

RWJ Somerset USW Local 9620 Collective Bargaining Agreement Ratification Management Talking Points April 24, 2019

1. Question: What are the dates in which the Registered Nurses (RNs) covered by the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) at RWJ Somerset can vote to ratify their contract?

Response: Registered Nurses covered by the CBA at RWJ Somerset will have the opportunity to vote to ratify the contract for 5 days beginning on Monday, April 29, 2019 and concluding on Friday, May 3rd. The voting will be held in Conference Room A/B during the hours of 7:30am to 8pm.

2. Question: What are the key components of the tentative agreement?

Response: Below please find the key components of the tentative agreement for which the RNs will be voting to accept and ratify.

- Wages: In addition to the RN market adjustments made in October of 2018 the RNs covered by the CBA will receive:

Year 1: Full time and part time (32 hours or greater) RNs covered by the CBA will receive a 2.5% increase. A 2% increase will be retroactive to January 2019 and a 0.5% increase effective June 30, 2019.

Year 2: Full time and part time (32 hours or greater) RNs covered by the CBA will receive a 2.5% increase. A 2% increase effective December 29, 2019 and a 0.5% increase effective June 28, 2020.

Effective these same dates, per diem RNs shall receive the same increases for Years 1 and 2.

- On Call Pay: Increased from \$4.50/hour to \$4.75/hr. retroactive to the first pay of January 2019.
- Charge Pay: Increased from \$1.50/hour to \$2.00/hr. retroactive to the first pay of January 2019.
- Preceptor Pay: Increased from \$0.75/hr. to \$1.00/hr. retroactive to the first pay of January 2019.
- Tuition Assistance: Increased to \$5,250.00 per calendar year for studies leading to a BSN or higher nursing degree.
- ANCC Certification List: Updated to align with certification pay eligibility which enhances and supports the opportunities to recognize specialization in a clinical nursing practice.
- Bereavement: Eligibility to utilize bereavement time for foster child(ren)
- Professional Advancement System:
Effective January 1, 2020, professional registered nurses hired before June 1, 2014, shall be eligible to submit credit earned before June 1, 2014 toward Clinical Nurse Level III designation providing they are currently at the Clinical Nurse II level. This documentation must be submitted by Saturday, February 29, 2020.

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3. Question: What does it mean if an RN chooses to vote “yes” when casting their vote for the contract ratification?

Response: If an RN votes “yes” this indicates they accept the terms of the tentative agreement.

4. Question: What does it mean if an RN chooses to vote “no” when casting their vote for the contract ratification?

Response: If an RN votes “no” then this indicates the RN does not accept the items which are part of the tentative agreement for ratification. In addition, based on the information provided by the USW leadership, our understanding is that a “no” vote indicates the RN does not accept the terms of the tentative agreement and authorizes the union to submit a 10 day strike notice.

Under the National Labor Relations Act, labor organizations representing individuals working in the healthcare industry are required to provide the healthcare institution a ten (10) day notice of intent to strike so that appropriate arrangements may be made to ensure continuance of care to patients.

5. Question: What am I allowed to say to my staff?

Response: Please inform staff of the voting dates, time and location. Also, please provide staff the opportunity during work time to step away to learn more about the agreement and vote.

If there are specific questions that your staff may have, please have them contact Kimberly Delbrune-Mitter, USW President for RWJ-Somerset at kimusw9620@gmail.com.

6. Question: Does the USW negotiating committee, USW leadership and Hospital leadership support the ratification of this agreement?

Response: The union has provided in their literature that they are recommending the RNs vote “yes” to approve and ratify the tentative agreement. The leadership team recommends the RNs vote “yes” to ratify the tentative agreement as well.

7. Question: There is a rumor I heard the RNs believe their “no” vote casted also counts as a vote to have the USW union stop representing the RNs at RWJ Somerset. Is this accurate?

Response: The vote of “no” cast by an RN does not mean that their vote counts towards a decision to have the USW union stop representing the RNs at RWJ Somerset. The “no” vote casted by an RN indicates the RN does not accept the items which are part of the tentative agreement for ratification. In addition, based on the information provided by the USW leadership, our understanding is that a “no” vote indicates the RN does not accept the terms of the tentative agreement and authorizes the union to submit a 10 day strike notice.

8. Question: I heard RNs want to know about the wellness program which provides them an opportunity to see a decrease in their 2020 health benefit contributions. Is this accurate?

Response: There is a program available through our Healthy Together wellness program which provides employees the opportunity to achieve credits towards a decrease in their 2020 health benefit contributions. Participation information is available on the bridge and posted in our departments. Further information will be forthcoming later in the year regarding how these credits will be applied.