

Raising standards at DSHS and DOH means better care and better jobs

We know what we need to safely do our best work and that is why we are coming together in our union to win high quality training, a preceptor program, and safe staffing across our agencies that is sufficient to protect our vulnerable patient population

By speaking out, we're sending a message that we're united behind our proposals to raise standards.

Key issues we brought to the management team

- **Staffing:** We need staffing that will accomplish our agencies' missions. This includes a robust float pool and a premium to float between centers.
- **Precepting:** Our newer co-workers need the right training to be able to bring their best. Precepting should be done by people who enjoy training co-workers, are good at it, have been given the time in their work day, and are paid an appropriate premium.
- **Wages:** We raised our wages in our last contract, but we need to stay caught up with industry standards. Those of us who have dedicated the most years to this important work are lagging behind. We proposed an across-the-board wage **increase** of 5% each year of the contract, plus wage increases at each of the steps from step t to step z.
- **Breaks:** We know how important it is to be well rested, so our proposal includes making sure our breaks are free from interruptions.
- **Accountable investigations:** We brought to light the lack of accountability around investigations and we proposed a three-month timeframe for most investigations to ensure fair treatment.
- **Continuing education** that keeps us at the top of our field is of utmost importance to the work we do, which is why we proposed an annual skills fair and certification premiums.
- **Equity and inclusion at work:** At our workplaces, everyone should feel valued. The way we do that is by looking at our policies and seeing that they are bias-free.



"We had a nurse put under investigation. They were out almost six months and didn't even get interviewed for two months. The on-call and other staff ran things which led to problems on the unit. If you pull people off the floor they have to be replaced and investigations are expensive. This caused trauma for the patients and

could have led to even more expense. We need our investigations to be brought under control."

Melissa Staples, RN3, ESH



"There are 12 of us in organizational development. We are tasked with training floor staff. Our chronic understaffing makes this difficult because staff can't leave their units to attend our trainings. When we fix the staffing shortfall we will see improvements to safety on the ward, and we will also see a vastly improved ability to provide and receive training for quality patient care."

Janie Palafox, Organizational Development, RN3, WSH

Our bargaining team

Debbie Carlson, Nursing Consultation Advisor, DOH
 Tricia Terry, Nurse Consultant DOH
 Shana Johnny, Nurse Consultant DOH
 Charan Paul, RN3, Fircrest
 Tia Hallberg, Nurse Consultant, Holgate HCS
 Troy Wasmundt, RN3, Naselle JRA
 Tina Angeles, Nurse Consultant, Lakewood RCS
 Lisa Hartwell, Nurse Consultant, Lakewood RCS
 Debbie Hawkins, RN3, WSH
 Barb Shelman, Forensics admissions, WSH
 Willie Saw, RN3,, WSH
 Paul Singh, On Call Supervisor, WSH
 Sharon Bethard, RN2, WSH
 Paula Manalo, RN3, WSH
 Elizabeth Barber, RN3, WSH
 Janie Palafox, RN3, WSH
 Melissa Staples, RN3, ESH
 Onnika Merkle, RN3, ESH
 Van Braas, RN2, ESH
 Roni Palmer, RN3, ESH
 Traci McKenzie, RN3, Lakeland Village
 Tracie Lillienthal, RN2, Lakeland Village
 Patricia Carlson, DDA, ARNP Lead, Spokane RCS
 Betty Diaz, Nurse Consultant, Yakima RCS

URGENT ALERT:

Freedom Foundation

We know the difference our union makes: because of our contract we have won increases to our wages that are helping us recruit and retain staff. One special interest, the billionaire-funded extremist Freedom Foundation, sees that we’re winning and wants to break our unity and stop the work we’re doing to improve care.

The Freedom Foundation filed a public records request for all DSHS/DOH staff’s first name, middle initial, last name, job classification, hire date, and work email. This information was released by the state on June 15.

If the Freedom Foundation uses this information to contact you, please let your union delegate or organizer know. They will be trying to entice us to quit our union, undermine our strong voice for safe staffing and better wages, and weaken our organization. We won’t fall for their lies.

Together we are continuing to fight the release of personal information. We will keep you updated about this or any other request for your personal information.

Staying stronger together

It takes all of us working together to keep our union strong so we can win on staffing, wages and benefits, and safety. If we’re not all in the union together management will try to rollback what we’ve won.

We’re staying strong together even though extremist groups and anti-union employers are working to weaken our union strength. By making it optional for public employees to be in our union they hope we will lose our power. Our union raises standards for all workers and each of us needs to do our part to keep our union strong.

Say NO to attempts to weaken our union

The Freedom Foundation is one extremist group behind this attack that will try to get us to drop our dues. They have already requested our personal information including our emails and home addresses so they can knock on our doors, send us mail with misleading information that we can give ourselves a raise, and they might even show up outside of our hospital to talk to us. But what they don’t tell us is that if we leave our union we’ll be weaker and without power to have a say in our pay, healthcare, and working conditions.

Here’s what we can do to keep our union strong:

- **Commit** to keeping our union strong. If you haven’t done so already, fill out a new union card at <https://joinseiu1199nw.org> and do your part to stay united.
- **Talk** to your co-workers now about why you’re staying in the union and what we’ve won together. Connect with your delegate and Executive Board leader about what we can do next.
- **Watch** for mail, phone calls, or visits to your house from the Freedom Foundation about dropping your union dues. Don’t be fooled: tell the Freedom Foundation that you’re staying union strong.

Our next bargaining session: July 3

A victory for education at Western

When we use our union voice to advocate for change, we get heard. Because we were clear, united, and persistent, the department of organizational development has been reorganized, including two important changes:

1. The interim director is now someone we have expressed confidence in, and
2. RNs will be directly supervised by an RN4.

It’s important that we have supervisors who have provided direct patient care and understand our work.