



# UNION NURSE



NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE-TEXAS • NATIONAL NURSES UNITED  
FEBRUARY 2013

## JUST CAUSE AND THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING BRINGS THESE BILL OF RIGHTS PROVISIONS—PRESUMED INNOCENT, DUE PROCESS AND REPRESENTATION—TO THE NURSES’ WORKPLACE

“Just cause” protection backed up by the grievance procedure is written into NNOC union contracts (HCA-affiliates see Articles 22 and 23, Tenet see Articles 9 and 10 or your tentative agreements that are in effect). This means that any discipline must be for a good and fair reason, the hospital must prove that the nurse is guilty of what she is accused of, and the punishment must fit the crime. Without a “just cause” union contract, RNs (as well as other workers) are “at will” employees, subject on a whim to discipline and discharge. The grievance procedure ensures that RNs receive representation and due process rights not only when faced with discipline but on all disputes and unresolved issues with management.

*It is up to each member to know their rights and use them when necessary.*

## SIERRA MEDICAL CENTER NURSES JOIN THOUSANDS OF OTHER TENET NURSES in NNOC

In a 60% “Yes” vote, Sierra nurses in El Paso gained collective bargaining and union representation rights, linking forces with three other NNOC-El Paso hospitals. This was the Sierra nurses’ second election; the first was marred by company violations and a rerun was ordered by the labor board. Persistence pays off, and Sierra nurses will begin contract negotiations shortly. **The organizing committee will meet on February 21—5 pm and 8 pm—at the Hilton Garden Inn to get the ball rolling.**

Earlier in February, Tenet nurses from Texas, Florida, Missouri, and California, meeting in Houston, created the first-ever National Bargaining Council of Tenet nurses and adopted a set of strong principles of unity. All three Texas Tenet facilities will be in contract negotiations this year, including the contract renewal at Cypress Fairbanks in Houston. Tenet nurses rallied at CyFair just to make the point that collective bargaining is a RN right as well as a human right.



*Some of the new founding members of the NNOC at Sierra with their membership cards, on election night.*



*Collective Bargaining is an RN Right, at CyFair.*



*Nurses from El Paso at the Houston meeting.*



*The Houston delegation of nurses.*

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## TEXAS ROUND-UP



Providence MC Facility Bargaining Committee meets after discussing the NNOC with Sierra nurses.



At an El Paso NNOC leadership meeting, union and metro nurses discuss how to best use the staffing language in their contracts. **Left to right:** Tess Earnest, Monique Aguirre (DS), Carmen Acevedo (LP), and Laura Sanchez (LP).



Corpus Christi MC nurses with community allies demonstrate for the Robin Hood Tax on financial speculation at US Representative Farenthold's office.



The Providence Negotiating Committee ready to present to management hundreds of RNs' signatures in support of NNOC's bargaining goals.



NNOC reps on the staffing committee at Las Palmas MC preparing their proposals for the staffing committee meeting. **Left to right:** Enriqueta Triana, Ann James, Juan Anchondo, and Lucia Adams.

Cypress Fairbanks PPC calls for a full review of staffing matrices and practices in anticipation of contract negotiations. Nurse reps report that significant progress is being made in the Level 1 Nursery on transitioning and staffing.

The union PPC at Valley Regional MC arrived at three important agreements with their nurse management—for a “free charge” in ICU, continued self-scheduling with fewer weekend shifts also in ICU, and an end to strict management oversight of hourly rounding.

## DEADLINES FOR RN ACTIONS

- **PPC review of all matrices should be close to completion by now.** All matrices need to be categorized as review, monitor, or adjust. Proposals for necessary adjustments should be prepared for presentation to the contract staffing committee in **the next two months.**
- **Save the Date—April 25—NEXT NNOC-TEXAS STATE MEETING:** in El Paso. Each facility union sends three delegates and each metro committee sends two delegates—those in El Paso can send more. Any suggestions or recommendations for the state meeting must be received in the Austin office by **April 11.**
- **Safe patient handling and RN-to-Patient ratio legislation:** We can move these two bills forward if enough nurses and allies personally contact your state reps. Results of these contacts will be tallied and more plans made on **April 25.**

### MARCH MEETING DATES

- Corpus Christi MC:** March 12 • Leadership Council and membership meeting
- Cypress Fairbanks MC:** March 12 • Leadership Council | March 29 • PPC
- Del Sol MC:** March 6 • PPC | March 13 • Leadership Council
- Las Palmas MC:** March 12 • PPC | March 19 Leadership Council
- Providence Memorial:** February 28 • FBC | March 27 • Membership meeting
- Sierra MC:** February 21 • Organizing Committee | February 27 • First FBC/NR training

### SOME TEXAS HISTORY TO KNOW

WHO WAS HUMBERTO SILEX AND WHY DID HE FACE DEPORTATION?