



Bargaining Update / Vaccine Mandate

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National Bargaining Update

What you can do to achieve a strong union contract:

- **Sign this petition now** for a strong union contract ***and get five friends and family members to do the same (it takes less than a minute and text the link to your friends and family):***
https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/invest-in-patient-care-and-healthcare-workers?clear_id=true&source=UFCW7
- Find out more about why two-tier is wrong for healthcare professionals:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cro0uXdSaIA>
- Virtual Townhall Meetings Coming Soon!

On Wednesday, August 25, Kaiser negotiators finally put a proposal on the bargaining table. In the face of the surge, and the growing shortage of workers in every job category, Kaiser proposed to pay all new hires much lower wages (on a two-tier wage scale) and pay current workers a 1% annual raise for the next three years. For more information on why two-tier is a non-starter see this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cro0uXdSaIA>

“Management has doubled down on a destructive, dead-end proposal that will lead to lower care standards, and even worse staffing levels,” said Michael Barnett, President of USW Local 7600. “We will not agree to divide the workforce and pay new hires less to do the same work.” Kaiser negotiators stuck to their proposal even after the Alliance presented extensive research showing that in fact, KP wages are very close to pay rates of competitors. The “wage study” is bogus. “Clearly, Kaiser has lost their way, but we have not,” said Sandra Flores, Business Representative of IUOE Local 501. “We will stand up for our patients and for each other, for as long as it takes, to get a good contract — and we will NOT allow a dangerous race to the bottom to start with our workforce at Kaiser.”

The Alliance has proposed a strong contract that recognizes our expertise, attracts skilled staff to provide safe care, and protects our wages and benefits. In addition to wage increases across the board, we’ve proposed to raise standards in regions and unions that lag behind as well as increased tuition reimbursements. We’ve also proposed a joint labor-management task force to address competitiveness and affordability, based on shared and accurate data. When we work together in a transparent interest-based process, we achieve innovative solutions.

Vaccine Mandate Update

We have been working to address the concerns of our members regarding the vaccine mandate. Some of our members oppose the mandate; others are supportive of the mandate. At this time over 90% of our members have received the vaccine – one of the highest rates in the KP system. Although Local 7 encourages our members to get the vaccine, which is proven to be highly effective, we are not supportive of the vaccine being a condition of continued employment with KP. We also know that more jurisdictions including the State of Colorado are poised to implement a vaccine mandate of some kind for healthcare workers (the City of Denver already has announced a mandate).

The bottom line is that the Company will require all employees to be fully vaccinated by September 30th. Judges have upheld mandates by employers.

With these limitations in mind, the Company has agreed to the following:

- Employees will have 60 days to get vaccinated after September 30th, but those employees will be placed on unpaid leave from 10/1/2021 and for sixty days hence.
 - During this period, health insurance benefits will continue for those on the 60-day leave.
- For those who prefer to not be vaccinated the company will treat their separation of employment as a resignation
- Employees may get up to 8 hours of paid time off in cases of adverse reaction to the vaccination
- Employees will be paid up to 2 hours to get each of the vaccinations
- Employees maintain the right to file Workers Comp claim for those with more severe adverse reactions
- Testing for those who qualify for an exemption will be done on the clock at your worksite
- Those on an approved leave of absence will not be required to get the vaccine until they return to work.

The Union advocated for the following additional things ***although we either have not heard back on some of them or were not successful:***

- Employees should not be terminated for not getting the vaccine. The company should at the very most exclude staff members from onsite KP work, and look at other accommodations like virtual work. ***The company does not agree to this.***
- Those working from home should be able to continue to work since they pose no risk of spreading covid to other employees or the public (***the company does not agree to this***).
- For those who work 10- or 12- hour shifts and experience adverse reactions, increase the 8 hours to cover their whole scheduled shift (***Union has not heard back yet***).
- People currently on an approved LOA should not fall under this mandate until they return from the leave – the 60 days should start when they return from their leave (***Union has not heard back yet***)
- KP should follow CDC guidelines regarding pre-surgical patient testing in all regions (***have not heard back yet***)
- For those with adverse reactions, time off should not be considered against them for purposes of the attendance policy (***company appears to be opposed to this further encouraging a work-while-sick culture***)
- Employees should be able to use paid time during the sixty day period (***have not heard back yet***).
- People resigning should be offered severance as outlined in their local CBA (***have not heard back yet***).
- Since we are clearly still in a pandemic the company should provide COVID admin pay (***the company does not support this***).

What you should do:

- We encourage you to get the vaccine in a timely way.
- If you are concerned about the vaccine please consult with a medical provider to address any concerns.
- If you qualify for an exemption take the appropriate steps outlined in the company communications.
- If you get terminated or are placed on an unpaid leave of absence notify your union representative so we can take appropriate steps including filing a grievance.