

YOUR BARGAINING TEAM RECOMMENDS A “YES” VOTE!!

**WSNA/WHATCOM COUNTY CONTRACT
GENERAL SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS
November 21, 2022**

TERM: New contract will expire on December 31, 2025.

WAGES:

6% (effective first full pay period in January 2023). Additionally, Steps 10-15 will be eliminated, and all the wage increases associated with Steps 10-15 will be pushed to Step 9, which will now be 3.8% higher than Step 8. Currently, Step 9 is only 0.5% higher than Step 8. The net effect of this is that wage increases you would currently have to wait until Step 15 to receive (with a three-year waiting period between each Step between Steps 10-15) will now occur at year 9. So, nurses between Steps 9-15 will receive additional wages increases of between 1.75% and 3.3% (depending on Step) on top of the 6% increase, for a total increase between 7.75% and 9.3%.

4% (effective first full pay period in January 2024).

3% (effective first full pay period in January 2025).

PREMIUMS, CERTIFICATIONS, ETC.:

New Higher Pay Range for PHN II with Certification or Advanced Degree. Currently PHN II nurses with a certification or advanced degree are not entitled to additional compensation, unlike PHN I nurses with certification or an advanced degree. Now, PHN II nurses with certification or an advanced degree will be placed at range 50 instead of range 49.

Weekend Premium [NEW]. We have secured a weekend premium of \$3.50 per hour for nurses whose normal work week does not include working on weekends. The weekend is defined as Saturday and Sunday.

Electronic Contact. Currently, during a public health emergent situation, nurses who are required to remain in electronic contact receive standby pay of \$20 per day. We have increased this amount to \$5 per hour.

MEDICAL INSURANCE:

We put a lot of effort during these negotiations to secure a health benefits plan that worked for everyone. In the end, we convinced the County to continue the current WCIF 500 plan, but to soften the premium costs for current nurses who have dependent coverage as of November 10,

2022. For such nurses, the County will contribute these *additional* amounts per month beyond the existing premium split:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Employee plus Spouse: | \$71.36 |
| Employee plus Child(ren): | \$62.47 |
| Employee plus Spouse plus Child(ren): | \$98.02 |

Additionally, .9 FTE employees who have Employee Only coverage will no longer have to pay a premium.

Holidays. Juneteenth is now formally recognized as a holiday in the contract.

Emergency Callback. New language clarifying if a nurse is called back from vacation, they will receive a minimum of four hours at the overtime rate and be paid at the overtime rate for any additional hours worked beyond four hours, and the vacation will be returned. If they don't work a full shift, they may use the returned vacation to top up hours.

Overtime on a Holiday. New language clarifying if a nurse works overtime on a holiday, they will be paid double time but may not choose comp time in lieu of the double overtime.

Vacation Waiting Period. Currently, new hires must wait six months before using vacation. Now, there is no waiting period.

Vacation Accrual. Currently, full-time nurses with less than three years of service earn less than 8 hours of vacation per month. Now, all full-time nurses with three years or less of service will receive 8 hours of vacation per month.

Vacation Cash out. New language allowing nurses to cash out up to 40 hours of vacation per year with mutual agreement of management.

Leave Sharing Program. Currently, nurses are limited to donating up to 24 hours of sick leave and up to 24 hours of vacation leave to other employees under the County's leave sharing program. Now, there is no 24-hour limit.

Cash out of Sick Leave upon Termination. Currently, nurses are required to give at least 30 days' notice to be able to cash out sick leave. Now, nurses will have to give only two weeks' notice.

Maternity Leave. New leave clarifies maternity leave also includes paternity leave.

Family Leave. New language eliminating the requirement that nurses who have taken 12 weeks of unpaid FMLA must exhaust all their vacation and personal holiday accruals in order to take additional unpaid leave.

Working in a Higher Classification. New language clarifying that when a nurse works in a higher classification for five or more working days, the nurse will be paid at the higher rate of pay excluding paid time off.

Wages Adjustments. Currently, the contract allows for the possibility of a wage adjustment during the life of the contract if the wages for Whatcom County positions fall 5% below other comparable counties or health districts. Now, the wages need be only 3% below other comparable counties or health districts, not 5%.

Mediation of Grievances. New language allowing the use of mediation, by mutual agreement, instead of immediately going to arbitration over an unresolved grievance.