

Dear CRONA Nurses,

Today we commemorate Juneteenth, a day that marks the end of slavery in America, when slaves in Galveston, Texas finally received word that they were free. We know that the legacy of slavery did not end there; it has persisted through generations and impacts all of us in a multitude of ways. We now have an opportunity to use our influence as nurses to oppose racism and work to create a society free of discrimination. As nurses we are advocates for health, and no population can truly be healthy when racism and other forms of discrimination persist. CRONA is advocating for self-reflection, education, and action. Expect to hear more on this issue in the future. As a union, we know that where there is unity there is strength, and with our voices together we can be a part of the drive for change that will ultimately bring better health to us all.

This week we also celebrate the Supreme Court's decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, recognizing that federal employment law protections apply to millions of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workers. No one should experience discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity and CRONA welcomes this confirmation of the law.

In Unity,  
Colleen Borges, President  
CRONA

## Time to Use Education Hours and Funds is Running Out

The academic year ends August 31, and any unused education funds will be lost. SHC is allowing nurses to use education time during TWA but LPCH is not unless the time was pre-approved prior to TWA. Make sure to use all of your hours and funds! Remember, you may use funds to purchase educational materials such as books and to pay for professional memberships and certification testing. You may only roll over unused education hours if you previously requested to use them and were denied: SHC nurses may roll over all denied hours, LPCH nurses may roll over up to 16 denied hours. Please be able to provide documentation of the denial. You may use education time in excess of 40 total hours per week and the hours will not be paid overtime, so if you want to use our education hours on top of working your full commitment you may do so.

In our current contract, the end of the academic year was changed to August 31 instead of the end of the pay period prior to August 31. This led to some issues for nurses who used education funds/hours at the very end of August last year. The hospital has finally agreed to go back and manually credit the affected nurses, with apologies for the delay. Please let us know if this issue affected you.

## Check Your Paycheck

We say this over and over because it is so important. Many nurses do not check their paychecks regularly, only to find out they have been paid an incorrect rate, did not receive shift differential on their PTO, or other errors.

If the error has persisted for years, we cannot recover all of the missing wages and the money is lost. It's your money, you earned it, make sure you are getting it!

You have a contractual right to paper copies of your pay stubs. If you would like to receive these in the mail you must put in a ticket with HR. If you are denied, this is incorrect and you need to let us know at [crona@crona.org](mailto:crona@crona.org). Please make sure to include your HR ticket number if you ask CRONA for assistance. If you prefer to access your pay stubs online but are having difficulty connecting to eConnect from your home, call the Help Desk for assistance.

## Monthly Membership/Area Rep Meetings

We will continue to hold our membership and Area Representative monthly meetings online only until we are allowed to hold in-person meetings in the hospitals again. We will continue the online webinar meetings even when we resume the in-person meetings.

From this month's meeting, here is the Q&A:

**Q:** Is there an update on travel restrictions for educational conferences? I am registered for one in August. (I am actually hoping to go virtual but hotel says it's non-refundable).

**A:** You must check restrictions at the time you travel, as they are changing over time. You may or may not be required to quarantine upon return. It is very hard to plan travel in advance with everything so uncertain.

**Q:** A traveler has asked why she was being sent home earlier than the staff. She had to remind the Charge Nurse that she is a traveler, nevertheless, she was still sent home.

**A:** That is exactly right. A travel nurse is sent home before a CRONA Nurse.

**Q:** Visitors policy is opening up. Are visitors tested?

**A:** Visitors are not tested; they are asked screening questions and must wear a mask. It is up to all of us to enforce the mask policy for visitors. If a visitor refuses to wear a mask, you need to escalate to your manager and/or nursing supervisor.

**Q:** Are there any preparations in place if there is a spike with the large groups of protesting?

**A:** So far, we have not seen a spike in COVID-19 infections with protests, we are seeing an increase in cases as shelter-in-place restrictions are loosened. The hospital was required to have a plan for increasing cases in order to be allowed to restart elective surgeries and outpatient visits.

**Q:** Where can I find the information regarding accommodation for nurses taking care of COVID patient?

**A:** There is information available on the hospital intranet. You must submit a request to HR. You will be expected to provide documentation.

**Q:** Do you have to take mentorship class to get PNDP points when you are scheduled to mentor a nurse?

**A:** Yes. This is how the hospital set up the program.

**Q:** If a CN IV quit Stanford during her panel renewal year, and came back after 5 months, does she reapply as if she is doing it again for the first time? She came back as a CNII, as an external candidate.

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** I work in the PDC clinic as a Relief nurse. I was told I can't float to the Labor and Delivery unit until the TWA is lifted. Is that correct? I am a labor and delivery nurse and have the skills to work on LND.

**A:** That is not correct. If there is work available on the Labor and Delivery unit, and nurses on the unit do not pick up the extra shifts, you could pick them up.

**Q:** Can a Relief Nurse be pre-scheduled to work, to cover another nurse's upcoming PTO?

**A:** All units must meet their minimum staffing numbers. If meeting those numbers means that some nurses continue to work over their scheduled commitments, this is allowed to meet patient care needs. We must not sacrifice patient care and safe staffing.

**Q:** Travelers are still working on some ICUs when staff on other ICUs are being mandatory canceled....it's a huge problem particularly on J4 with super low census....How can we be sure there are NO travelers on ANY ICU's when we are canceled?

**A:** This is supposed to be coordinated with the Staffing Office. Your Resource Nurses should be communicating about which units have excess staff and which are short, and floating nurses.

**Q:** Can you speak to use of "negative balance" PTO?

**A:** The hospital is allowing staff to go into a negative PTO balance if the staff want to use PTO to cover time off work. The negative PTO is being paid without shift differential, even for permanent evening and night shift nurses. This is something for nurses to keep in mind when considering going into a negative PTO balance. It's kind of like a PTO payday loan.

**Q:** I missed earlier discussion. I didn't receive 1% retention pay. I changed commitment recently when I transferred to a different department, could either of these be the reason? Who do I email?

**A:** If you were due to receive retention pay or certification pay, but did not, you must open a ticket with HR. If the issue is not promptly resolved, please email [crona@crona.org](mailto:crona@crona.org) and include the relevant information and your HR ticket number.

**Q:** Sorry if you talked about this.. do we have adequate PPE? I work on M7 and we get the COVID/PUI patients. We are having hard time getting disposable stethoscopes especially and sometimes have to call repeatedly to get N95 masks and gowns...

**A:** If you are having issues getting supplies, please file a SAFE report and an ADO. Supply delivery has been impacted as those staff are also required to reduce hours under the TWA. We cannot sacrifice safe patient and must speak up when the TWA makes our work environment unsafe.

**Q:** Can I use my EDU for PALS and APHON to keep my certifications? Manager told me that those are not mandatory for me to work in my current position. But I don't want those to expire. Can they refuse EDU because the certifications are not mandatory? I work in the Ambulatory outpatient setting.

**A:** Your management should support you maintaining your certifications. If PALS is not mandatory for your area it is not paid for by the hospital, but you should be able to use your education hours/funds. Please let us know if you are denied.

**Q:** I have requested twice now to have a copy of my paycheck sent by mail but have not received one because of TWA in payroll. Is this correct?

**A:** No, this is not correct. Please email us your information and HR ticket number for your requests to receive paper pay stubs. It is in our contract that we may receive paper copies.

**Q:** If someone volunteered for TWA time off.... do those hours count as "cancelled" hours when it becomes necessary to mandatorily cancel in a unit?

**A:** Yes, if the time off has already occurred. You may not count future time off hours towards your hours of cancellation.

**Q:** If I am full time CRONA nurse, but have been sent home before a per diem nurse?

**A:** This sounds incorrect. Please email us with details, including the shift length and start times for you and the other nurse.

**Q:** Does taking an A time “count” towards being canceled?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Do we earn PTO while on light duty?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** When schools reopen this fall, it is very likely that children will not resume a traditional schedule. This creates much difficulty for many nurses. Has CRONA been discussing this with the hospital? What kind of flexibility with scheduling could we expect? Will we be able to continue to take days off for home school purposes?

**A:** CRONA has raised the issue of children returning to school. The hospital has not shared any plans with CRONA, and may not have them yet. They will likely wait to see what the changes are.

**Q:** I had pre-approved EDU time for first week of July. Due to COVID19 conference was canceled. I asked mgmt if I could take online courses for those pre-approved hours. I was told NO since hospital is being stringent on EDU hours during TWA. Is this true?

**A:** No. Please send us an email with your information, including your unit and who your manager is.

**Q:** Example - we are overstaffed, and a nurse needs to be taken off the schedule for the next day. I still have A time so volunteered to take the A day for the next day. My manager asked if it was “voluntary or mandatory.” I admit that I volunteered.....but someone would have to take a mandatory A day...so I was a bit confused by the question. It is “voluntary” right....

**A:** If a manager asks and you say “yes”, regardless of your motivation for agreeing, then it is voluntary.

**Q:** I heard some nurses who purchased books and asked for reimbursement (provided receipts) were asked to also show proof of delivery packing slips...why? This is ridiculous and very controlling on how we use education funds. Can the hospital do this?

**A:** We asked the hospital about this and were told that those nurses submitted proof of purchase from Amazon that did not show that the package was delivered. Make sure to print your receipts after the package is delivered to prevent being asked this.

**Q:** I am still on orientation and my preceptor took a day off and no one was with me because the other nurse coordinators were working at home. I am not supposed to be working by myself? Right?

**A:** Correct. You should never work alone while you are on orientation. You are not counted in staffing numbers. If no other preceptor was available, then you should have been cancelled and your orientation extended by a day.

**Q:** We have been so short staffed, there are days we work 6 hours straight without a break. What is the language around that?

**A:** You need to add a missed break penalty to your time card, along with a missed meal penalty. By six hours of work you should have had a rest break and a meal break. Your manager will have no motivation to ensure safe staffing if no one says anything or puts in for meal/rest break penalty pay. Please also file an ADO.

**Q:** Has the hospital discussed severance pay or early retirement for some older nurses as part of the solution?

**A:** No.

**Q:** My manager charged my B-time for taking BLS and ACLS. Can they do this? Under what code do we use for these mandatory classes?

**A:** This is incorrect. Required classes are paid as Orientation/Training time. Your manager should know this, it is basic. You need to submit an HR ticket to get the education time credited to you. At SHC, CEPD was providing some confusing information but this has been corrected.

**Q:** Will there be a formal process for submitting request for education hours roll over if they have been denied?

**A:** CRONA recently raised this issue with the hospitals and asked them to prepare a process.

**Q:** Why aren't all RNs fit tested? It puts a burden on all RNs that are fit tested?

**A:** All nurses must be fit-tested. Some nurses fail the test and must wear a CAPR. The availability of CAPRs is limited, so a nurse who must wear a CAPR may be assigned to a patient who does not require use of an N95. New fit-testing is going on now for those who wear the 1870 and 1870+ as those masks are becoming unavailable.

**Q:** Can you please explain our standard ESL process (pre-COVID)?

**A:** This language is in the contract, which is available as a searchable PDF online. You are entitled to use ESL on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of illness/injury, regardless of when your scheduled work days are. You may use ESL on the first day of illness/injury if you are admitted to the hospital.

**Q:** N-95s are being recycled, however, no one seems to know where or who is responsible for the recycling containers.

**A:** The hospital is collecting those and sending them to a third party company for processing. No processed masks have been issued for use as of now.

**Q:** Are Limited Relief nurses eligible for the bonus retention?

**A:** Yes. The amount was based on your FTE, not the number of hours worked, so the amount is not large.

**Q:** Do all types of Relief Nurses get certification pay?

**A:** Yes. All CRONA Nurses are eligible.

**Q:** What does Occ Health do for employees that live at a distance to get a COVID test? This has been a problem....even when you've been told by Occ Health to stay home.....and are too ill to be tested at Stanford?

**A:** That would need to be a discussion with Occupational Health at the time. We do know of one example of a nurse who lived multiple hours away and was allowed to obtain her own testing locally through her PCP. The results must be provided to Occupational Health.

**Q:** Are Relief Nurses eligible for getting Clinical Nurse 3 pay raises?

**A:** Yes, if they meet eligibility criteria. This information is available on the [crona.org](http://crona.org) homepage.

**Q:** Do you need to enter the certification every quarter or is it good as long as it hasn't expired?

**A:** No, not as long as the certification is still valid. It is a good habit to set a reminder to check every quarter.

**Q:** I have been told by my manager that voluntary PTO is not TWA. Is this correct?

**A:** No. Please send us this information in an email to [crona@crona.org](mailto:crona@crona.org) along with your unit and manager's name. We can then make sure that your manager's knowledge deficit is corrected.

**Q:** How long is the orientation as a nurse coordinator in a specialty clinic?

**A:** Nurse Coordinators are not CRONA nurses and are not allowed to do CRONA work. We do not know how long their orientation is. If one is being oriented to a CRONA job that is not allowed and we need to hear about it immediately.

**Q:** Do you have to pass the certification exam before getting reimbursed for the exam fee? Thank you.

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** LPCH Ambulatory managers are saying because the doctors don't have patients physically there and doing telehealth appts instead, that there is no census and the CRONA rules for inpatient does not apply to the outpatient clinics. Our advice calls and mounds of paperwork are overwhelming. This affects patient safety as we cannot get to all the messages or review all of them to determine any urgent messages. Also, patients need their medications and because the nurses are responsible for reviewing ALL medication refills, some urgent ones may get missed. Managers state that they may have to reconsider allowing any PTO if we cannot work short staffed. But they are not allowing relief nurse to come in or another nurse working over their commitment to help out. They have said filling out an ADO is not the correct way, and that an iCares is the correct form. They schedule patients throughout the lunch hour but tell us that we cannot claim no lunch. We need some kind of support in the Ambulatory setting please.

**A:** We can only help if you let us know who you are and what is going on! It sounds like your manager is making inappropriate statements. Denying you a meal penalty when you did not get your meal break is ILLEGAL, please report this immediately. Your manager should not be making you work short-staffed. You are entitled to PTO, 2 to 4 weeks per year depending on seniority, your manager cannot make such a blanket statement. Your manager will continue to get away with outrageous and illegal behavior as long as no one speaks up. Please speak up.

**Q:** Now that you clarified....if I was charged B-time for ACLS/BLS years ago, is it too late to correct that?

**A:** Yes, it is too late, sorry.

**Q:** That means all our nurses should be getting missed break and meal penalties every day...

**A:** YES!! File for your missed breaks!!!!!!

**Q:** Just to confirm... missed meal penalty is if you take your lunch AFTER your 5th hour of working?

**A:** Yes. You can find the exact language of the state law online.

**Q:** If I miss a 15mins break and I didn't ask my Resource for it because it was very obvious, we were slammed and there was no time for anyone to take 15 mins break, does that mean I cannot claim missed break?

**A:** NO! Claim your missed break! It is the responsibility of the employer to offer you your break, that is how the law reads.

**#CRONAStrong**