



## King County

### **Dow Constantine**

King County Executive

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June 21, 2023

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove  
Chair, King County Council  
Room 1200  
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

This letter transmits a proposed Ordinance that would, if enacted, ratify a negotiated collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA) covering staff nurses in the Departments of Public Health and Adult and Juvenile Detention bargaining unit for the contractual period of January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2024.

Adoption of this proposed Ordinance will enable King County to provide bargained for wages, hours, and working conditions to employees who provide nursing care services in our community.

The negotiated CBA covers approximately 229 staff nurse positions, including the following classifications: Advanced Practice Nurse Specialist, Advanced Practice Nurse Specialist – Jail, Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner, Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner – Jail, Licensed Practical Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse – Jail, Psychiatric Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner, Psychiatric Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner – Jail, Public Health Nurse, Public Health Nurse – Jail, Public Health Nurse – Juvenile, Registered Nurse, Registered Nurse – Jail, Registered Nurse – Juvenile.

The King County Departments of Public Health and Adult and Juvenile Detention nurses perform a wide variety of nursing services and patient care. For example, Public Health nurses provide care coordination, education, screening, assessment, and referrals for pregnant and parenting individuals, infants, and young children. Registered Nurses (RNs) work in the ambulatory care setting, providing health care services in public health clinics and in our jail facilities. Our Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners provide direct clinical services such as screening, assessment, diagnosis, and prescriptions to pediatric, adolescent, and adult patients throughout King County in public health clinics, jails, and school-based health centers, and through mobile outreach.

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The negotiated CBA was reached pursuant to good faith negotiations and collective bargaining between King County and the WSNA and has been ratified by the bargaining unit.

The terms and conditions of the negotiated Agreement adopts several provisions and standards from the Coalition Labor Agreement (CLA), including provisions related to donated leave, deferred compensation, and sick leave cash-out on retirement. New provisions related to scheduling will enable Public Health's Community Health Services Division to respond to emergent staffing needs through an expanded shared staffing agreement. The Jail Health Services Division (JHS) will benefit from the implementation of a relief nurse pilot program, equitable access to continuing education benefits, and stabilization of the shift selection process.

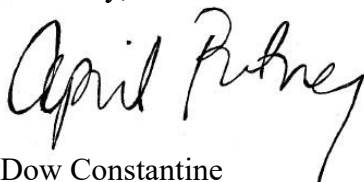
The general wage increases (GWI) for the negotiated WSNA Staff Unit CBA are the same as those negotiated for the CLA. The January 1, 2023 and January 1, 2024 changes are each four percent. In addition to the GWI, the Registered Nurse wage scale will be brought into alignment with the Public Health Nurse wage scale prospectively upon ratification of the agreement by both the Union and the County. This change is based on matters concerning internal equity, such as pay grade equity between internal classifications in the bargaining unit, and is responsive to market wage changes in the profession. This wage parity is designed to address the critical RN vacancy rate, which is approximately 30 percent within Jail Health Services. A \$1,000 bonus is paid to members of the bargaining unit who do not receive the RN parity increase based on certain eligibility requirements. Currently, JHS fills vacancies using agency RNs at an inflated hourly rate.

A complete breakdown of the costs associated with this agreement can be found in the accompanying fiscal note, which has been reviewed by the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget. The 2023-2024 Biennial Budget included a GWI assumption of four percent each year, however, additional funding will be requested to implement terms of the agreement that were not anticipated in the budget, such as the RN wage parity increase. A proposed budget supplemental Ordinance is transmitted concurrently with this agreement.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance. This important legislation will ratify the negotiated CBA, which provides standardized working conditions and the competitive wages that are necessary to recruit and retain the qualified employees needed to further the nursing-related services provided by the County.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Megan Pedersen, Director, Office of Labor Relations, at 206-263-2898.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove

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King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Shannon Braddock, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Karan Gill, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Mina Hashemi, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget

Megan Pedersen, Director, Office of Labor Relations