



Standing together for a contract that reflects our values

When we stand strong in our union and take action to show our commitment to improvements, we have the strength to make DSHS a great place to work and receive care and services.

Last week we showed our unity throughout the state by wearing stickers in support of our proposals.

Together we took a hard look at management practices in our workplaces, crafted proposals based on what we need, voted to support our bargaining proposals, and now we're bargaining to bring management up to the standards we know other agencies and healthcare employers have. Talk to your bargaining team member or organizer to hear more about how we're taking action to win.

Our proposals (see on back), along with last session's proposals on staffing, float pool, precepting, breaks, fair wages, equity and inclusion, and duration of investigations will all serve to make DSHS and DOH sought after workplaces. We need to stand together to make this a reality.

Our next bargaining session: July 30



"We have been at the bargaining table three times so far and we don't hear much interest from management on wanting to improve anything. The low staffing shows a lack of respect. They take staff off the floor for long investigations which causes inadequate staffing and disrupts our work. They made a big deal about Nurse's Week, asking us to leave the wards to celebrate, but we were short staffed so no one could attend. They talk about how much they value us but their actions don't show it. Management needs to listen to the experts who work on the wards each and every day. Until they hire more nurses and create a real float pool we are continuing to be disrespected."

**Melissa Staples, RN3,
Eastern State Hospital**



"Too often we see RNs disciplined inappropriately. We are human. Most of the time when nurses make a practice error there are systems issues that contribute to the error, such as staffing shortages, inadequate training or orientation, or inadequate communication. These are the issues that allowed the error to occur in the first place. Punitive measures are not helpful."

**Debbie Carlson,
Nursing Consultation Advisor, DOH**



Our proposal	Management’s actual response
End punitive measures that hurt morale: We know that motivation and great morale are no accident. We told management that punitive measures including reduction in pay and demotion are not effective, are not acceptable, contribute to low morale, and must be removed from our contract.	“We’re not interested in that.”
Make hiring and promotions accountable: Hiring and appointments still suffer from a byzantine variety of protocols and lack of transparency. We proposed simple fixes that will make the process more transparent and equitable.	“We’re not interested in that.”
End mandatory OT: Mandatory overtime is antiquated and unnecessary, and used as a crutch by the staffing offices at our larger facilities. This is no way for us to have a predictable family life and a safe work environment. The solution to this is appropriate staffing in the first place and better planning on management’s part, not shifting the burden to us. Mandatory OT should be treated the same as it is in all other hospitals in the state—by ending it.	“Let’s have a meeting.” (our response to their response: LOL)
Reduce probationary periods: A probationary period of 6 months is usually plenty to know whether a new staff member is a good fit. Extending up to a year is inappropriate and unfair. We proposed limiting their option to extend probation to a maximum of nine consecutive months.	“We’re not interested in that.”
Make comp time start at 40 hours: Our contract specifies the work week for exempt nurses is 40 hours. But since we only get comp time after 45 hours, many nurse consultants are under pressure to work 45 hours every week. That’s why the provision for compensatory time must start at 40 hours, not 45. It is up to management to hire enough staff to get the work done, not push us to do more.	“We’re not interested in that.”

Say NO to attempts to weaken our union

We only have the strength to win a great contract if we all stand together in 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:

- **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 bargaining team

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