

WE'RE HOLDING KAISER ACCOUNTABLE FOR CORRECTING HRCONNECT FAILINGS

This week, a group of union delegates and executive board members met with Kaiser's Director of Labor Relations for our system-wide grievance relating to HRConnect. Because this is such a widespread issue that affects us all across Kaiser, we agreed with management that our first meeting would go directly to the highest step of the grievance process.

We reiterated at the meeting that Kaiser is failing in its most essential, basic function as an employer—**paying us for the work we do**. We told them that this failure could not come at a more critical time, as we are still in a pandemic with re-increasing case counts at the same time as we are working so hard, going above and beyond to bring hundreds of thousands of vaccinations to our community.

Union delegates at the meeting talked about many of the direct experiences of coworkers across the clinics—from not being able to afford to take time off due to accrual balance errors, to having no idea what some of the pay codes on our time card that look like a random group of letters even mean, to facing new and evolving pay errors as a night shift worker whose shift sometimes crosses between two pay periods.

We focused on solutions. We presented a detailed proposal to Kaiser of what they need to commit in writing, to settle our pay errors and make us whole. We are expecting a response to the grievance and the proposal we presented within two weeks.

We will not let up until we are paid for the work we do.



“At the Step 3 grievance meeting I was able to speak to all of the concerns we have about HRConnect and the pay issues it has caused. The settlement we proposed to resolve the issues covers every item that has been paid or calculated wrong. If we don't get the result we want, we now have a legally binding process to escalate our concerns until we get resolution. I'm confident that this is the right path forward and we as a union are taking all the steps we need to. We will stick together and hold Kaiser accountable to paying us correctly and making this right.” La Nita Thomas, Surg Tech, Tacoma ASC

WHAT KAISER NEEDS TO DO REGARDING HRCONNECT

- Provide detailed information regarding complete pay records, accrual balances, overpayments, and a number of other areas
- Issue a new, joint statement with the union, in a spirit of partnership, about the payroll errors, our rights and opportunities to fix the errors, and the steps to resolution
- For meeting with HR consultants about pay errors: Pay us for our time in the meetings, release union delegates to attend the meetings with us if we wish, and provide us detailed pay info in advance so we can be prepared for our meeting
- Commit in writing to reimburse us for any financial penalties we have faced due to late or missing pay
- Strive to reach mutual agreement with all employees regarding overpayment, including regarding a payback period of more than the 13 pay periods they've offered so far if need. Take no adverse action against anyone regarding not agreeing to an overpayment arrangement without meeting with the union first to try to find a solution
- Fix the ongoing errors in LPN continuing education accruals—we won an increase to 40 hours/year in our last contract, but the HRConnect system currently only allows us to access 24 hours

WHAT KAISER NEEDS TO DO REGARDING HRCONNECT (CONTINUED)

- Provide a “key” to the codes on our timecard, so we can understand whether we are being paid right and what our pay record means. Eventually, we told them we hope the timecard can be changed to be more simple and readable
- Meet to understand the pay rules affecting shifts that span two pay periods and correct errors in this area
- Identify changes in who received pay premiums like certification pay, float pay, lead pay, and other types of extra pay that coincided with the start of HRConnect, and make corrections where needed
- Audit the entire HRConnect system and employee pay with an outside agency or contractor, to determine additional pay errors and fix them. It cannot be only on individual employees to detect every error in our pay
- Fully correct all errors in pay and accrual within 14 days of being notified of the error, and all errors identified in the grievance by May 7, 2021

We’re Taking a Stand for Better Staffing in Environmental Services



Custodians are the front line of infection prevention at Kaiser and are a critical part of the care teams that allow us to provide quality patient care. Despite numerous conversations at our EVS workgroup with management about staffing and overtime, the situation has only gotten worse. We now have more vacant EVS positions than ever and overtime has skyrocketed, with some of us working over 1,000 hours of OT last year alone. Poor staffing and excessive overtime is leading to injuries, burnout and frustration over the disrespect Kaiser is showing by continuing to ignore these issues. We’ve had enough and are moving forward with a grievance on behalf of all custodians.

If you’ve been impacted by understaffing, overtime or workplace injuries in EVS, please reach out to your organizer or delegate to find out how you can get involved.



“It’s very important for management to recognize the stress and hardship they put us through when jobs are not filled in a timely fashion. And coming up with real-world solutions to address the matter makes a difference.”
Matt Brown, Custodian, Olympia, EVS Workgroup Member

“Management wanted to change our job title from custodian to Housekeeper. We know that our job is so much more than housekeeping. We are the frontline of infection protection at a major healthcare organization and should be recognized as such. We proposed that our title be EVS Tech, since our work is much more technical than just housekeeping.”
Andrea Rodriguez, Lead Custodian, Bellevue



We’re Standing Together and Winning Improvements

Despite the ongoing struggles with EVS staffing, we are standing together and winning on issues that impact EVS, like holding bad managers accountable, making sure we have access to proper PPE and making our voices heard in decisions that affect us. We have two recent wins:

- N95 mask fit testing for all custodians
- Heading off a job title change that doesn’t make sense or respect our work

We're Standing Together and Winning Improvements (continued)

As the front line of infection control at KPWA, we know that Custodians need to be protected from COVID, both for our own safety and the safety of our families, and to ensure we are not spreading COVID within the workplace. We need the appropriate level of PPE available to all staff. Several leaders in our union in EVS have organized and after multiple conversations with management, including with the head of infection control, **we have won N95 fit testing for any custodian who wants it.** This is a huge step forward in ensuring our safety and our ability to continue to do our jobs to the highest standards.



Recently, KPWA management came to us with a proposal to change our job titles to "Housekeeping Aide" in an effort to better recruit into EVS vacancies. They believe that applicants may be overlooking the vacant positions in EVS because they are not searching for "custodian." We raised this issue at EVS Workgroup and let management know that they should have asked us what we think of this name change before making a plan without us. We said that "Housekeeping Aide" does not recognize or respect the unique skillset we have working in healthcare that is different from another setting, like a hotel.

Other healthcare employers in the area use the term "EVS Tech," which we think would align better with area standards and differentiate our work from other jobs which don't require a medical infection control skillset. Management heard our concerns and agreed to rethink the name change as well as remove the requirement to have a high school diploma or GED. **It is important that we have a seat at the table when changes happen that impact our work and we will continue to advocate for our voices to be heard.**

Next Steps on Our Groundbreaking Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program

*Report by Le'Nae Jackson, MA, Contract Specialist,
and MA Apprenticeship Labor-Management Committee Member*



"As a member of the MA apprenticeship program JLMC, I am happy to announce after months of preparation we are finally able to roll out our second cohort of new MA apprentices. This particular time around we have a more targeted focus of Seattle and East King County, which consists of South Lake Union, Ballard, Factoria, Bellevue, Capitol Hill, Rainier, Redmond and Northgate. Now for those who don't know, back in 2018, we collaborated with Kaiser Permanente and the Training Fund to look for ways we could fill the ever growing need for medical assistants within our organization.

This apprenticeship, which is an opportunity to not only learn a new skill but also get paid while doing it, is the first of its kind in the Washington region and Kaiser Permanente of Washington was the first one to roll it out. We collaborated with Kaiser Permanente to open up opportunities for those who would not have the chance or the accessibility to gain a new job skill. This opportunity allows for the apprentice to not only gain a new job skill but to also be paid while doing it!"