



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 15, 2021

Contacts:

Jake Kern | jkern@skdknick.com | 917-232-8889

Alaina Berner | aberner@skdknick.com | 703-915-7032

UFCW LOCAL 7 SUE KAISER PERMANENTE ON BEHALF OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS

UFCW Local 7 Filed a Lawsuit in Federal Court Against Kaiser on the Heels of the Rally to Save Patient Lives at the Capitol, Calling for the Company to Prioritize Patients Before Profit

DENVER – The [United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 7](#) (UFCW Local 7) health care workers at Kaiser Permanente sued the company for its failure to provide sufficient staffing to ensure quality patient care and safe workloads for medical providers. Even years before the pandemic, health care workers at Kaiser were experiencing persistent understaffing and begged for an increase in staffing levels, but Kaiser ignored them. Kaiser Permanente has recently proposed insufficient labor contract terms that would only further burden the already strained health care system and put the health of their own patients at risk.

At a rally on Thursday night at the Colorado State Capitol in Denver, health care members and community leaders outlined the myriad ways Kaiser has refused to foster a safe work environment so they can better care for patients, especially during the pandemic. The crowd heard directly from State Senator Jessie Danielson (D-24), Local 7 President Kim Cordova, and Susan Hill, a Physician Assistant who works at Kaiser Permanente and was a cancer patient at Kaiser Permanente.

“Throughout the pandemic, health care workers have committed themselves to long and grueling hours and have exposed themselves to health risks to care for our communities, including the surge in COVID-19 patients. Unfortunately, this sacrifice is not recognized by their employers at Kaiser Permanente. After years of pleas to their superiors for more staff and better hours so they can perform at their best for their patients, Kaiser workers have no choice but to bring in the law,” **said UFCW Local 7**

President Kim Cordova. “The mental and physical health of those providing care is essential to prevent mistakes and make sure every patient -- especially during this difficult time -- is receiving the highest quality services. Kaiser Permanente needs to put their money where their mouth is and consider the people they care for every day, not just their own bottom line.”

As Kaiser continued to make billions of dollars each year, [\\$3 billion in profits](#) in the second quarter of 2021 and [\\$6 billion in 2020](#), the company has proposed a two-tier payment system that would sow division among workers and cause even greater staffing shortages. Health care workers show up every day for their patients, meanwhile, their employers fail to consider how mental and physical health and burnout can affect the care patients receive.

“Health care workers have put everything on the line for our communities during the pandemic and their entire careers. Kaiser Permanente health care workers are standing up for their patients and making sure that their very ill patients get the healthcare they pay for and need,” said **UFCW Local 7 Director of Healthcare Nate Bernstein**. “The lawsuit UFCW Local 7 has filed is intended to make sure Kaiser lives up to its commitment to the community, but also the health care workers that are so devoted and critical to our community. UFCW Local 7 health care members are making modest and common sense requests to perform their jobs safely.”

The hardworking health care workers of UFCW Local 7 are calling for:

- Strong across the board wage increases for all workers
- Improved collaboration around staffing decisions
- Better provisions for time off and work-life balance

You can view the full complaint [here](#).

###

[Local 7](#), the largest Union in Colorado, is affiliated with United Food and Commercial Workers International Union which represents over 1.3 million workers in the United States and Canada, and is one of the largest private-sector Unions in North America. UFCW members work in a wide range of industries, including retail food, food processing, agriculture, retail sales, and health care.

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)