

TO: Madison Labor Community

From: SEIU Healthcare WI Meriter RN Bargaining Committee

RE: Latest updates on our fight for a fair contract at Meriter Hospital

We are writing on behalf of our Registered Nurse colleagues at UnityPoint-Meriter Hospital who are members of SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin.

We want to share the latest updates in our fight to win a contract agreement that helps nurses heal and therefore better serve our patients after a very difficult year. Our goal is to win a contract that ensures nurses can take care of ourselves, heal and recover after a traumatic year and be valued and respected for our essential work.

**We're proud of the way that nurses showed up for our community during this pandemic. Now, we're asking that you show up for us (ACTION STEPS BELOW).**

Yesterday, March 13th, Meriter nurses formally notified our employer and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service that we are prepared to strike beginning March 24.

Our Bargaining Committee remains hopeful that — with the help of the federal mediator — we can reach a fair agreement without a strike. But we are united in our commitment to taking collective action if necessary. Most of the issues where UnityPoint-Meriter and nurses are still far apart are related to our need to take care of ourselves, and be valued and respected:

- **Sufficient paid time off** that does not force RNs to use vacation days when we need sick days and allows nurses time to rest and recover;
- **Just compensation** for RNs who give up time with our families to pick up extra shifts on their days off, which would mitigate staffing and scheduling problems;
- **Fair across the board raises**
- **A meaningful voice in decisions and protections** in this pandemic and any future public health emergencies.

**This is a critical moment for Meriter nurses -- and we need your support. Here are ways you can help:**

- Share this letter with your friends and family
- [Sign the pledge](#) that you will stand in solidarity and not cross the picket line
- Share our fight with other Madison RNs help us ask them to pledge to respect our picket line: [bit.ly/SupportMeriterRNs](https://bit.ly/SupportMeriterRNs)
- Share the pledge on Facebook

- Write a letter of support for Meriter RNs on behalf of your union or organization, showing why you value and stand with nurses and pledging not to cross the picket line (email to [info@seiuhcwi.org](mailto:info@seiuhcwi.org))
- **Tweet your support! Here's some sample tweets:**

*Meriter nurses may strike and need our support. #HealthcareHeroesUnited  
#MadisonValuesNurses Sign now: [Link](#)*

*I stand with UnityPoint Health-Meriter Nurses! Meriter - give your nurses time off to care for themselves as they recover from COVID-19. #HealthcareHeroesUnited #MadisonValuesNurses*

*UnityPoint Health-Meriter RNs are preparing to strike for respect, protections and support, and time to heal. I support Madison RNs fighting for a fair contract. #HealthcareHeroesUnited #MadisonValuesNurses*

*Throughout COVID-19 we've called nurses heroes. Let's treat them like heroes. I stand with UnityPoint Health-Meriter Hospital nurses. #HealthcareHeroesUnited #MadisonValuesNurses*

We are grateful for the support we are getting from working people across the Madison community. We are all in this together. Our fight will help our city build a stronger healthcare workforce that meets the needs of working families throughout this community.

In Solidarity,  
Kayla Gehin, RN in the NICU at Meriter  
Member of the Bargaining Committee