Transition. If you are working on Sunday night, you’ll need to plan to handoff your patients to your manager around 0700. If you’re having trouble with your handoff, please escalate to your charge nurse and your manager, and if that fails, please reach out to Gabriel Erbs at 503-415-1461 for support. We will have folks standing by to help. View the handoff document here, but the main principle remains, take care of your license first and join us on the picket line second.

HANDOFF DOCUMENT

Working during the strike. We ask that every nurse honor the picket line, and communication ONA has received from Providence has indicated that they may not be following our contract during the strike. They have also denied ONA staff and striking nurses from entering the facility, so we will be unable to police our agreement for the duration of the strike. If you do feel compelled to work and you cross the picket line, you will have to work for the duration of the strike. Please take extreme care. You may call Gabriel Erbs at 503-415-1461 if you want to report a potential contract violation. Again, we ask that all nurses honor the picket line and support our strike. We have hardship resources for striking nurses.

HARDSHIP APPLICATION
Impacts to Services. After telling us for years that they are unable to ease our way by blocking beds, limiting services, or providing adequate staffing, PSH has shown how swiftly they are able to mobilize against their nurses, patients, and communities PSH has already communicated self-inflicted, substantial impacts to services during the strike. We understand the following have happened or will be happening during the strike:

- Canceling of non-emergency surgeries/procedures
- Emergency Room on divert
- Substantially limiting ancillary
- Closing of multiple units or parts of units including critical care, step-down care, Mother Baby, clinics, and possibly more

Providence’s behavior during a strike. Despite their communication to nurses that they will only be allowed to work if they report at 0700 or 1900 on the day of the strike, Providence has communicated to ONA that they may be using the normal protocol for broadcasting short staffing. Be prepared for those alerts, and we ask that nobody cross the picket line in response to those repeated messages. Providence has also indicated that if nurses show up at 0700 or 1900 on the first day of the strike, that they may not be needed during that time and could be sent home unpaid. We feel this may constitute deception on their part, targeting those willing to cross the picket line with a bait and switch. It is our impression that PSH, in their actions and communications, have indicated that they may prioritize their replacement workers over core staff/those who cross the picket line.

Secondly, Providence has indicated that they will send out a survey garnering responses as to whether you are crossing the picket line/working, or striking. It is our understanding that you are under no obligation to respond to this survey, but if you do respond under direct order, respond honestly.

We will have printed picket line instructions for all picketers, and we ask that folks always behave professionally, respectfully, and with grace. The impact our strike has had on Providence is already momentous, and we should not jeopardize anyone’s health, safety, or well-being in any way during the strike. The goal of our picketing will be to demonstrate positive energy as well as unity and support for a better contract and a more just healthcare system. If you see picket line disturbances, please report to a picket captain, and we will address it.

PICKET LINE INSTRUCTIONS

Returning to Work. Following our communication to them that we are prepared to return to work on Friday night at 1900, Providence has communicated directly to ONA’s staff and directly to individual nurses that they intend to “lockout” nurses on Friday night through Saturday morning at 0700. This is another in a litany of egregious Unfair Labor Practices (ULPs or violations of our rights to take collective activity to improve our jobs). ONA will be filing a ULP over Providence’s decision to lockout the nurses who can care for PSH patients better than anyone. That said, you should plan to return to work as scheduled after 0700 on Saturday, June 24. If you have additional questions, please reach out to a bargaining team member or your labor representative for support.

It’s time. The response and support we have received from the community, other Oregon nurses and healthcare workers, our neighbors, and elected officials has been truly inspiring. Next week, we, along with all of our incredible supporters, are going to send an unmistakable message to Providence executives that it’s time that they finally put people before profits. It’s time that they invest in the people who make this healthcare system operate and have held this community together for so many years.