

United as a Union in Unprecedented Times

We are united for our patients' and families' safety in this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic. At every level, from our local and national KP leadership to the governor of Washington, we are joining together as a union to speak up to authorities for staffing for safe patient care, economic protections if we are impacted by COVID-19 and adequate protection for staff on the frontlines of patient care.

We have been in close communication with KP leadership both locally and nationally to ensure new measures taken to keep us safe and able to provide care to our patients follow the highest level of safety protocols and are in line with our union contracts and standards.

Local KP management has shared their immediate plan of consolidating member-facing care at key locations and moving to a virtual care model everywhere that is possible in an effort to encourage social distancing and reduce exposure for staff and patients. Most staff will continue working at their own clinics doing virtual care or other work. While face-to-face care will vary by specialty, many departments, such as Urgent Cares, will stay open to see our most critical patients.

As a union of caregivers, we recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic is an extraordinary situation that calls for the best in our labor-management partnership approach in order to rise to the immense challenge of providing care for our community while preserving safety and stability for ourselves and our families.

We agreed with management to a process for staffing open clinics which mirrors other staffing processes from our contracts: first asking for volunteers and then assigning shifts by inverse seniority within the geographic districts, taking into account a person's skill set, training and licensure.

KP management has assured us they are confident everyone will have work to do during this pandemic period, even with many clinic locations closed to in-person patient visits.



"As frontline healthcare workers, this COVID-19 outbreak is scary. We see the protocols on what's the best way to deal with this virus changing every day and due to supply shortages

some of that goes against our best practices training. As a country we have to be in this for the long haul and commit to doing what it takes to get through this. At work we have to be flexible and willing to step up outside of our normal work to care for our community. We have to stay informed and advocate for the supplies and safety measures we need to keep ourselves and our patients safe." **Cece Pickens, RN, Tacoma Medical Center**

COVID-19 Exposure or Symptoms at KP: What to Do
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COVID-19 Exposure or Symptoms at KP:

What to Do?

As a union, we continue to be in close touch with KP management locally regarding what to do if you are exposed to COVID-19.

If you or a co-worker believe that you might have been exposed to COVID-19, or if you're worried that you may have symptoms, the first thing you need to do is contact your manager. It is important that you contact your manager specifically regarding your symptoms or exposure to COVID-19, as opposed to just generally reporting that you are sick and won't be in, because Kaiser has set up specific steps to screen and support employees who may have COVID-19 symptoms or exposure. **Here are the steps:**

- Call in sick, being clear about the symptoms you are experiencing
- If you are at work, approach your manager and explain your symptoms
- If an employee has symptoms or has had unprotected exposure with a confirmed COVID-19 case or Person Under Investigation (PUI), managers should direct the employee to call CNS (Consulting Nurse Service) and send the employee home if at work
- Employees should contact the CNS Employee Line at **(206) 630-0150**
- CNS will do an assessment
- If cleared, CNS will direct the employee to notify their manager with instructions
- If not cleared, CNS will have employee call Employee Health
- Employee Health will determine if the employee can return to work and will request that the employee contact their manager.

Pay During Quarantine If it is determined that you need to be quarantined, KPWA should pay you administrative leave pay. You should NOT have to use your PTO, EIB, or Workers Compensation to get paid for your time in quarantine.

What to Do If You Are High Risk If you are considered high-risk based on CDC guidelines about your age and underlying health conditions and are concerned about your current work situation, you have the right to request an accommodation from Kaiser for a safe work assignment. In order to initiate this process, the first step is to talk to your manager. An accommodation may include being reassigned to a facility that is lower risk or working remotely or taking a leave. If you are unable to resolve your question about an accommodation with your manager, then reach out to a union organizer or delegate for help.

Protection for Healthcare Workers As a union, we are advocating at all levels and in every forum for adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) for all healthcare workers. We believe that N-95 respirators are the gold standard for PPE. Due to the grave PPE shortage we are facing, the CDC has made the interim recommendation that surgical masks be used by healthcare providers in some circumstances, and Kaiser nationally has adopted this "droplet protection" standard for PPE in most situations that do not involve invasive patient procedures.

We believe that the supply shortage must be addressed in the most aggressive way possible. Together with our healthcare union partners WSNA and UFCW 21, we have released a statement calling on the federal government to do all in its power to increase the supply of N-95 masks and other PPE, including releasing supplies from the national PPE stockpile, specifically targeting states like Washington that are in the midst of COVID-19 outbreaks, and incentivizing US companies to manufacture more PPE. It is critical that PPE that is available is provided in an equitable manner to all caregivers and that we have access to proper fit-testing and instruction in PPE use in every language we speak.

If you have concern about PPE availability in your workplace, talk to your delegate or organizer.

Labor-Management Partnership Update

We remain committed to working with Kaiser to roll out the full Labor-Management Partnership in Washington. Together with our partner unions, we have held several productive meetings with management over the past two months regarding the Performance Sharing Plan goals, where we will be eligible to receive a bonus in early 2021 based on our achievement of jointly bargained goals in 2020 around safety, service, quality, affordability, and attendance. We are making progress toward launching the Contract Specialist roles and building toward a plan for roll-out of our unit-based teams.

Some of this work is on a longer timeline than we had originally anticipated due to the COVID-19 crisis, but look for additional updates soon over the coming weeks. In addition, we are working with Kaiser management to finalize the printed version of our new local contracts over the coming weeks as well.

Union COVID-19 Hotline

If you have concerns about COVID-19 in your workplace or to report an incident, call our union's COVID-19 hotline at (866) 977-0247. Organizers are staffing the line every day 9:00am-5:30pm to take your incident reports and answer your questions. Calls received after 5:30pm will be routed to voicemail and returned the next day.

More information is available on our website:
www.seiu1199nw.org/coronavirus