

Negotiations Update: Contracts Expire This Sunday, March 31

Our current contracts expire on Sunday, March 31. We are working hard to try to reach agreement with the hospitals. We have seen some movement from the hospitals, but significant gaps still remain on key issues.

Plan to attend a CRONA membership meeting on Saturday to find out the latest.

CRONA Membership Meetings: Saturday, March 30

6:30 – 9:00 a.m.: Come at any time and for as long as you can.

LCPH Auditorium, 1st floor

We Need Real Improvements in Working Conditions and A Truly Competitive Economic Package

To attract and retain Nurses, we need a competitive total package of wages, benefits and working conditions. CRONA has proposed across-the-board wage increases of 4% effective April 1, 2019; 4% effective April 1, 2020; and 4% effective April 1, 2021. CRONA's proposed raises would allow us to keep up with cost of living increases in the Bay Area. Last year, the cost of living increased by 4.5%. And there is no indication that will drop off: the average of cost of living increase over the last three years was 3.63%. Not only would the 2%, 1% raises the hospitals have proposed *not* keep our wage rates above those of the competition, but they would mean our wage increases would not even keep up with expected cost of living increases. This is why CRONA is standing strong for our wage proposal.

We need a total economic package that will compete. That means that we need better retirement benefits, including retiree medical coverage, to help Nurses want to stay and build their careers at Stanford and Packard.

Retirement benefits are a proven way to improve retention. CRONA has proposed a 1% increase in the hospitals' base contribution to the retirement plan (phased in over the term of the contract), and a substantial increase in the existing lump-sum retiree medical benefit. And because we believe that Nurses should be able to afford and have access to the same quality care they have spent their careers providing to patients, CRONA has also proposed that the hospitals pay a portion of the cost of giving retirees access to the hospitals' own medical plans, the Stanford Health Care Alliance.

CRONA will continue to stand strong for the economic package Nurses need and deserve.

The Hospitals Must Do More to Protect Nurses

Even in light of the high-profile violent incident reported at Stanford, the hospitals are refusing to agree to our common sense proposals on workplace safety. We know that workplace violence is a real problem and Nurses have written us with reports of being kicked and punched and verbally threatened. This is not acceptable. When a Nurse is assaulted or threatened by a patient or family member, the Nurse should have the right to request a change in patient assignment, and that request should be granted unless no other staff are available. To date, the hospitals have not agreed. Lip service is not enough when it comes to our safety. **We need to get serious about respecting and protecting Nurses.**

If a Nurse is injured at work, CRONA has proposed that she or he should be able to use Extended Sick Leave right away to cover the worker's compensation waiting period, and not have to dip into PTO. It makes no sense that a Nurse who is seriously injured at work should have to go without pay or use PTO in order to pursue her worker's compensation benefits. This literally adds insult to injury. The hospitals have not agreed to this proposal.

We Can't Afford to Lose Part-Time Positions

The hospitals' most recent proposals agreed to maintain parts of the contract provision protecting part-time positions that we negotiated three years ago. Specifically, the hospitals agreed that recently vacated part-time positions would continue to be re-posted as part-time, but so far they have refused to agree that such positions would be re-posted at the same commitment level. This protection is key because it helps to ensure that the hospitals will not replace a 0.6 commitment with a 0.8 commitment. The hospitals have also proposed to limit the units to which these protections would apply. CRONA is standing strong to ensure that our part-time positions are protected.

No Need for a More Stringent Attendance Policy

CRONA and the hospitals reached a compromise six years ago on the attendance policies. The hospitals now want to undo that compromise and want flexibility to change the policies as they see fit. CRONA objects and has proposed to maintain key provisions of the existing policies and prevent the hospital from making the policies more punitive. Nurses should not be forced to choose between coming to work sick, which is not good for their patients and colleagues, or being disciplined.

CRONA Is Working Hard to Get a Deal

Although significant gaps remain on key issues, we are making some progress. The hospitals are no longer insisting on contract language that would allow managers to force Nurses to precept and instead have proposed that Nurses could be assigned to precept only if they agree to take on preceptor responsibilities and then receive training. CRONA wants reasonable limitations on precepting assignments, and so we are working to close the gap.

The hospitals have repeatedly taken the position that the side letter regarding specialty skills incentive payments has expired and the hospitals will not renew it. The hospitals, however, have admitted that it is difficult to recruit Nurses with specialty skills. We believe the way to recruit and retain Nurses is to provide incentives, not to take them away. So CRONA is standing strong for the principle that Nurses with advanced skills should be rewarded. To break the log-jam on this issue, CRONA proposed a new program to provide additional incentive pay to Nurses who obtain national certifications. This national certification incentive benefit would not be limited to certain specific skills and yet would serve the hospitals' goal of encouraging more Nurses to obtain certifications. The hospitals have not yet agreed.

Our Contract Expires March 31: Stay Tuned for More Updates

#CRONAStrong