



We are united for a strong contract and affordable health benefits

We need raises for recruitment and retention, good benefits, and a positive work environment to keep our hospital strong and support our families and patients. Our pay trails behind Evergreen Kirkland and even further behind other hospitals in Snohomish and King County.

We unanimously voted YES on our bargaining proposals for our first full-length contract bargaining in five years—the proposals include significant raises and stable healthcare, as well as respectful treatment from management and adequate time off between shifts after working standby. Our bargaining team shared our overall vision for our hospital and bargaining priorities with management at our first bargaining session on September 21. We look forward to bringing specific proposals that address our concerns at our next bargaining session on October 6.

Our overall bargaining priorities

- ★ Wages and compensation that retain us
- ★ Good benefits for healthcare and retirement
- ★ Supports for adequate staffing
- ★ Respect for our union
- ★ Continued protection of our health and safety
- ★ Equity, inclusion, and justice - including increased time off
- ★ Training and education opportunities

Our Bargaining Team

Danni Johnson, RN, Med/Surg

Hannah Park, Dietary Aide, Food and Nutrition Services

Heather Beierle, RN, OR

Junga Joanne Jang, RN, Pre-Op

Kevin Collinson, RN, OR

Kirsten Bursch, RN, ED

Roshana Revenig, EVS Tech, Environmental Services



“We are committed to work together with the leaders of Monroe Hospital so we can retain staff, have cost of living wages, and continue to give the best care we can in our community.”

- Heather Beierle, RN, OR

We need secure healthcare benefits

In an unusual development, at our first bargaining session, management brought us an urgent (from their perspective) proposal to change our health insurance provider from Premera to Aetna for 2023. Management explained that the costs that they pay for our benefits will increase significantly for 2023, and it will save them some money to switch insurance providers (although still cost significantly more than it did in 2022).

Our current health insurance contract protections extend through the end of 2023, so we are not required to bargain and reach agreement now about health insurance separate from our full contract agreement. We know if we do not reach agreement to change health insurance now, we keep the same Premera plan for 2023, with no changes to our out-of-pocket costs, and our premium costs go up 5% (for instance, if someone paid \$100/month, they'd pay \$105/month—an increase, but not a huge one).

We told management we would consider whether we could voluntarily reach a new agreement about health insurance, but also that any voluntary agreement we make to change health benefits now needs to benefit us and our families. We told management our health insurance values:

- ★ Secure costs in the future: We need to extend the agreement that premiums can go up a maximum of 5% per year—or something even

continued on the flip side

better—versus an “unknown” that they might go up a large amount. We also need to keep the protection that the out-of-pocket costs we pay when we access healthcare don’t go up in the future.

★ No-deductible care for care in and around our hospital: We have had access to low- or no-cost care at the hospital and nearby providers, since before our hospital become Evergreen. Currently, the “preferred network” with no deductible in the Premera plan is how we access this. If we move to a plan without this level of “preferred network,” then we need to have no deductible for care here, including both the hospital facility itself as well as the nearby provider offices in the Evergreen network in Snohomish County.

So far, management’s proposal to change health benefit plans involves giving up the security of both our healthcare premiums and out-of-pocket costs, as well as limiting the no-deductible care to just the facility fee at the hospital itself, not physician costs and office visits. For example, our family premiums would go from around \$660/month up to more than \$800/month in 2024 under management’s proposal. This kind of change is not good for us. It is not something we can agree to, particularly in a voluntary bargaining without any agreement even on our wages and other important topics.

We will continue to explore if it is possible to reach an agreement on a change in healthcare that benefits our members, and we will receive a new proposal if management has some new ideas. In the meantime, we are prepared to keep the benefits we have while we unite to bargain a full new contract. Share your thoughts with your bargaining team member.

Kirkland coworkers are bargaining alongside us

Our 900 colleagues in our union at Kirkland are bargaining for improvements right alongside us and have had two sessions so far. Our teams met together leading up to negotiations and share many priorities for our contracts. Roshana Revenig from Environmental Services joined the Kirkland bargaining team on the first day to convey solidarity and share ideas. We know we are stronger together across both campuses.



Retirement grievance update

In our last contract, management committed to making a “good faith effort” to put retirement contributions into our retirement accounts twice per year. We know from around our union that most hospital systems give retirement contributions every pay period—so workers earn the contributions each time they get a paycheck, accrue interest through the year, and don’t miss out on any contributions if they leave employment. This year, we realized that not only is our hospital not putting in the contributions twice a year—in fact, they stated that they don’t intend to do so and a “good faith effort” means making the contributions at all—but that they have not yet put our 2021 contributions into our accounts as of almost October 2022! Management could not provide any information about when they plan to make the 2022 retirement contributions, when we asked. Several coworkers attended our grievance meeting where we told management this is not acceptable. We are escalating our union grievance and evaluating what additional actions we can take. We will stay united to ensure we receive the retirement contributions we are owed in a timely way.

