

Backus Federation of Nurses

LOCAL 5149 | AFT CT AFT AFL-CIO | NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022



Staffing Committee Update

This month the meeting focused on A2 and the staffing ratios reported to DPH. What nurse to patient ratios do nurses feel are realistic keeping patient safety as our top priority? It was discussed that 1:4 would be ideal, but perhaps 1:5 is possible depending on patient acuity. If a patient is receiving Chemotherapy, 1:3 would be safest. The ratios reported to DPH for A2 were 1:4-7, the fluctuation presumably for night shift. We are still requesting an Epic Acuity Tool be purchased and implemented to assist with safe assignments. The result of this recent staffing meeting is that Erin Truman, Director of Nursing, stated she would gather the data of staffing ratios for A2 over the past year and bring recommendations to the budget committee to increase FTE's on A2. FTE stands for Full Time Equivalent which translates to hiring more staff for that unit.

????? Q&A

What happens to my PTO at the end of the year?

Article 46.6 PTO Carry Over. Employees may carry over a maximum of eighty (80) hours of accrued unused PTO from one calendar year to the next calendar year for employees in forty (40) budgeted hour positions. Carryover will be prorated for employees with budgeted hours of less than forty (40) hours but at least twenty-four (24) hours.

- 40 hrs: 80 PTO hrs carried over
- 36 hrs: 72 PTO hrs carried over
- 32hrs: 64 PTO hrs carried over
- 24hrs: 48 PTO hrs carried over

What happens if I have more than my allowed PTO for carry over at the end of the year?

Accrued, unused PTO above the carry-over maximum will be forfeited after the end of the last pay period each calendar year. The carryover process will occur with the pay period which contains January 1. Notwithstanding the foregoing, at the end of the calendar year, PTO that was properly requested and was denied twice in excess of 80 hours (prorated for employees with budgeted hours of less than forty (40) hours but at least twenty-four (24) hours) shall be cashed out at the rate of 50%.



Regional Updates:

Some congratulations are in order!

- First, a major victory for school nurse members of Windham United! The Windham Public Schools' board of education has approved their recently

ratified three-year union contract that includes pay raises, boosts to paid leave and frees up personal days!

- And Western CT United Professionals union members recently ratified their new three-year union contract with NuVance Health which will raise their wages and improve call pay language.

Upcoming Workshops and Training

SCAN ME



Eastern CT Legislative Meeting

MAR. 5, 10:30AM (on zoom)

This informal discussion is an opportunity for members and area legislators to talk about the issues our federation's Legislative and Political Action Committee (LPAC) is pursuing in the General Assembly's 2022 legislative session.



SCAN ME

Defensive Charting Webinar

MAR 28, 6:00PM (on zoom)

One of the most important parts of nursing is documentation, and the scariest part of nursing is the threat of a lawsuit – but those are the least covered topics in nursing school! Come join us as we cover what you are REALLY supposed to document, how the lawsuit process works, and what to do if you get named in a lawsuit. Presenter Lisa D'Abrosca, RN, BSN, LNC will also cover the pros and cons of nursing malpractice insurance.



SCAN ME

Wellness Power Hour

APR 20, 6:00PM (on zoom)

This professional development course will focus on working through stressful work environments. Participants will be taught various mediation and breathing techniques and will learn how to bring these tools into their own work environments. This workshop is being presented by AFT CT Field Representative Liz Guerra.



Incentives Update

The previous incentive in place for the recent surge was set to expire on 2/12/22. Our union was able to negotiate for a new one that benefits all our nurses. This extended Incentive is more than double time for even the highest step on our wage scale. It is comparable to new incentives at other area hospitals. The new incentive also has added language that protects our hard-earned incentive pay. In previous incentives, nurses would lose the entire incentive for just 1 call out in the entire schedule period. In this new incentive program, call outs only apply to the specific week that incentive is included in. Another benefit is the extended time-period from 2/12-4/23/22. This incentive is another step towards the ultimate goal of providing safe staffing for our hospital.

Upcoming Elections Nominations

For **President** and **Secretary**

Email nominations to LPlace@aftct.org, by **March 1**
If needed, election will be held on **April 5**



bylaws changes



Bylaw Changes

REVISING OUR CONSTITUTION

The Constitution Committee has suggested a series of changes to our Union's Constitution and By-Laws; last month, all these modifications were reviewed, and approved, by the Executive Board. In the spirit of democracy and openness that has always run through our Union, a summary of these revisions are present here; ultimately, the General Membership will vote on whether these changes are accepted!



I. Officer Elections Every 2 Years

The Committee suggests changing Union Officer elections to every other year. Currently, The President and Secretary are elected one year, and the Vice President and Treasurer are elected the next, resulting in yearly elections.

We thought that this was both inefficient, and unnecessary. Some also thought that if Union Members wanted a change of leadership, they should be given a chance to elect a "clean slate" of officers-- all at the same time.



II. Modifying Local Union Dues

The Committee suggests a \$2/pay period dues increase to our Local, and then subsequent increases based on negotiated annual market adjustments.

The dues that members pay to our specific Union/Local has not changed in 10 years (however, the amount that goes to State and National Unions has automatically gone up). With the increase in our Union's size-- and overall activity-- the Committee suggests it is important to plan for future by increasing the money that will stay in our own bank account. Future automatic adjustments would also allow for our Local's dues to keep up with inflation-- and streamline the overall dues adjustment process.



III. Increasing Officer Stipends

Officer stipends have been mostly unchanged for 10 years. The Committee felt it important to acknowledge the vast amount of time it takes to conduct Union business by increasing the current, and frankly low, reimbursement rates that Officers receive. Also, importantly, we wanted to make these positions more attractive to future office holders.

Our President is currently reimbursed at less than half of what her contemporaries are at other local hospital unions. Even with increased stipends, the Committee realizes that Officers will not come close to being compensated for the time they invest in the Union, but then, we know no one becomes a Union Officer for the big bucks!



Process for Completing The Review

An in-depth review of these changes will be held during our next (virtual) Membership Meeting on March 1st at 6p. Please join us, review the changes, and ask questions!

Voting on accepting these changes will be held during the (virtual) Membership Meeting held the following month, on April 5th at 6pm. The revisions will pass with a 2/3 majority vote of those present.

