



HPAE

AFT / AFL-CIO

LOCAL 5091 Newsletter

A Newsletter for the
members of HPAE Local 5091
at Bergen New Bridge

The Solidarity Pipeline

2nd Quarter 2025

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

REFLECTION

Being a union leader is a journey marked by privilege, responsibility, both challenge and reward. It means standing at the crossroads of advocacy and accountability—where the voices of many are channeled into advocacy, negotiation, and unity.

This role is the chance to make change, helping members feel seen and heard. From pushing for fair policies, fighting for fairness, amplifying collective concerns, and to drive systemic change in the workplace. You also learn a ton—about communication, strategy, and how to stay grounded when things get stressful.

However, leadership doesn't come without cost, it's not always easy. Not everyone's going to agree with you—and that's okay. One thing I've learned is you can't please everyone, and not everyone will like you. That used to bother me more, but I've come to understand it's just part of the role.

The expectations are heavy, you're often the one having the hard conversations, facing pushback from both management and members. Not forgetting its unshakable commitment, like long hours that doesn't clock out at 5 p.m, and the loss of your personal time.

Even with all the pressure, one thing always brings me back: we don't do this alone. We lead with each other, shoulder to shoulder. Every voice that speaks up, every honest conversation, every small win—it all matters. Every hand raised in solidarity makes the weight a little lighter and the victories a lot sweeter.

Because when we show up for one another, that's where the real power is.

So let's keep going—side by side—and keep showing what union strength truly looks like.



CONTRACT RATIFICATION

Hey Membership, Now that we have won our contract, we need to continue building our Union and win further victories moving forward.

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who showed up, spoke out, signed petitions, and helped us get this new contract across the finish line. Your involvement really made a difference, and we couldn't have done it without you.

Let's be real—negotiating contracts isn't a walk in the park. They involve compromise, tough conversations, and the reality that we don't always secure everything we ask for. It takes compromise, and a whole lot of back-and-forth, but again thank you to each and every one of you.

The way you all came together—showing up, speaking out, and standing tall as we prepared to strike—was nothing short of inspiring. That kind of unity doesn't go unnoticed, and it absolutely made an impact at the table.

We didn't end up going on strike this time - I know that can bring up mixed feelings. But I want to be clear: this wasn't a step back, It doesn't mean we backed down—it means there were last-minute negotiation breakthroughs, legal considerations, and an adjusted strategy.—Our solidarity was felt. We saw movement in negotiations that wouldn't have happened if we hadn't been ready to act together.

We didn't get it all. That's the honest truth. But we made gains—and we made it clear that we're serious about the conditions we work under and the care we provide.

And just because the contract's been settled doesn't mean the conversation is over. We've got monthly Labor-Management meetings, and we'll keep using that space to raise issues, find solutions, and keep pushing forward.

We're in this for the long haul. And after everything I've seen from this membership, I'm more confident than ever in what we can accomplish—together. So if something's bugging you or you've got a great idea, speak up—we're all ears.

Next steps to Making the Most of Your Contract - Our contracts are only as strong as our enforcement of them. Learn about contractual benefits by being familiar with your contract, knowing what you have so that you can make use of it and protect it.

SELF CARE TIPS FROM YOUR LEB

Cristina Blasoni, Secretary

Dear HPAE members,

While composing this, I am contemplating the concept of Radical Acceptance. As per Marsha Linehan who coined the Dialectical Behavior Therapy theory, Radical Acceptance is fully embracing and accepting the present moment regardless of how difficult, painful, or distressing it is. Radical Acceptance is not resignation, condoning or approving the experience it is accepting it without judgment or resistance. Accepting reality fully helps us make healthy choices in dealing with experiences. Here are the steps to take to embark on your Radical Acceptance journey:

1. Recognize the Resistance
2. Acknowledge Reality
3. Accept the Situation
4. Practice mindfulness
5. Identify what you can Control
6. Shift the Focus
7. Embrace Self- Compassion
8. Reframe Pain as Part of Healing
9. Focus Only at the Present Moment
10. Be Patient and Loving with Yourself

Hope this is helpful for you in your daily professional and private life!

Carol Q - Treasurer

Summer here. No matter what kind of plans you have for yourself, your family, and friends, take time to make the best of it. If you are using the airports, check ahead, as weekend flights have been reduced locally. If you are driving, check traffic conditions and do auto maintenance before you leave. Drive defensively.

If you are at the beach, watch for signs about the swimming conditions. If you stay home, it's a good time to check air conditioning filters and bbq functions. Keep sunscreen and water nearby. Simple actions will help to make your time off pleasurable and safe.

Have a great summer!

Corinne - VP Non Nursing professionals

With Summer here, I am wishing you a season filled with all of your favorite activities with your loved ones! While our dedicated work continues each day, I hope you are able to enjoy the longer days with the added sunshine. Self care is incredibly important, so what are you scheduling to care for yourself this season? You deserve it. Stay healthy, I look forward to achieving more together.

Nancy - VP Nursing

HPAE members join us in welcoming Summer season. Stay abreast about the air quality and act accordingly. Seek medical attention for any respiratory condition before it's exacerbated. Dress properly going in the woods; avoid mosquitoes and tick bites. In all, remain alert; in good health and enjoy the summer.

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS TO RESPECTFULLY CONSIDER



Violence Prevention for Health Care Workers: Please join the workplace violence prevention committee (WPV) immediately if you can. These meetings and the addressing of these issues are mandates to our employer, that your safety is priority.

Threatening or assaulting health care workers is now a criminal offense. **Why It Matters:** You're legally protected on the job. Facilities must post signs about penalties, and offenders can face fines, jail time, or mandatory programs.



COPE Corner: Why Trenton Matters to You: Think laws passed in Trenton don't affect your daily work? Think again.

From patient safety protections to staffing practices, legislation signed in Trenton shapes the care you deliver and the conditions you work under—every single day. That's why HPAE's Committee on Political Education (COPE) is laser-focused on making sure our voices are heard where decisions are made. COPE advocates for laws that protect our profession, our patients, and our rights on the job.

Here's the important part: COPE's work is powered only by voluntary member donations. No dues go to political action. Every dollar comes from members like you who want a seat at the table.

Want to support COPE's efforts? Visit the HPAE website to fill out a contribution form Or ask for one at the next membership meeting.

Recent Wins From Trenton Include:



Legal protections against violence for health care workers
Social Work Licensure Compact (A-2813/S-2688)

New Jersey joined this compact to allow licensed social workers to practice across state lines without needing extra licenses—helpful for telehealth and workforce flexibility.

Pending bills Bills



Safe Staffing Now: A3450 & S1941

Bills A3450 and S1941 would establish mandatory nurse-to-patient ratios in hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, and certain state facilities. These ratios will be based on patient needs and unit type—



Spotlight: S-1522 – Advancing Nurse Practitioner Independence
S-1522 eliminates outdated practice restrictions for New Jersey's Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs). No more mandatory joint protocol with a physician. This bill empowers nurse practitioners to: Open and lead independent practices. Deliver patient-centered care without bureaucratic delays. Work to the full extent of their education and expertise.



Your voice makes these protections possible. Let's keep advocating for the rights we need, both in law and at the bargaining table. Because when we organize, we don't just make noise—we make laws.

"EXPLAINER BOX "DID YOU KNOW?"

Grievance corner When Refusal May Lead to Discipline

Work Now, Grieve Later" Principle: So while a union contract provides important protections, it doesn't automatically shield you from consequences if you refuse a task. The best course is often to document the issue, comply if safe, and file a grievance with union support. Employees are expected to comply with assignments and then challenge them afterward through the union's grievance procedure. Refusing outright—unless safety is at risk—can be considered insubordination.

When Refusal May Be Justified

Work Outside of Job Classification: If the task clearly falls outside your negotiated job duties and the contract prohibits such assignments, you may have grounds to refuse—or at least file a grievance.

Unsafe Work Conditions: Under OSHA, workers under some circumstances have the right to refuse work that poses an imminent danger to health or safety.

Violation of Contract Terms: If the assignment violates specific provisions (e.g., mandatory overtime limits, seniority rights), you may be able to challenge it through the grievance process.

IF UNSURE : please follow the work now, Grieve Later principle and reach out to your union reps or LEB immediately.

Get to know your contract corner: ARTICLE 5: MANAGEMENT RIGHTS "What Does Management Rights Really Mean?" **5.1 The Employer has both the legal responsibility and the sole right to manage the hospital and, except as specifically limited in this Agreement.**

This section outlines management's legal power—but our contract carves out key protections. For example If management wants to change your unit's schedule, they can't ignore the scheduling protections we negotiated.

Rights vs. Limits

What Management Can Do	When They Can't
Assign shifts	If it violates agreed scheduling rules
Lay off staff -	Not without just cause or notice, per contract
Move departments	Only if it honors staffing protections

EDUCATE YOURSELF AND YOUR CO-WORKERS

Attend a meeting, share this newsletter. Please also continue to follow our FB page and instagram to stay up to date with local news and events. — **Jason Peters - Member Mobilization**

HPAE UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Mark your calendars for our yearly HPAE conference which will be held October 16th and the 17th venue to be announced soon.

Also this year we are doing things differently to plan early. As everyone can testify this year has flown by —where has the time gone. With this in mind we are asking members for the suggestions for our year end holiday party. Please reach out to any LEB member with your suggestions.

IN SOLIDARITY HPAE LOCAL 5091 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Faith Mazuru, President

Nancy Bazille , Vice-President Nursing

Corinne Albrecht , Vice-President Non Nursing Professionals

Cristina Blasoni, Secretary

Carole Quinn, Treasurer

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