

# RESPECT OUR UNION: WE DEMAND TO BARGAIN

As a union, we have the rights to negotiate over changes in our working conditions. We filed a demand-to-bargain letter to YVMH on Tuesday, August 9; we are waiting to hear back from Memorial on dates to meet. You can read our union's statement on the mandated COVID vaccine below.

## Union statement on vaccination requirement for health care workers

As healthcare and behavioral health workers, we agree that the COVID vaccines are safe, effective and the best way to protect ourselves and our families from COVID-19. But as members of a union, we know that we have the right to bargain any change to our jobs.

When an employer issues a vaccine mandate, we will demand to bargain a COVID vaccine memorandum of understanding that details the conditions for vaccination, including time off for shots and side effects, and the procedure for medical or religious exemption.

We will not tolerate discrimination and we will demand racial equity. No worker should be made to wear stickers or other markings to show whether they are vaccinated. Vaccine information must be provided in the language spoken by workers.

We also know that while the vaccines are incredibly effective, they do not replace PPE or other infection control measures. We will continue to demand universal access to N95 masks and push employers to improve ventilation in facilities where needed.

Members of SEIU Healthcare 1199NW have worked tirelessly to care for our patients and clients during the COVID-19 crisis. We've faced unprecedented challenges and continue to fight in our workplaces every

day to ensure we have what we need to safely give the best possible care.

By continuing to stand together, we will win what we need to keep ourselves and our patients safe. To learn more about our demands, talk with your delegate or organizer.



"I have been an executive board member for many years with the union and there are those of us not vaccinated due to religious and medical reasons. I am glad we have the option to deny the vaccine due to these reasons. As a union we believe the vaccines are the way to go to keep our community and patients safe, but we understand people want a choice. We filed a demand to bargain Tuesday, August 10 to negotiate over changes in working conditions and to discuss if we can find alternatives. Administration has not given us a date to meet yet."

- Sandy Gaytan, RN, L&D

## STANDING UP FOR SAFE STAFFING

Many of our co-workers took action on August 18 and marched to CEO Carol Pete's office to demand better staffing. The demands we brought:

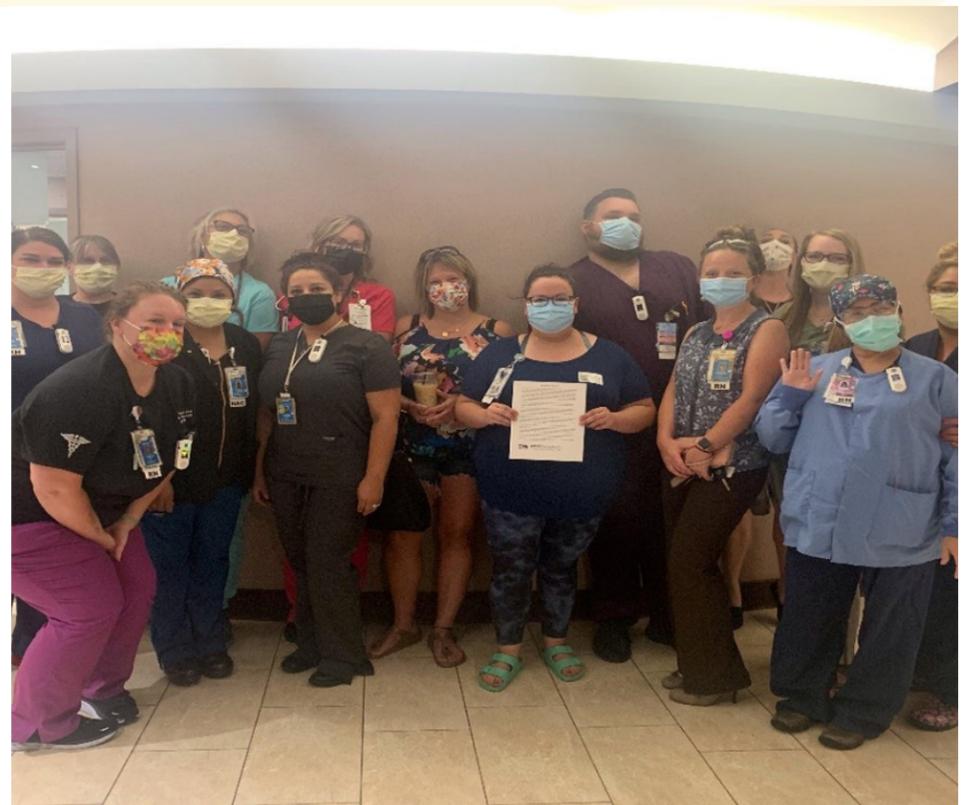
We ask that our support staff be able to help make our day-to-day tasks easier. There was talk about training our current nursing assistants to assist with blood sugars, retention catheters, and other tasks that could help share the workload but that has not been successful. We ask that we get more nursing assistants that want to stay in our hospital. Retention has been something for all nursing staff that has suffered. Nursing assistants are not minimum wage workers!

We need more Respiratory Therapists! Our Respiratory Therapy team really is the greatest support during these high numbers of COVID patients and right now we are lacking that support, as well! Instead of finding more support in the Respiratory Department, we have pushed some of their overextended tasks onto nursing staff or the patients would suffer. Nurses are asked to do their own breathing treatment on top of all the other care they are having to provide.

We are having to wait on supplies, use alternatives and that is not always going to be the solution.

We are thankful for the additional reimbursement with the incentive programs recently. However, we need to stock our hospital to full capacity! We need retention bonuses for the staff! Our turnover is detrimental and we need to feel appreciated for all the work we are doing and continue to do. It is concerning that with the new mandate our staffing shortage is going to become more of a crisis, we need support now.

We are here UNITED for better staffing for our patients' safety and for the safety of our staff. We should not be waiting for a sentinel event to make the right changes towards patient safety.



"Today my coworkers and I took a stand. Enough is enough. We need better staffing NOW. We cannot continue to work under these dire circumstances where patient care is suffering and the morale is at an all-time low. We marched to Carol Pete's office and demanded better staffing and how the hospital can do better. She heard us. Now, what is the hospital gonna do about it?"

- Ruth Kessinger, RN, 2EW

## GET THE FACTS: UNION REPRESENTATION FOR ALL!

### *Combatting misinformation*

Regardless of vaccination status, the union will represent members in each bargaining unit.

## GRIEVANCE UPDATE: 10% EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT

We had our step 3 grievance this week and Memorial has refused to bargain alternatives for the employee discount – we've asked to come up with creative ways to work together and still offer some kind of incentive, but Memorial has not come to the table ready to do so. The nurses' bargaining unit is meeting on August 24.



"We've had this benefit for a long time, I've been at the hospital for 18 years. Folks feel like this is a takeaway – 400 people signed a petition to get this discount back. This is important to us and folks are trying to hold on to what we have. We want to work together and comply with any regulations that the employer has to abide by."

- Alice Westphal, 3EW NAC

## UPCOMING UNION TOWN HALL ON VACCINE REQUIREMENTS

Our union will be holding a telephone town hall to share information and offer members an opportunity to ask questions about our union's response to employers' vaccine requirements.

August 24, 5-6 PM

Participant Line: (855)-756-7520 Ext.75511#

For more up-to-date information,  
visit our website:



<https://www.seiu1199nw.org/>

If you still have not received an  
updated union contract, access  
our YVMH portal online at:



<https://www.seiu1199nw.org/chapters/yvmh/>