



# CHI's wage garnishments for healthcare taxes are unacceptable

## We are holding management accountable for their tax mistakes

It is outrageous that CHI-Franciscan garnished money from our paychecks this winter for taxes on healthcare expenses that took place as long as three years ago. Many St. Joe's co-workers, led by our labor-management committee, met with management in late 2018 and delivered a petition demanding that all garnishments stop immediately. We will continue to speak out through organizing, grievances, and all means necessary to hold CHI accountable in this area.

### What is happening?

Many of us use the Health Equity card to pay for our healthcare expenses, swiping it like a debit card when we visit the doctor or dentist or pharmacy. Some of us put our own money on our card through the Flexible Spending Account program. Most of the money on the card is given to us by CHI-Franciscan, either through the Health Reimbursement Account we had through the end of 2016 or through our participation in wellness activities, like we protected and expanded in bargaining our last contract. We have never owed taxes on money on the card that we used for healthcare.

This fall, out of nowhere, CHI contacted us and said that we had to supply receipts for various "unaccounted" payments we made with the card going back more than three years, and that if we did not supply the receipts, they would garnish taxes from our wages. Management has provided murky and shifting explanations of what happened, alternately blaming CHI's own oversight and an error by Health Equity, the company based in Utah that manages the card. One thing is clear, though, among all the explanations—this mess is management's making, not ours. And so they, not us, need to fix it.

It is unacceptable that:

- Management tasked us with providing receipts stretching back more than three years.
- Many of these receipts are for services at CHI-Franciscan's very own facilities—and yet it is us, not management, who have to do the work of retrieving the documentation.
- Management directed us to contact CHI-Franciscan Benefits Department for help if we had trouble resolving the issue with Health Equity. While a few of us got help and got our situation resolved, others in the exact same situation were told there was nothing management could do.

It is not acceptable that when management messes up, we have to use our time and money to make things right. We will hold CHI-Franciscan accountable. Look for an update on our grievance soon.



"Last year November, money was taken out of my paycheck. We had a meeting with HR with our concerns. Management says I owe for using the HSA card. I told management, it's not right. I still want answers, I wanted to know what happened."

**Elizabeth Karikari, EVS Tech, EVS**

# We continue to raise our voice for the staffing our patients need

We are getting ready for our second staffing meeting where we will follow up with the hospital's upper management on the staffing concerns we raised in our first staffing meeting last summer. At that meeting, we told management they must address our concerns of short staffing, vacation denials, missed breaks, an inadequate staffing matrix, and a slow hiring process. In response to our unity, management made some improvements. We are continuing to organize for the staffing we need throughout the hospital.



"At the staffing meeting, I addressed how short we have been in EVS and how bad that is for St. Joseph Medical Center. I feel like the response from management shows that they see the problem and are taking steps to address it, which is progress. We will continue to hold them accountable to the process until we see results."

**Kenny Harris, EVS Tech II, EVS**



"We voiced to management that when we request our vacations that we are left on our own to figure out who is going to cover our shift while we are on PTO. We are left with fewer days off than we request and sometimes we don't get to take our vacation, which I don't agree with not accessing our PTO. We need paid time off support when we request our vacation from management, so we

can have the time off we need."

**Angie Swanson, HUC, ACC**



"We negotiated staffing language to meet to raise and review staffing concerns. Recently we brought concerns about our new DFM system in the dietary dept. The issues were ongoing and slow to fix. After bringing these concerns to the staffing meeting, I see significant improvements been made to the DFM system and are continuing to improve daily. Working together we can

improve the workplace and stand up for ongoing quality patient care, which is our main focus."

**Alisha Colyer, Dietary Aide, Dietary**



"We need coverage for our 15-minute breaks. We need support when we have 1 to 1. Sometimes one CNA is assigned to two 1 to 1s, which makes it hard for us to be in two places if one CNA is on break and another might be covering both 1 to 1s in addition to 9 other patients. That doesn't feel safe for us or our patients. We need to prioritize CNA and 1 to 1s 15-minute breaks."

**Joti Narayan, CNA, ACC**

## Our unity works—more than 4 in 5 co-workers got wellness money last year

At our bargaining last year we won a commitment from management to work together with us to increase our participation in the wellness plan where we can earn \$450 toward our healthcare costs for participating in wellness activities. Our advocacy for improving the plan and involving us paid off. Last year, 81% of co-workers participated, compared to only 22% the year before—almost four times as many!

Our Wellness Committee meets this month to discuss the details of the 2019 wellness plan.



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