



SEIUHealthcare®
United for Quality Care

Kaiser Permanente

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New Year, Fresh Wins: 2020 Brings Paid Family and Medical Leave and Improvements to Our Contracts

Everything we need to know to start the New Year with strength

Paid Family and Medical Leave

Our hard work in Olympia over the past few years is still paying dividends on different fronts. In 2017, we launched a petition to help pass landmark legislation that guarantees paid family leave in Washington. Using our collective voice to enact positive change helps improve working conditions for all, and together, we are lifting standards for all workers around the state!

Starting January 2020, we will be able to use Paid Family and Medical Leave to help replace our paycheck when we need to take time off from work to take care of ourselves or a family member.

Nearly every Washington worker can qualify for paid leave as long as we work a minimum of 820 hours. At Kaiser, we bargained with the employer about the implementation of this new law and agreed that we can use our PTO, EIB and/or STD benefits to supplement our leave and make our wages whole if we chose to.

To learn more about the kind of life events that are covered under Paid Family and Medical Leave and how much time we can take, visit our website at <https://www.seiu1199nw.org/paidleave2020/>

Higher Wages Make Kaiser a Leader in Our Region

In addition to any step/anniversary increases for which we were eligible in 2019, we all should have seen at least 3% across-the-board increase to our hourly wage in November. In addition, we all began contributing 9 cents per hour to the Trust, which covers the costs of being part of the National Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions and the Labor Management Partnership. All Coalition-represented union members across the nation contribute, and Kaiser contributes an equivalent amount as well. The Trust funds all of the partnership work we do together, including the new increased education benefit of \$3,000 each per year for CE.

Because our wage increase was effective the first full pay period after October 1, but we didn't see the increases on our paychecks until November, we will all get a retroactive payment for that time. Some of us have already received our full retro pay, others only partial, and others none at all. Management has communicated to us that all retro pay will be paid out by February 4, 2020. If you have questions or concerns, reach out to your SEIU delegate.

Find more on the back

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New Certification Pay for CS and Surgical Techs

In recognition of the unique skill sets and training we have, we bargained new certifications in our local contract. CS and Surg Techs who are nationally certified can now receive a \$1/hr certification pay. To be eligible you must provide documentation of your national certification to your manager.



“If you are a Certified CS or Surg Tech, submit proof of your certification to your manager so that they can forward to HR. If you need help paying for testing, you may be eligible for help covering some of the cost through our training fund. Let’s encourage each other and aim for all of our KPWA CS and Surg Techs to become certified during this New Year. We bargained hard for it.” **La Nita Thomas, Surgical Technologist, Tacoma Medical Center**

Respecting Our Union through Paid Time for Delegates

Prior to our newly bargained contracts, our delegates did not have the power to represent us on paid time and had to use their breaks or time off to do union work. Under the National Agreement, our delegates can now represent us in investigations and grievances on paid time. This is a great improvement and provides us with better access to representation when needed.

If you’re a delegate, going forward when you represent a co-worker in an investigation or a grievance, this is done on paid time and you do not need to clock out. If you have trouble securing release to do this work, please contact your organizer.

Increased CE Funds Through Our National Contract

We all now have \$3000 per year to use for continuing education. Kaiser is working on guidelines for how to use the national CE funds and we have made it clear that we need to have input in how the new funding works. We are also working with the Training Fund on how RNs and ARNPs will be able to use the fund going forward for education and career advancement. For now, continue to apply for CE using the same process we’ve always used. More information will be coming soon.

Improved Weekend Scheduling Respects Our Work-Life Balance

Our new contract provides multiple ways to schedule weekend work, while ensuring we have at least two out of four weekends off. For clinics currently open on weekends for primary care, some of us were forced to bid into schedules with more frequent weekend work. Delegates from each of those clinics will be meetings with clinic managers, our union organizers and Labor Relations Consultants to clarify the process and next steps for those of us who want to get out of those more frequent weekend schedules. Delegates and managers will communicate the plan to affected workers in the coming weeks.

A New Union Leadership Role: Contract Specialists

The National Agreement provides Contract Specialists – here in Washington, we will have 2.5 FTE available. The Contract Specialist is exactly what it sounds like – someone who knows our union contracts in & out! The role is a year-long position for a current member in good standing, who will represent us in the work of implementing and enforcing our national and local contracts. We are working with Kaiser to roll out this work as soon as possible. More information coming soon.



“We are excited to implement the new role of Contract Specialist. This role will allow us to take paid leave from our clinical role and to focus on building our union and making it stronger. This role is important in helping build trust between staff and management, and making our partnership with Kaiser stronger and more successful.” **LeNae Jackson, MA, Olympia Medical Center**

Improved Access to Medical for New Hires

Under the new contract, employees receive health benefits the first of the month following hire – this is a huge improvement from the 60-90 day wait period! Our new co-workers hired between November 2, 2019, and December 31, 2019, will receive their health benefits starting January 1, 2020.

A Renewed PT/OT Joint Labor-Management Committee

We know that we have the most power to make the positive changes we and our patients need in the workplace when we all have a voice and work together in partnership with Kaiser leadership. With changes to appointment times, return access challenges and other regional changes to our work, we spoke up in bargaining about the need for increased representation on our PT/OT JLMC, and won a fifth position and more frequent committee meetings through March 2020. We have since filled the fifth position and met with management several times, having robust conversations about how we can improve access, streamline our workflow and improve the patient experience. We will continue to meet and move forward with making recommendations to PT/OT leadership for further improvements to our work.



"Through our new contract we have been able to expand the size of our JLMC and increase the number of meetings. This has allowed us to work more effectively with management on ways to improve access and better manage our recent schedule change. I'm excited to continue working

with our team in addressing issues that are important to our physical and occupational therapists here at KPWA."

Erica Ellzey, PT, Burien



"Thanks to bargaining and recruitment efforts, the PT/OT JLMC is more comprehensive than ever, representing Home Health and outpatient therapists from all areas of KPWA. We have been meeting managers monthly to address issues such as follow-up access and ensuring equal and quality care to all patients."

Bobeya Krishnek, OT, Northgate

PT/OT JLMC members: Erica Ellzey (Co-Chair), Bobeya Krishnek, Jean Meyers, Julea Edwards, Daniel Rogers

Gaining Clarity and Consistency in Lead, Preceptor and Charge Roles

Both our bargaining team and Kaiser leadership agreed that we don't always get paid correctly when we take on a lead, charge or preceptor role, and we need more clarity about when those roles are most appropriately used. We agreed to come together as a committee to further define these roles, when they should be used, and ensure we are always paid when we do this work. The work done by this committee will help to inform and resolve several grievances we have filed relating to not being appropriately paid for these roles. Ask your committee member for more information.



"I'm excited to be a part of the Lead/Charge/Preceptor committee. A lot of our members have been affected by this topic and to now be working on clear contract language alongside management will improve everyone's understanding. We have made great progress in our first few sessions and management is listening to our input. We are looking forward to continuing to make progress and ensuring there is clarity for everyone moving forward."

Cece Pickens, RN, Tacoma Specialty Center

Lead/Preceptor/Charge Committee members: Laura Kilberg, RN, Tacoma Urgent Care; Cece Pickens, RN, Tacoma General Surgery; Trish Nail, MA, Gig Harbor Family Practice; Wendy Rychwalski, ARNP, Northgate Family Practice; Alison Prevost, MLT, Capitol Hill Mental Health

Representing Our Union at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement Forum

Frontline staff and SEIU members, along with various healthcare leaders from Kaiser locally & nationally, had the opportunity to attend the IHI National Forum on Quality Improvement in Health Care 2019 Conference in Orlando, Florida. The conference provided us with a multitude of insightful workshops focused on improving the quality of care we can and do provide. The keynotes, by Tarana Burke and Abby Wambach, in particular, were exciting and moving – and relevant to being successful in our work.

Discussions during breaks and meal time focused on the future of healthcare models, what we can learn from the booming Orlando hospitality industry (where employees come before guests, because management recognizes well-cared for employees are going to be better able to care for guests), and what we need to truly help improve healthcare access.



“Attending the IHI National Forum on Quality Improvement in Health Care re-energized my investment in being a frontline healthcare worker. I am thankful for the opportunity and am excited to bring my renewed energy and focus on quality improvement back to my co-workers and frontline partners at Kaiser Washington.”

Trish Nail, MA, Gig Harbor Family Practice



Trish Nail, MA, Gig Harbor; Tim Ma, PT, Bellevue; Breana Baker, MA, Olympia; Teri Murray, Liaison RN, Kitsap Care Management



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