



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Well, it is finally here! Time to gear up and get ready for our negotiations. This is an exciting time and a time for all of us to get as much information as possible. Time to communicate with each other and educate the new nurses about what it means to be part of this process.

Negotiations mean a time to show up in mass. To be watching as an observer behind the negotiating committee and letting Cooper know that we mean business. Our contract proposals are based on the survey results we received from you. Our negotiating committee has reviewed our current contract and has developed our 2024 Initial Contract Proposals.

The highlights of our Initial proposals will be presented at our General Membership Meeting on February 7th at the Double Tree in Cherry Hill. The times will be 8a, 1p, 6p and 8p. We hope to see everyone there.

We are actively recruiting for members to be on the MMT (Member Mobilization Team) who will assist in getting information out to all of you and will help to mobilize everyone to come out to negotiations, meetings and participate in our activities. If you are interested in helping, please contact Ethan at EWehrwein@hpae.org.

Just a reminder we are looking for members to be on our joint committees, to be Union Reps, and to be on the Executive Board.

Please check your non-cooper email regularly to keep up to date on information regarding our negotiations. Hope to see you at our first bargaining session on February 28th at The Double Tree by Hilton in Cherry Hill.

In solidarity,

Doris Bell, RN

President Local 5118

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

This is our year.

Our year to unite as one and fight for what we deserve, for all.

The year we hold Cooper accountable for staffing, safety, retention, wages, and respect.

The year we differentiate ourselves from others in the area.

This is the year WE come out on top!

This is the year that Cooper will see **HPAE RED.**

Join our Member Mobilization Team (MMT).

This Team is charged with mobilizing their co-workers to come out to negotiations, membership meetings and all actions or activities that we do. Any amount of time that you can give will help ALL of US to win a contract that we can be proud of.

To join the MMT please email Ethan at ewehrwein@hpae.org



2024 CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

FEBRUARY 28TH IS OUR FIRST COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SESSION with Cooper.

What is Collective Bargaining? It is the process by which a union negotiates with employers for the terms and conditions of employment.

Cooper has always permitted "open" negotiations. That means members may attend. The hospital does not have to allow open bargaining sessions to take place. Very few union negotiations are open to members. Cooper administration can take away this privilege at any time. That is one reason we have standards that we ask all members to follow.

- ❖ **Arrive on time.** Doors will be closed at 10:15am (unless otherwise noted), and you will not be permitted in until there is a break in the session.
- ❖ **Respect the process.** Everyone attending the sessions must remain quiet. Cell phones must be off, no recording and no pictures.
- ❖ **Caucuses.** This is when Cooper will leave the room to go to their breakout room. Our Union negotiating committee stays in the negotiation room. Our negotiating team may briefly talk to members prior to caucusing, then members will be asked to leave the room while the team works. This could be a long time or a brief time. The team will try to let members know.
- ❖ Members may come back into the room when the bargaining session reconvenes.
- ❖ **The first day.** We will make our opening statement and present our Initial Proposals. After our presentation, Cooper will ask to caucus to review our proposals and determine if they have any questions for us. They will

come back into the room to either ask their verifying questions or the day will end.

- ❖ **The second day.** Cooper will present their proposals and possibly respond to our initial proposals. If we have any questions, we will caucus, discuss their proposals, and call them back into the room. We would like to start bargaining on the second day.
- ❖ **The sessions.** We go back and forth with our proposals!!! The rationale is given for proposals, questions are asked by both parties. Both sides will eventually amend their proposals and make counter proposals. When language is agreed upon by both sides, it becomes a tentative agreement. All agreements are tentative until voted on by the membership at a General Membership meeting to ratify the contract. The outcome is determined by a fifty plus one vote count.
- ❖ If the contract is ratified, a new Collective Bargaining Agreement has been reached. If the Tentative Agreement is not ratified, the parties can go back to the bargaining table if both sides agree to do so. If not, a strike may be inevitable.

Negotiations

Location: Double Tree by Hilton
2349 Marlton Pike West, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

Time: Members must be present and signed in by 10:15. Doors close at 10:15. No exceptions.

Dates: Feb. 28, March 13, 20 (**bargaining will be at the CCBO**), 27, April 3, 17, 24, May 1, 8, 13, 20, 22, 27, 29, 30 and 31.

GRIEVANCE CORNER- JANUARY 2024

Recap of 2023 grievances that were filed.

- We had a total of 21 grievances.
- We won **12** of those grievances!
- 4 of the grievances were withdrawn because the grievant did not want to pursue it any further or we were able to reach a settlement without moving forward within the grievance process.
- 3 were denied. They were not strong cases.
- And there are 2 grievances that are still open.

We know Cooper violates our contract more than 12 times in any given year! If you feel that your Union contract has been violated, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss the circumstances. We have

10 business days from the day of the violation to file a grievance. Do not wait until the last minute. If it is beyond 10 business days, the employer has the legal right to not hear our case. **Do Not just take what your manager tells you about the issue.**

We need more Union Reps. If you are interested in knowing more out about how to become a Rep and what a Rep does, please contact me for more information.

Ann McCausland, RN
Grievance Chair

annmcc@comcast.net

609-876-9721

HPAE PROFESSIONAL ISSUES CONFERENCE - CODE RED

It was a beautiful fall morning and our Executive Board piled into a single car headed to New Brunswick. It was so early the sun hadn't risen yet however the excitement was palpable. We were headed to HPAE's Professional Issues Conference. The music at the convention immediately started playing, the conversations were overlapping, and the mood was high.

We arrived at the conference, checked in and started making our way to the vendors. There were tables covering everything from insurance to state funded programs to information on mental health programs. I got as many pens and goodies as possible. Talking and making friends as I went. The atmosphere was clearly filled with a readiness to make a change.

The topic of this conference was Code Red: Understaffed, overworked. Unsafe for everyone.

This is something we have all felt in the past couple years with it making its head known more and more annually. Everyone regardless of department has felt the stress involved with understaffing. The worry that we aren't going to be able to provide the best possible care for our patients. The knowledge that if we had a safer staffing ratio our patient's outcome would improve.

We heard from representatives from Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut about the work of passing

safe patient ratio legislation. We knew that these laws improved patient care, but data was provided to back it up. In some states, part of the legislation implemented states that when health care companies violate these acts, they are required to pay fines ensuring that safe staffing continues.

New Jersey Safe Staffing Bill S304 is trying to put us on the map as a state with the same care for our nurses as our patients. This bill recognizes that when nurses have better ratios the care for both the nurse and the patient improves. With Election Day recently passing, we, as health care providers, need to realize the fight is only just beginning.

We must stop fighting with each other and realize that nurses are not the problem.

We must band together.

We must show up and tell both the administration and our government that safe staffing saves lives.

We can help this fight by reaching out to your local senator and demanding support for bill S304.

We are not alone in the fight for safe staffing. If we do not raise our voices in unison though, a change will not be seen. We are stronger by standing together, shoulder to shoulder, in solidarity.





Address Service Requested

A Newsletter for the members of
HPAE Local 5118 at Cooper Hospital

110 Kinderkamack Road
Emerson, NJ 07630
Phone: 201-262-5005
www.hpae.org



UNION UPDATES AND REMINDERS

- ➔ The new Cooper **Moorestown Campus** is not part of our Union, currently. The RN job positions for this campus are non-bargaining unit positions. Transfers into these positions will not carry over union membership or seniority.

Cooper is doing everything they can to prevent the RN positions at this location from becoming UNION positions. The job title they are using is RN Coordinator. We have submitted requests for information letters and will continue to do so. We must show that the nurses working there do the same work we do at the hospital and/or in our outpatient areas.

- ➔ **Summer Vacation** sign up lists are starting to be circulated. The lists are due to management by February 15th. Refer to Article 19 Vacation Scheduling in our Union Contract.
- ➔ **Resignation and Rehire Eligibility.** Proper notice of resignation for PTO cash out and rehire eligibility includes four worked weeks and no PTO. Refer to Article 27 - Resignations/Terminal Pay in our Union Contract.
- ➔ **Contact Information.** When you change your email, cell and/or address please make sure to update your information through the HPAE website. From main page on HPAE.org - Member Resource Tab - Update my Information. This is extremely important as we are getting ready for our contract **NEGOTIATIONS. IF WE DO NOT HAVE YOUR ACCURATE CONTACT INFORMATION, YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE ANY CORRESPONDANCE FROM US.**

- ➔ If a new nurse comes onto your unit, please direct them to HPAE.org Local #5118 website to find an electronic copy of our current contract for them to review and become familiar with.
- ➔ **Precepting. We cannot be mandated to be a preceptor. Precepting is voluntary.** If you are being forced to precept, show your manager Article 21.7 in our Union Contract.
- ➔ **HPAE's Safe Staffing Bill** (S.304/A.4536) is a proposed bill focusing on safe staffing levels in NJ hospitals. Please learn more about this bill and ways to support it! Information about this bill can be found on our HPAE website.
- ➔ Nurses who have worked at least 1,000 hours in the previous calendar year may use up to \$500 per calendar year to cover costs of successful certification and recertification fees/exams, related books/materials, outside sponsored ACLS/BLS, etc., and/or continuing education conference fees. Refer to Article 21 - Tuition Reimbursement and Staff Development Program in our Union Contract.