

May 2007 Employer Agreements

Attached

- 1) **Executive Board Resolution: 5/19/07**

- 2) **Petition: To SEIU International Executive Board**
Signatures gathered: 42,976 (30% of 142,619)
* Signed petitions were never formally delivered. SEIU knew we were moving the petition as we mailed a packet to others in SEIU that included the resolution and petition. This alone caught their attention.

- 3) **Flyer: Our Voice Matters**

- 4) **Discussion Guide: For Staff and Stewards who were leading discussions at Worksite Steward Council Meetings**

RESOLUTION ON PRINCIPLES FOR HEALTHCARE EMPLOYER AGREEMENTS

Adopted by: SEIU United Healthcare Workers-West Executive Board on 5/19/07.

WHEREAS: SEIU United Healthcare Workers - West's vision is to improve the lives of healthcare workers in hospitals, nursing homes, homecare, and other healthcare settings by uniting more workers into our union through organizing the unorganized; improving healthcare workers' wages, benefits, and working conditions and the quality of care for the people we serve; and ensuring that healthcare workers' voices are heard at every level of government; and

WHEREAS: SEIU United Healthcare Workers - West has demonstrated our commitment to growth by increasing our membership through organizing 65,286 healthcare workers over the past seven years; by providing staff assistance and financial resources to organize unorganized healthcare workers in campaigns across the nation including Florida, Nevada, Oregon and Minnesota; and by using our collective bargaining power, to help unorganized healthcare workers win a fast and fair process to form a union without employer interference; and

WHEREAS: SEIU United Healthcare Workers - West has strategically used our increasing numbers to achieve new standards in our collective bargaining agreements, which have led more unorganized healthcare workers to want to join us; and

WHEREAS: SEIU United Healthcare Workers - West has built a strong, democratic union based on worksite organization, transparent decision-making, and the active involvement and commitment of rank-and-file leaders; and

WHEREAS: SEIU United Healthcare Workers - West members participate in bargaining and vote on collective bargaining and employer agreements; and

WHEREAS: SEIU United Healthcare Workers - West has built and sustained mature, constructive employer relationships that enhance healthcare workers' rights, improve the quality of care, allow us to build a stronger union, and achieve improved standards including a greater voice on the job; and

WHEREAS: The Service Employees International Union is in the process of negotiating employer agreements that may hinder healthcare workers from advocating effectively on behalf of the people they serve, significantly limit the scope of healthcare workers' collective bargaining rights, and frustrate healthcare workers' rights to participate in negotiations and vote on agreements that affect them;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: In order to build a powerful movement that unites healthcare workers in SEIU through organizing the unorganized, enables healthcare workers to improve conditions for themselves and the people they serve, and enhances rank-and-file leadership in determining the direction of our union, we endorse the following principles and demand that they be embodied by clearly defined contractual standards in any employer agreement negotiated by the Service Employees International Union:

1. Improving Patient/Resident/Consumer Care

Healthcare workers' ability to make their voices heard on matters of patient/resident/consumer care is essential and must be furthered, not frustrated, by any employer agreement. While employer agreements require mutually respectful and constructive means for resolving differences, the union must not be constrained from raising patient/resident/consumer care concerns at the worksite or in the public arena, or from engaging in public advocacy on matters where the union and employers disagree.

2. Union Democracy

The current rank-and-file members of the union must have a seat at the bargaining table and the final vote to ratify any employer agreement that involves their employers. Union members must also be fully apprised of developments in negotiating any employer alliance agreement and fully informed of the terms and conditions of any proposed agreement. We must embrace and advance workplace democracy.

3. Full Collective Bargaining Rights

Any agreement that limits the scope of healthcare workers' collective bargaining rights must be explicitly temporary. Such an agreement should not exceed four years in duration, after which healthcare workers must enjoy full collective bargaining rights, including the right to engage in collective, concerted action.

TO SEIU INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

We, the undersigned members of SEIU-UHW, believe the following to be basic principles for any employer agreement.

We call upon the SEIU International Executive Board to require that any employer agreement with SEIU include the following:

1 | A VOICE FOR QUALITY CARE

We must be able to advocate effectively for our patients, residents and consumers.

2 | UNION DEMOCRACY

We must have a seat at the bargaining table and the final vote on any employer agreement that affects us.

3 | FULL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS

New members should not be locked permanently into substandard contracts without a voice, a vote and the right to engage in concerted collective action.

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PARA LA JUNTA EJECUTIVA INTERNACIONAL DE SEIU

Nosotros, los abajo firmantes, miembros de SEIU-UHW, creemos que los principios siguientes son básicos para cualquier acuerdo con los empleadores.

Pedimos a la Junta Ejecutiva Internacional de SEIU que exija que todos los acuerdos de los empleadores con SEIU incluyan los siguientes puntos:

1 | UNA VOZ POR LOS CUIDADOS DE CALIDAD

Debemos tener la capacidad de defender con Efectividad los intereses de nuestros pacientes, residentes y consumidores.

2 | DEMOCRACIA SINDICAL

Debemos tener un lugar en la mesa negociadora y el voto final sobre cualquier acuerdo con los empleadores que nos afecte.

3 | PLENOS DERECHOS DE NEGOCIACIÓN COLECTIVA

Los nuevos afiliados no deben quedarse encerrados para siempre en convenios de calidad inferior, sin voz ni voto y sin derecho a tomar acciones colectivas concertadas.

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OUR VOICE MATTERS

We strive to make our Union – SEIU United Healthcare Workers West (UHW) – a model of union democracy based on worksite organization, transparent decision-making, and the involvement of worksite leaders. As California's largest union, we have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect our work and those we care for is fundamental. Some in SEIU currently are negotiating an agreement with nursing home employers – in California and nationally – and have repeatedly excluded UHW members and elected leaders from the process. These agreements would restrict members' voice on the job and be implemented without affected members even having the right to vote.

A recent development with SEIU, our national affiliate, suggests that this may be in jeopardy.



“ Having a voice to me means being able to sit across the table from my employer and advocate for what our patients need. It means telling hospital managers when we're short staffed and actually getting those problems fixed. It means being respected, being taken seriously and having the power to create change. ”

*Martha Vazquez, Radiology Technologist
St. Joseph's Medical Center, Stockton*

In response to these developments and to ensure they aren't repeated, we in UHW have proposed to SEIU that 3 Core Principles be part of any agreement with an employer:

1

A VOICE FOR QUALITY CARE

We must be able to advocate effectively for our patients, residents and consumers.

2

UNION DEMOCRACY

We must have a seat at the bargaining table and the final vote on any employer agreement that affects us.

3

FULL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS

New members should not be locked permanently into substandard contracts without a voice, a vote and the right to engage in concerted collective action.

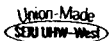
Please make your voice heard!

Talk to your steward or rep to sign a petition
Attend a membership meeting to discuss these issues further.

“ We as healthcare workers need to have a voice, and we need to have the right to vote on any contract or alliance agreement that affects us. Today SEIU is bargaining with my employer without any representation from UHW. *It's just not right.* ”



Patrick Forte, CNA
Diamond Ridge Healthcare Center, Pittsburg



Discussion Outline

Worksite Steward Council & Membership Meetings

Introduction

- Recent developments with SEIU regarding the renegotiation of an agreement with nursing home employers suggest that our fundamental principles may be in jeopardy. This includes things like a voice for quality care, union democracy, and full collective bargaining rights.

Q: Has anyone heard about the offer to make care within SEIU? What have you heard?

- Today we are going to talk about these issues, our proposal to SEIU to ensure that our core principles are part of any agreement with an employer, and a plan to make our voice heard in this important debate.
- If members have questions on what SEIU is:
 - SEIU is our national affiliate -- an umbrella organization made up of over 100 local unions, including UHW. SEIU has over 1.8 million members in North America that are employed in health care, property services, and the public sector.
 - UHW is the second largest local union in SEIU. We have over 150,000 members.

Discuss the Issues

- We strive to make our Union -- SEIU United Healthcare Workers West (UHW)-- a model of union democracy based on worksite organization, transparent decision-making, and the active involvement of worksite leaders. As caregivers, having a meaningful voice in decisions that impact our work and those we care for is fundamental.

Q: What do these things mean to you? What are ways you've exercised voice on the job? In areas of your work that impact quality of care? How have you and your co-workers been involved in collective bargaining?

- Some in SEIU are negotiating an agreement with nursing home employers-- in California and nationally -- and have repeatedly excluded UHW members and elected officers from the process. These agreements could restrict members' voice on the job, hinder our ability to effectively advocate for the people we care for, and may be implemented without affected members even having the right to vote.

Q: Comments? Questions? What are the concerns of you and your co-workers and the level of participation in the union? Are you all satisfied? How would you feel if the work was like...?

What Do These Issues Mean To You?

Q: What impact do you see these agreements having on you and your co-workers?

Principles for Employer Agreements

- In response to these developments and to ensure they aren't repeated, we in UHW have proposed to SEIU that 3 Core Principles be part of any agreement with an employer:

1. A Voice for Quality Care

We must be able to advocate effectively for our patients, residents and consumers.

2. Union Democracy

We must have a seat at the bargaining table and the final vote on any agreement with an employer that affects us.

3. Full Collective Bargaining Rights

New members should not be locked permanently into substandard contracts without a voice, a vote and the right to engage in concerted collective action.

In some cases, first contracts do not meet all the standards that our members enjoy in contracts with a long history of collective bargaining. Negotiating a first contract is like building a house -- we must lay the foundation before we put on the roof. We believe first contracts are the start of the process. Members must be permitted to fight for all the standards we enjoy in subsequent contract negotiations.

Comments/Questions

Next Steps

- SEIU will be making key decisions in the coming months. We need to influence the path SEIU takes.
- Our elected Executive Board passed a resolution affirming the principles and adopted an outreach plan to make our voice heard. We are:
 - discussing this issue at every worksite steward council meeting and membership meeting;
 - voting on a resolution at our worksite steward council meetings; and
 - asking our co-workers to sign a petition.

Comments/Questions

- Resolution: review, discuss, and vote.
- Petition: review and discuss plans for circulating the petition.
- Role plays, if time permits:
 - Working in pairs, practice talking to your co-workers about these issues and asking them to sign the petition.
 - Debrief role plays. What worked? What would you do differently?
 - Wrap up: What additional questions do you have? Summarize key points and next steps.