Sacred Heart Home Care Services
Hardship Strike Fund & Support Committee Formed

We have established the ONA Sacred Heart Home Care Services Hardship Strike Fund & Support Committee to provide oversight and ensure that our strike fund is utilized for those most in need of assistance. Our strike has been sanctioned by the ONA Labor Cabinet, and they have authorized an initial amount of the ONA Statewide Strike Fund that will be available to the committee for distribution to members experiencing financial hardship due to the strike. Our committee may request additional funds if needed.

Tonya O’Dell, Sacred Heart ONA Treasurer, will Chair the Hardship Strike Fund & Support Committee and is joined by Becca Coons and Erin Grace. The Hardship Strike Fund & Support Committee has established guidelines for prioritizing any hardship requests for financial assistance and a process to review and approve or deny applications for financial assistance. Our committee will continue to garner more resources and assistance for our striking nurses throughout.

The ONA strike fund shall be administered as outlined in Policy for Use of ONA Strike Fund 8.2.2 which describes the procedures we must follow. The Hardship Strike Fund & Support Committee will serve as the “local strike committee” referred to in policy.

PROCEDURE:

1. The strike shall be sanctioned by the Cabinet before any strike fund moneys can be distributed.
2. The strike fund shall maintain a reserve balance of $40,000, or whatever amount is deemed feasible. The reserves may be used if the Cabinet finds extenuating circumstances.
3. ONA members and fair share contributors shall be eligible for strike fund moneys. However, an applicant will not be eligible for strike fund moneys if he or she crosses an authorized ONA picket line at any time for any unauthorized reason.
4. If more than one sanctioned strike is in process or if the potential for more than one sanctioned strike exists, a proportionate share of the strike fund (less the reserve) shall be available for each affected unit. The proportionate share shall be based on the number of members and fair share contributors in each unit.
5. Each bargaining unit with a sanctioned strike shall maintain a local strike committee. The local strike committee shall be responsible for:
   1. The initial screening of all applications for strike fund moneys, make a recommendation on each application, and forward the application to ONA headquarters;
   2. Maintenance of the log book discussed in Item 6.1;
   3. Determination with ONA when patient care standards require nursing service from the strike force as described in Item 7.  
   4. Presentation of checks for strike fund moneys sent from ONA headquarters to individual applicants (see Item 8.).
6. Application for strike fund moneys must be made by the member or fair share contributor on the ONA Application Form for Strike Funds and filed with the local strike committee. To be eligible for strike fund moneys, an applicant must demonstrate the following:
1. The applicant has actively participated in the authorized strike as determined by the local strike committee. Such activities can include, but are not limited to, activities on the picket line, in negotiations, on the local strike committee, at strike headquarters, or babysitting. A log book must be kept by the local strike committee to document the strike related activities of members and fair share contributors.

2. The applicant must demonstrate that they have taken steps to notify creditors of strike action.

3. The strike fund is a needs based program and therefore the applicant must demonstrate a substantial financial need for the strike fund moneys. Such need may be evidenced by a prolonged inability to pay a home mortgage or rent, inability to feed oneself or family or inability to pay for one’s utilities. The applicant must demonstrate they have made substantial effort to secure employment, including seeking employment outside the nursing profession. Such will be evidenced by copies of applications for employment and a log indicating the times and dates the applicant has attempted to locate work.

7. If the local strike committee and ONA decide that community patient care standards require nursing service from the strike force, at least 25 percent of each paycheck of nurses who have been approved to work by the local strike committee shall go to the strike fund.

8. ONA staff designated by the assistant executive director of labor relations shall review all recommendations made by the local strike committee for disbursement of strike fund moneys. If such recommendations comply with these policies, staff shall disburse the funds as available. Staff will send checks made payable to the member or fair share contributor directly to the individual.

9. No member of the Cabinet shall participate in any decision related to the use of strike fund moneys if the bargaining unit to which the Cabinet member belongs is on strike or faces the potential of a strike.

Guidelines to keep in mind when considering making a hardship request from the strike fund:

- APPLICATION. Funds may be applied for on an emergency basis. Application forms will be made available to all ONA members on the SHHCS unit webpage once available.
- QUALIFICATION. In order to qualify for funds, the applicant must have volunteered for the equivalent of three, four-hour shifts per week on the strike line or on other strike activities and have taken steps to reduce their need for funds.
- THE FUND. The ONA Strike Fund is for the entire state membership of ONA. The Strike Fund should not be seen as an alternate source of income.
- THE DECISION. The Strike Fund & Support Committee will decide who is eligible for funds, based on the needs of our membership.

Detailed information on the Hardship Application Process, a link to the application form, as well as the expected timeline for submission-to-check-received, will be provided on Friday, February 9!

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   2. The applicant must demonstrate that they have taken steps to notify creditors of strike action.
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fund moneys. If such recommendations comply with these policies, staff shall disburse the funds as available. Staff will send checks made payable to the member or fair share contributor directly to the individual.

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**How You Can Personally Prepare to Strike**

No one can predict what will happen over the next few days and weeks, but we encourage each nurse to be financially prepared for the strike.

Consider taking the following steps NOW to prepare:

- **W-4 Withholding.** Increase your number of withholding allowances on a W-4 form (claiming more than 9 may trigger attention from federal tax authorities). Remember to change the number back immediately after the contract is settled. Please remember that what you save in taxes now you will have to pay at tax time. However, this may give many members a cushion while there is a strike.
- **Notify Creditors.** Inform your creditors (credit cards, mortgage company, loan office, daycare center). Creditors greatly appreciate knowing this and consider such advance warning to be the act of a responsible debtor. It is important you contact all creditors prior to the time a payment is due, if you are unable to make payment. Contact the creditors in person or by phone for general information on credit and late payment policy. Maintain a record of when and whom you speak with. We also recommend written notification. This also needs to be done before the payment is due so that your credit rating won’t be affected. Most creditors will make payment arrangements, either a minimum payment or payment of interest only. Again, keep a copy of ALL correspondence. The following is a sample letter.

*To Whom It May Concern:*

*I am a Registered Nurse at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Home Care Services. I hold an account with your institution, #_________. Our bargaining unit is planning to go on strike February 10th. [Or] We have been on strike*
since February 10th. I may not be able to make full payments on my account but would like to arrange a deferment or minimum payment schedule during the term of the strike to maintain my account in good standing.

I would be happy to meet with a service representative. Please contact me if this is required. Thank you.

Sincerely, [name]

Bank Loans
You must contact your bank to defer payment. Some banks have pass payment cards with loans to let you skip a payment. Late payments will be assessed if the bank is not notified in advance of your inability to make payments. Some banks will give unsecured loans with good credit ratings, first payment due in 30-45 days.

Mortgages/Rent
Notify your mortgage company and/or landlord that you are going on strike. They may allow a grace period. Companies usually require that mortgage payments be made but may be willing to allow deferment of payments for a month or two. Landlords may be willing to allow deferred payments and/or a minimum payment amount for a month or two.

Credit Cards
Contact your creditor, as advised above. Some companies allow a "free pass" for one or two months a year when a monthly payment can be missed, but the interest continues. Other arrangements may also be made with different companies.

Unemployment Insurance
It is our understanding that people on strike do NOT qualify for unemployment insurance.

Food Stamps
You can only qualify for food stamps while on strike IF you qualified for food stamps while employed or before any strike action.

Maternity Leave & Sick Leave
Maternity leaves should not be affected. You will probably need documentation; i.e. a note from the doctor or a hospital bill to verify to management that you were sick. If it is scheduled ahead (i.e., surgery) or you can prove you were sick before the strike started, you should get your sick pay; but, if you get sick the day before or the day we begin to strike, they may not pay you. PeaceHealth may expect RNs to declare whether they are on strike or not. If you fail to return on the date due back, they will assume you are on strike. These issues would be addressed in a return-to-work agreement.

Workers Compensation
At a minimum you will receive the 2/3 Workman's Compensation entitlement. Your ability to supplement Worker's Comp with vacation, sick, and/or comp will become part of the return-to-work agreement.

Health Insurance
COBRA laws apply. When we go on strike, you will be covered through the end of February as long as you worked during the beginning of February before the strike. Management must send you a notice asking if you intend to keep your coverage, you will have 60 days to respond. If you need the coverage any time during the 60 days, you will need to self-pay and can be reimbursed after electing COBRA coverage, retroactive to the first of the month following the strike date.

Vacation
If your vacation is preauthorized and you are away on vacation at the time of the strike, your
vacation should be honored. In the event you are not paid for your preauthorized vacation, please let a bargaining team member know and we will work to address it as part of the return-to-work agreement.

If you have any questions, please contact your ONA labor representatives Laura Lay at Lay@OregonRN.org, Tizoc Arenas at Arenas@OregonRN.org, Tyler Whitmire at Whitmire@OregonRN.org, or Claire Syrett at Syrett@OregonRN.org.