

# Collective Bargaining Update for March 22, 2022



On Tuesday, March 22, bargaining teams for CGH Medical Center (CGHMC) and AFSCME, Council 31, met again to bargain over terms and conditions of employment for some CGHMC employees.

## Bargaining Continues at a Slow Pace: Teams Discuss Discipline, Safety and Security

During last Tuesday's bargaining session with AFSCME, we revisited our desire to allow EMTs to work 24-hour shifts – a change that is widely favored.

Unfortunately, CGHMC's team *again* had to explain how PTO accrual and use for EMTs on 24-hour shifts would work. After going through this again in exhaustive detail, the union requested that we document – in writing – how it would work so the union can, once again, discuss it with EMTs.

We also had a lengthy discussion about our recent proposal on discipline. The union's representative noted he opposed "laundry lists" of serious offenses because they could limit an arbitrator's ability to consider unique circumstances. The union's representative offered, as an example, the possibility that one employee could be "*provoked*" into threatening another employee with harm.

CGHMC believes in protecting all employees from violence and threats of violence in the workplace, even from co-workers, whether provoked or not. The union's representative disagreed, so this item remains open and unresolved.

### AFSCME Leaders Continue to Treat CGHMC Like a Prison, Not a Hospital

A common challenge for all hospitals is the need to closely monitor patients who might be at increased risk for self-harm (suicidal ideation, fall risk, etc.). One-on-one monitoring of such patients, while difficult and costly, is sometimes required in order to best protect at-risk patients from accidents and self-harm.

While we continue to try to explain why the standard of care requires at-risk patients sometimes receive one-on-one coverage, union representatives reject these medical decisions and, instead, demand that the contract require all at-risk patients be watched via electronic monitoring (*via cameras - like some jail guards monitor prisoners*).



**While the union doesn't understand *at-risk patients* or the need for their care to be a medical decision for medical professionals, union representatives also feel strongly about metal detectors and armed guards.**

That's right! AFSCME also demands we put healthcare professionals and patients through prison-style metal detectors and post armed guards to watch them. AFSCME may represent guards, but this is not a state prison.

**As with proposals regarding low census, floating, and the use of external agency, AFSCME representatives appear to be struggling to understand how we do things in healthcare.**

As we have since September 2021 (6 months), we continue to bargain in good faith, in an effort to find common ground with AFSCME leaders.