

# Standing Together for Our Patients

## Frequently asked Questions

**FAQ  
Update!**

### **Does it violate the NLRA when the boss asks me if I'm striking or not?**

No, as long as it is done in a non-coercive manner and for the purpose of determining if coverage is needed. You do not have to answer. Repeated, coercive, threatening, or asking workers about other workers is likely a violation so please forward details in those cases to your bargaining team member or organizer. You should not feel intimidated by your manager about your decision. Lots of people are going to their manager together to declare their intention to go on strike for safe patient care.

### **Can I talk to my patients or their families about the strike?**

Be cautious and do not raise the subject yourself. You can answer questions from patients or their families about the strike as you would another topic but be short and factual.

"Thank you for your support" is a good response to patients who express support. Do not treat an expression of support as a question or invitation to talk further about the strike.

### **If I go to work on January 28, can I decide to join the strike later?**

Yes. Your right to strike is protected by federal law and you can join at any time. However, this is about having the strongest unity possible to show Providence we are united together for a fair contract and the proposals the bargaining team has presented. This means us all being out together for all 3 days of the strike.

### **My boss is telling me that I have to show up for 4 hours on Tuesday or I will get locked out. What do I do?**

Your boss is requesting that you cross the picket line and not strike. Management selectively locking out strikers is retaliation and a violation of the law. Everyone has a right to strike. You can participate in the strike and go back to work at the end of the strike. We will thoroughly track any individuals management locks out and collect written statements so we can take legal action.

### **How do I apply for the hardship fund?**

There will be forms at the picket lines for you to ask for money from the hardship fund.

### **How do I know if we're locked out? What do I do if we're locked out?**

We won't know who Providence is locking out until the strike ends at 7:30a on Friday January 31st. Everyone who is scheduled on or AFTER 7:30am on Friday January 31st MUST attempt to report to work. It is not enough for your manager to call you at home or tell you not to show up for work. If you are locked out come to the picket line outside your campus to fill out an affidavit or statement so we can take legal action together.

### **Is striking considered patient abandonment?**

No. When healthcare workers go on strike, we give the employer 10 days to prepare and we give the specific date and time when we will be striking. It is Providence's responsibility to ensure that if there are patients to be cared for at the time of the strike, that it has a plan to care for them.

### **Do I get paid vacation time when I strike?**

No, if you were not prescheduled for sick or vacation, there will be no vacation or sick pay from Swedish during a strike. If you are scheduled for leave during the strike, your leave should continue as scheduled.

### **What do I do during the strike?**

Striking is an important action we can take on behalf of our patients. We need every worker to come to the picket line at their work location for at least 4 hours during their regular working shift. If you have a second job or other responsibilities, that's ok, but plan to come for 4 hours each day. The public will want to know why we are striking. We will have press events during the strike at central locations where we can get reports from the strike lines at other locations.

### **What does it mean to go on an unfair labor practice strike?**

When we strike to protest an unfair labor practice committed by our employer we are called unfair labor practice strikers by the National Labor Relations Board. As unfair labor practice strikers, we can be neither discharged nor permanently replaced. When the strike ends, we are entitled to have our jobs back even if employees hired to do our

work have to be discharged. Management has engaged in a variety of unfair labor practices ranging from terminating some of our co-workers for their union activity to telling us we can't talk about the Union in the workplace, and refusing to provide us with necessary information for bargaining. These unlawful actions are impeding our ability to reach a fair contract.

### **Will we get locked out?**

It is against the law for Providence to permanently replace us with a lockout. Once we make an unconditional offer to return to work, Providence may try to temporarily lock us out of work by pointing to the contract length it negotiated with the replacement or scab agencies. Together, we are 8,000 healthcare workers strong, trained in every aspect of providing high quality care — from advanced surgery and family care to keeping our facilities clean and sterile. Providence knows a lockout will not be in the best interest of patients. If there is a temporary lockout, we will stay strong together and know that we have a legal right to return to our jobs.

### **Will I lose my healthcare coverage for February?**

No. Under the law, employees with a .5 or greater FTE who have medical benefits will return to work after the strike, and will be covered for the month of February. It is a continuing working condition and would be an unfair labor practice to take away health insurance, the same way it would be an unfair labor practice for the employer to reduce your pay without bargaining.

### What is the picket pay?

Picket pay of \$40/day is available for those who sign in and picket 4 hours/day. In addition, the union maintains a hardship fund that supporters can contribute to. Any worker who pickets can apply to the Hardship Fund for help. Members may also donate their picket pay to the Hardship Fund.

### What is the Hardship Fund?

Any striking member can ask for help from the Hardship Fund. Dollars are collected from our union brothers and sisters, from community allies, from our friends and neighbors. Bargaining team leaders will distribute the dollars to members. We can start to collect donations this week. Forms to apply for the hardship fund will be available on the picket line.

### Can I legally strike if I am on a work VISA or I am not a citizen?

YES. Every employee has the right to strike. Every worker can stand up with their co-workers, and in standing together, no one is alone. Immigrant workers are entitled to the same protections as non-immigrant workers under the NLRA, including protections to strike. In particular, H-1B workers cannot be terminated for participating in a labor strike; their participation in a strike does not violate the H-1B visa requirements that the worker remain employed by the petitioning employer.

### Can I get in trouble?

At the specific time we designate, everyone will walk out together or not go into work, and that will be a protected union action. Striking is protected by federal law and when our contract expired, so did our no-strike clause. As long as we stick together, we can fight any retaliation by Providence.

### How long is the strike?

We have given notice for a three day strike, starting at 7:00 am on Tuesday January 28, 2020 until 7:30a.m. on Friday January 31, 2020. If you start work at 5:00a.m. on January 28<sup>th</sup>, you need to report to work at that time and walk out together with everyone at 7:00a.m.

### How did we decide to give notice for our Unfair Labor Practice Strike?

The bargaining team is authorizing the strike based on all of the feedback we have heard from thousands of members that this contract needs commitments to patient care and recruitment and retention and that management is not bargaining in good faith. Managers are attempting to divide us by suggesting we should vote again when we already voted to authorize our representative bargaining team to call a strike if necessary.

### What if I'm on probation or a resident? Or what if I'm per diem or on call/standby? Can I go on strike?

Every employee has the right to strike. Striking is protected by federal law and when our contract expired, so did our no-strike clause. As long as we stick together, we can fight any retaliation by Providence.

### Will the strike impact my workers compensation benefits?

No. However, you must follow the terms of your workers compensation benefits. For example, if you are on a "light duty" assignment, you can participate in the picket up to the limits of your light duty. If you can only work two hours per day, you may only picket two hours a day. If your light duty assignment requires you to sit, the Union can provide you with a chair at the picket so you can still participate within the limits of your light duty assignment. If you are recovering at home from a workplace injury, you should continue to do so consistent with the terms of your workers compensation. If you have a specific question about your workers compensation benefit, please contact your delegate.

### Is it illegal for my manager to ask me if I am going to strike?

No, they can ask if you will be on strike. The best response is that you and your co-workers tell your boss all together that you will all be striking.

### Do we have to train our replacements?

Yes, if you are given that assignment from management you should not be insubordinate. It is a great opportunity to let co-workers and replacement workers know why you will be striking and standing up for patients.

### What would I tell my mortgage/tele company if I am late with my bills?

Send this letter to your creditors, and ask for a month's reprieve:

#### Sample Letter to Creditors

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To whom it may concern:

I have an account with your firm:

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I am employed with **[Employer]**, but currently I am involved in a labor dispute with them. My union, SEIU Healthcare 1199NW has called a work stoppage with the Employer.

Please make an appointment for me at your earliest convenience so that I may arrange a loan payment schedule for this period of time.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



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