



HPAE

LOCAL 5105 Newsletter

THE PATIENT ADVOCATE
A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS
OF HPAE LOCAL 5105 AT VIRTUA
MEMORIAL/CNS

THE PATIENT ADVOCATE

September 2020

Message from the President

Local 5105 Ratifies Contract 2020-2023

After a 3-month extension of the contract as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, our Negotiations Team 2020 spent their summer attending Virtual Negotiation Sessions with the employer. Despite being exhausted, both mentally and physically from the frontline battle with Covid-19, our team quickly regrouped and readied itself for battle. Half of this battle was dealing with the many challenges of the virtual Webex and Zoom platforms, but our team was amazingly adaptive and understood what had to be done to get a contract that they could bring back to the members. Team members fresh off the Covid-19 battleground held NOTHING back and made it crystal clear they were not only fighting for dignity and respect in the workplace but also our right to work in a safe and healthy work environment without the risk of serious illness or even death.

Our nurses showed dedication and courage on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic and it is important that health care employers everywhere recognize their professionalism and involve them in the planning of outbreaks. Winning a voice in how our employer allocates resources during a pandemic outbreak and how our nurses are notified of exposure of infectious diseases was definitely a top priority for our local. One of the achievements of this contract is the formation of the new Pandemic Preparedness Committee. This new committee will be made up of our nurses and management and gives nurses a proactive seat at the table in preparing for and addressing challenges during future disease outbreaks. Another important achievement was that the employer agreed and made a commitment to provide PPE that meets or exceeds laws and regulations, including those stipulated by OSHA. They agreed and made a commitment to fit test and train nurses on PPE usage including any new PPE items. The employer also committed to provide regular PPE updates to the union during infectious disease public health emergencies.

With the economy being in such uncertain times and our employer taking every opportunity to hammer this point into every situation the team knew from the start that financials were going to be the challenge. Although raise increases were not what we deserve the negotiations committee strongly felt they squeezed every last cent out of our employer!! If ANYONE deserves a raise, a bonus, a little financial recognition--it is the nurses! In this contract, retroactive to June 2020, nurses will receive an across-the-board annual 2% wage increases and an average of 1.3 % stepped increase in wages based on years of service. In 2021, the nurses will receive a 2% across the board raise along with the built-in step increases for years of service (again average step increases 1.3%). In 2022, nurses will receive the step increase, but we will re-open the contract to determine what the across-the-board wage increase should be when the economy is hopefully more stable.

A BIG Thank you to the 2020 Negotiations Team! We had an *AMAZING* team!!

Beth Cohen VP 3NE, **Bonnie Terwilliger** Grievance Chair CCL, **Melody Schantz** Sec/Tres 3NE,
Kelli Zambetti CNS VP, **Susan Lanis** CNS Grievance Chair, **Peter Latini** ER, **Susan Cruz** MBU, **Deb Bofinger** ENDO, **Dawn Jones** MBU

In Solidarity,
Sheryl Mount President Local 5105

A Word on Mental Health

With all the chaos of COVID-19, I felt like I was on the edge. Too much of one tragedy on top of another from the year prior, increasing responsibilities, then COVID-19, then my own illness – I was totally maxed out.

Totally fried, I turned to my Union because I had seen a flier for Trauma therapy covered by AFT. I needed to do something ASAP. The application process took a few emails back and forth and some phone calls but here I am to tell you that my therapist is wonderful and has truly helped me! This benefit is also covered 100%. The sessions are all through a platform similar to Zoom so you don't have to go anywhere. Very convenient. AFT really did a great job of getting me a therapist and coordinating everything.

So-- the point of everything here is this – no matter how much you can do, it doesn't mean you have to do it all the time, every time, and sacrifice your own well-being for others. I am learning to create and maintain boundaries and spend some time on myself which we all tend to forget to do as we put ourselves last, more often than not.

Remember to take care of yourself each day, every day. Hard to do but worth it for you and for everyone you care about.

If you are interested in this program, I can send you the flier via email.

Peace,
Beth

Grievance Chair Negotiation 2020 Reflections

Just as we thought we finally made it out of battle and the dust was settling, it was time to go back in. Beaten down and exhausted from the last 5 months of being on the front line of Covid-19, we had yet another battle to go through. It was negotiations time! This time felt different, how could they not want to support their nurses after all they had just been thru? Showing up day after day, putting themselves at risk despite being scared, the lack of appropriate PPE and the daily unknown. But that thought was short lived. It was all business people! We had a real fight on our hands. How do you get thru to someone who thinks they did the right thing and are governed by budget? How do you get thru the line of lawyers and HR that have no clue what it's genuinely like at the bedside day in and day out?

Those who worked from home and made the decisions that affected us every day? That was the struggle! But our committee brought it in the raw! It was not just about the money, it was about safety, and respect. Our lives were on the line. And our united front showed them that at face value. "Lesson Learned" was a hot topic, thankfully, WE had fought the fight already daily during Covid-19 and had well collaborated solutions to these lessons learned. Safety language to help protect us on the job, union involvement to maintain hospital transparency so we do not have to fix it after the damage is already done. Giving up our summers to Zoom and Webex- was not what any of us wanted to do, but we had to fight the fight. Even though we wish it were face to face.

We did it for all of you, to make sure we could get the best contract we could get for a well-deserved group of nurses. We take pride in all of you and drilled it hard with emotions and stark examples of what we all endured. Contract language that is strong and supportive and builds on the foundation of the future protection of our members. Priceless. Your voices were heard. I personally looked at this as a bad divorce. Fighting with someone you once loved, who you thought loved you, but let you down. We cannot let this disappointing behavior define us, but only make us stronger, more united and fierce protectors of each other and our patients. Stay strong warriors and be safe.

Yours in Solidarity,
Bonnie Terwilliger, RN ~ BSN
Grievance Chair



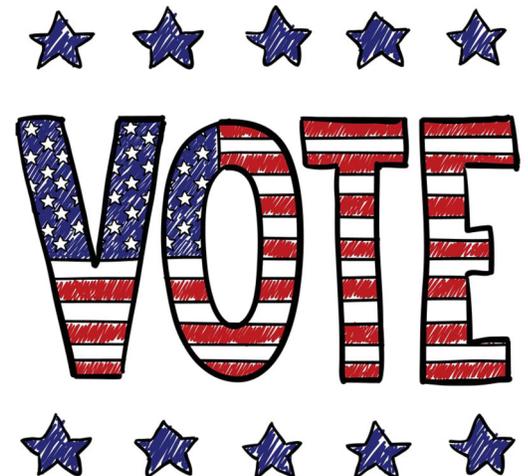
Voting in the 2020 General Election will be different, again.

After a long summer of negotiations and, thankfully, getting a good contract, I am turning my attention to the upcoming election. As a member of HPAE's political education committee called COPE, getting involved and encouraging people to vote is my passion and extremely important to me. If you would like to get involved, I suggest downloading the AFT Votes app. It is easy to do and provides simple ways to take action. As far as voting in NJ in the General Election goes, the Governor has, again, made the election mostly mail in, but you will still be able to vote in person with a provisional ballot. Here are the key points for the upcoming election:

- The General Election takes place on Tuesday, November 3rd, 2020
- The deadline to register to vote in the General Election is Tuesday, October 13th. NJ residents can now register online to vote at NJ.gov/state/elections.
- Mail in ballots will go out to all registered voters. Those voters will receive a ballot with prepaid return postage. No sample ballots will be mailed.
- Ballots can be mailed, dropped in a secure drop box or turned in at a polling place. The ballot must be postmarked by November 3rd.
- All voters can vote in person with a provisional ballot. Provisional ballots ARE counted, but only after officials can verify that you have not already voted by mail. Each NJ municipality will be required to open at least one in-person polling site, and each county must ensure at least 50% of their polling places are open.
- You can check your mail in ballot status at the same website above. You can check your provisional ballot status by calling 1-877-NJ-VOTER.

If you have any more questions about voting, visit the NJ (or PA for those of you who do not live in NJ) Election website, there's tons of good info there. And lastly, PLEASE VOTE!

In Solidarity,
Melody Schantz, Secretary/Treasurer, COPE co-chair



HPAE Council of Retirees

A great way to stay connected with our Union when we retire, is to become an active member on our newly established Council of Retirees (COR). The COR will continue the fight for patient safety guidelines, improve staffing levels and win legislation that protects our patients and our rights as Union members.

In addition to the above, members on this council may assist with elections such as phone banking, provide support to locals who may be doing an action around an issue they have in their Local or provide support to other retirees that need help getting to a medical appointment, need groceries or medications.

As a HPAE Retiree we encourage you to attend HPAE events and conventions.

Please contact me, Doris Bell, RN at (dbell-hpae@comcast.net) for more information. Hope to hear from you.

Contract Highlights 2020

- ◆ 3-year contract
 - ◆ Across the board increase effective June of each year of the CBA (retroactive to June 2020)
 - June 2020 – 2%
 - June 2021 – 2%
 - June 2022 – Wage Re-opener
 - ◆ Step Increases for each year of the CBA (each step averages 1.3%)
 - ◆ Improved Health and Safety Language:
 - Improved security at all main entrances (including the ED)
 - Codified procedure for notification of infectious disease exposures – union to get copy of such notices
 - Commitment to PPE that meets or exceeds laws or regulations including OSHA
 - Commitment to training and fit testing
 - Review of PPE needs in Safety Committee, Labor/Management Committee, and the newly created Pandemic Preparedness Committee
 - During a communicable disease public health emergency, Union representatives to receive updates on PPE regularly
 - ◆ Management to address non-nursing practice tasks
 - ◆ Increase Charge Pay to \$1.75 per hour as effective June 1, 2022
 - ◆ Art. 8.4 – new paragraph H:
 Employees who are on-call for twenty-four (24) consecutive hours shall receive a total of 32 hours of on-call pay. Employees who are on call for twenty-four hours of consecutive holiday on-call will be paid twenty-four hours of holiday on-call and eight hours of straight on-call pay.
 - Increase Continuing Education - Conference Days from \$200.00 to \$300.00 - full-time & from \$150.00 to \$200.00 for part and limited time employees.
 - Health Insurance during LOA reduced from 12 months to 6 months as of June 1, 2022
 - Codify reassignment order
 - Codify cohorting – during infectious disease outbreaks only
 - Maintain current PTO and Extended Sick Leave rather than reduced to NJ State Minimum Earned Sick Leave – what we have is far more generous.
 - If call out on second distinct weekend in 6 months, can be required to make up weekend shift in next quarter.
 - Managers to make best efforts to discuss shortening, extending, or ending orientation with Preceptors and preceptees.
 - Alleged inappropriate call-ins to be reviewed by Labor/Management Committee.
 - PACU added to units that get sleep time
 - Agreement to incorporate use of API Scheduling into CBA
 - Codification of Hospital Excused time order
 - Moving annual PTO requests to January 15 and manager response to February 15
 - No other changes to terms and conditions of employment except as proposed previously in these negotiations
- You can find the full tentative agreement by going to HPAE.org and looking for Local 5105 webpage.