Hospital Refuses to Meet on Issues with Mandate and Staffing

On August 30, ONA Labor Representatives, Jessica Barnes and Ateusa Salemi, met with Brooke Thrasher, Chief HR Director regarding the memo that was sent to all staff on that day regarding the “Required COVID-19 Vaccination.” During this time, the ONA labor representatives asked clarifying questions regarding process and strategy of said requirement. These questions and clarification were brought to the Executive Committee to be discussed further.

On September 7, a request was emailed to Brooke requesting to meet and discuss a potential bargain for a memorandum of agreement to address the staffing and retention need. Brooke replied on September 10, stating that they are not interested in discussing the impacts the mandate has on staffing or the Ontario community. The Oregon Nurses Association is very disheartened to hear this news.

Nurse Suicide and Resiliency

The American Nurses Association (ANA) is committed to meeting the needs of nurses and has launched a NEW Nurse Suicide Prevention and Resilience Resource site to provide information and tools to address the critical issue of suicide prevention. Research indicates that nurses are at a much higher risk of suicide than the general public.

During this unprecedented time, nurses are struggling with mental health issues like fear, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress as they respond to COVID-19 and continue to care for all patients. Effectively managing these mental health issues is essential in nurse suicide prevention.

ANA’s Resilience and Nurse Suicide Prevention Resource site provides information and tools to:

- Support suicide survivors
- Offer grief and bereavement coping strategies
- Honor a nurse’s memory

We encourage all nurses to check out the site, bookmark the pages, and share the resources with a colleague or a friend in need.

Nurses, you are not alone. Help is available. Learn more here.
Josh Hall with Oregon AFL-CIO is a workforce liaison that can help support with worker separation activities such as layoffs, unemployment insurance issues, and health insurance; and assist with non-worker separation activities such as apprenticeships, job fairs, and workers compensation. Josh is available for any questions particularly those concerning work and the vaccine mandate.

“Anytime there is a layoff at a company that has union represented employees, I work with the union and local boards to arrange a Rapid Response session. We tailor the session to whatever the union needs for these members but at a minimum we will have presenters from Oregon Employment Department, Oregon Health Insurance, and Title 1 providers. I personally attend all sessions either in person or virtual to ensure that the members get the information they need from these presentations. I want to make sure they feel confident that they can file an unemployment claim correctly, that they know where to go to apply for health insurance needs, or help with a resume, retraining, etc. From there, I continue to support the workers until they are reemployed. So from layoff to reemployment, they can reach out for help. This could be anything from providing direct help with things like UI issues to linking them up to agencies that can provide food services or utility payments. Really a wide range depending on their immediate needs.

Generally, I like to use the local presidents or business agents as the conduit so that the local leaders are always informed and in the loop, but I never turn anyone down who needs help.”

-Josh Hall, Oregon AFL-CIO workforce liaison (2021)

If you are in need of help, contact Josh by phone, (541)990-3518 or email, Josh@oraflcio.org

ONA stewards are the lifeblood of what makes our union strong. A strong union has at least one steward for every unit and shift. Stewards are there to answer colleague’s questions and discuss concerns and help keep every nurse up to date on important union activities.

Grievance handling covers identifying, filing and following up on contract grievance. Building worksite power stresses how to build your union and create an environment that results in improvements for nurses. Find the training that works best for you!

Space is limited so register today at:

www.OregonRN.org/Steward-Training