

Bargaining Update – September 5, 2018

The seventeenth set of bargaining sessions between Munson Medical Center (MMC) and the MNA occurred on Wednesday, September 4, 2018, from 1:35 pm to 5:40 pm and on Thursday, September 5, 2018, from 11:10 am to 6:50 pm.

After several sessions devoted to the topics, we have reached tentative agreements on language for the following portions of a collective bargaining agreement:

Mandatory Overtime

MMC and the MNA agreed that it is in the best interest of patient care and for the benefit of the Medical Center, nurses, and the patients they serve to reduce or eliminate mandatory overtime. We outlined procedures to enable us to continue to provide safe patient care while making progress toward this shared goal. These procedures call for the use of other reasonably available resources before using mandatory overtime, including unit volunteers, pool, PRN/TOC, system staffing, staffing incentive, and agency nurses who have the training, experience, and ability to safely care for patients.

Seniority

We agreed to continue the existing Munson Healthcare System Seniority currently used for benefits purposes. We also agreed that there will be bargaining unit seniority defined as “the time a nurse has filled a bargaining unit position, including time before the election.” Bargaining unit seniority will be used for most purposes for which unit/department or job classification seniority is used now. We will bridge both forms of seniority, if a nurse leaves the MMC or the bargaining unit, in a manner similar to how we bridge Munson Healthcare System Seniority now, but bridging will only occur once in a nurse’s career.

Vacancies

MMC and the MNA agreed that the procedures for filling vacancies will largely follow existing procedures.

- Positions will first be made available for qualified nurses already in the unit or department who want to change their shift or FTE status.
- They will be considered in bargaining unit seniority order after they have been on the unit for 180 days.
- Positions will be posted for 5 days, and skills and ability to provide the best care to patients will continue to be the principal factors considered.
- New nurses will continue to have a 180-day introductory period at MMC, and existing nurses who change position will continue to have a 180-day evaluation period for new positions after transfer.
- Nurses will not be able to bid for new positions for a year in most cases.

Layoffs

Although layoffs have been rare at MMC, it is important to have procedures in place in the event they occur. MMC and the MNA agreed that layoffs would begin with the nurses with the least bargaining unit seniority in the department or unit impacted. Those nurses can fill other vacancies for which they are immediately qualified, and will have recall rights for nine months.

Interim ICU Scheduling

We amended an interim agreement reached in March of this year for how ICU scheduling will be handled. This is the second time we have bargained and reached an interim agreement for ICU. The MNA had sought to change the earlier agreement.

The next set of collective bargaining sessions will be on September 17 and 18.