

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, February 6, 2023
Media Contact: CareGiversComms@Gmail.com

BREAKING: 22,000 HEALTHCARE WORKERS AT AMERICA'S LARGEST HOSPITAL CORPORATION KICK OFF NATIONWIDE CONTRACT BARGAINING SPANNING FIVE STATES

In somber first negotiation session with HCA Healthcare, hospital workers hold moment of silence, bring photographs of frontline coworkers who died while caring for patients without adequate PPE from the industry giant

Los Angeles, CA - Nationwide contract negotiations for union contracts covering 22,000 frontline HCA Healthcare workers in 30 major hospitals spanning five states as workers decry dangerously low staffing levels at HCA hospitals.

“As we open contract negotiations, we honor the memories of our union family, particularly Rosa Luna, Sally Lara, and Sylvia Morton, who needlessly lost their lives while caring for patients during the pandemic in hospitals where HCA failed to keep us and our patients safe,” said Fernando Perez, a phlebotomist represented by SEIU UHW-West. “HCA is the largest hospital corporation in America, yet HCA pays poverty wages as low as \$12.50 an hour in some states and retaliates against workers when we speak out against low staffing and unsafe conditions they’ve created for the patients we promised to protect. We’re fighting for a contract that honors those lost and makes HCA finally live up to its responsibilities to patients and workers as a hospital industry leader.”

Contracts for SEIU members across five states (California, Nevada, Texas, Kansas, and Florida) are up for negotiation in the coming months. HCA workers have been calling out HCA’s unsafe staffing levels — which [lag national averages by 30%](#) — and [poverty pay so low that it left ‘frontline heroes’ facing housing insecurity](#) as they risked their lives battling a global pandemic.

SEIU United Healthcare Workers West (UHW) in California is the first local union to begin negotiations this year, with additional SEIU locals in Florida, Nevada, Missouri, Texas, and California preparing to hit the bargaining table in the coming weeks and months. Mass contract expirations for tens of thousands of HCA Healthcare workers this year could have serious impacts on operational capacities at the industry giant

already stretched to crisis levels by short staffing, but workers warn HCA's failure to adequately address patient safety concerns could force them to take major nationwide strike action to achieve lasting reforms.

"This year, 22,000 of my fellow healthcare workers will bargain for new contracts with HCA to demand better staffing, protections, and other improvements we need to safely and properly take care of our patients," said Stacey White, a speech pathologist and member of 1199SEIU Florida. "As caregivers and union members standing together, we've made it our responsibility to hold HCA accountable for the care their facilities offer and jobs they support in our communities. We will not sit back and let this giant corporation continue to put profits over patients."

Last month, all six SEIU locals whose HCA contracts expire this year converged at HCA hospital in West Hills, California, for their [first ever multi-state national action](#) - a major escalation from previous years and a sign of the more urgent worker-driven "post-pandemic" demand for change as the company remains [mired in controversy](#) and faces [a Congressional call for investigation](#) into alleged Medicare fraud.

HCA workers are demanding transformative new standards for patients and workers alike, including an end to HCA's lagging staffing levels - a key indicator of patient care outcomes - and a minimum wage as high as \$25/hour for hospital workers in some locations.

The SEIU local unions negotiating this year with HCA are SEIU 1199 United Healthcare Workers East (at HCA hospitals in Florida), SEIU Nevada, SEIU Texas, SEIU United Healthcare Workers West and SEIU 121RN (at HCA hospitals in California), and SEIU Healthcare Illinois Indiana Missouri/Kansas (at one HCA hospital in Kansas).



In memoriam photographs of three fallen SEIU UHW members who lost their lives caring for patients while working for HCA Healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic, displayed in contract negotiations with the employer.

####

ABOUT SEIU HEALTHCARE

More than one million healthcare workers across hospitals, home care, and in nursing homes are united in SEIU, the nation's largest union of healthcare workers. SEIU is an organization of nearly 2 million members united by a belief in the dignity and worth of workers and the services they provide. SEIU is dedicated to improving the lives of workers, families, and communities to create a more just and humane society.

For more information, visit: <https://www.seiu.org>