

The Union and the Company have met a bunch of times in the last several months to attempt to improve the time-off scheduling process. The last few years have been a doozy, and your Local 7 representatives (both staff and stewards) have been hard at work trying to make it better.

We have been working with the company to improve the process. The bottom line is that we could not reach a comprehensive understanding about how vacation scheduling would work within the outpatient pharmacy departments. The company wanted to have us agree that the region would be limited to less than 10% of the pharmacists approved to be off at a time. *We simply can't agree to that!*

The Union and the company did come to the following understandings:

- **Pharmacy Pairings During the Annual Selection Period.** As I think was previously communicated by management, there are pairings among certain selected clinics. This will be used during the annual vacation selection period but not during the rest of the year. This will hopefully enable collaboration between the teams. The pairings may not be perfect but they were selected with fairness in mind.
- **Planned Time Off, not all Unworked Time Considered.** The Company will assess time off requests based on the idea of planned time off:
 - Vacation, float holidays, CE, but exclude sick time and LOAs.
- **Continuing Education.** You can request the use of continuing education during the annual vacation selection period. CE time will be approved following vacation approvals. *Importantly, CE time is requested through HR Connect, not through the annual vacation selection process.*
- **Vacations will be Honored if Clinic Assignments Change.** The company agreed that for those who are moved involuntarily (by management and according to labor contract) (not those who voluntarily bid on a job outside of their current clinic), their original vacation requests will be honored.
- **Vacation Approvals Based on Current Hours.** Hours have been in flux over the last couple of years. If you make a vacation request and then are assigned to days that you weren't previously assigned, the company agreed to make every effort to accommodate certain requests.
- **Displaced Staff.** If you are a displaced staff member you should bid with the clinic/dept that you have been displaced from. This means if you have been assigned due to COVID operations to a different clinic than your home clinic, you should do your vacation bid from your home clinic.

The Company and the Union **could not agree** to the following:

- **Allow More People off at a Time.** The Union sought a higher percentage of time off that we thought was reasonable. On average, employees get 5.5 weeks off per year when you include vacation, CE, float, and flex. This would mean allowing closer to 20% off at a time would make sense. The company doesn't have the budget to fulfill this need.
- **Extend the Annual Vacation Selection Period.** Since the union and the company did not conclude its discussions until this week, and the guidance you were provided left many of you scratching your heads, we thought it would make sense to extend the vacation request period by at least one week. The Company did not agree. Thus, you will need to have your vacation requests in by February 6 as usual.

UFCW Local 7 representatives will continue to advocate for you, and we do have contract bargaining this year. Staffing, budgeting, and backfill will be an important item to address.

In unity,

Nate Bernstein