



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

206-263-9600 Fax 206-296-0194
TTY Relay: 711
www.kingcounty.gov

February 18, 2021

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

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

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 & Juvenile Detention bargaining unit for the contractual period of *January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2022*. 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 351 staff nurse positions, including the following classifications: Public Health Nurse, Registered Nurse, Advance Practice Nurse Practitioner, Advance Practice Nurse Specialist, and Licensed Practical Nurse. Nursing positions are located across three divisions of Seattle-King County Public Health, and the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention.

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.

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

The terms and conditions of the negotiated CBA align with the WSNA Supervisor and Managers CBA and adopts a number of provisions and standards from the Master Labor Agreement (MLA). The notable changes to the CBA include improving the process to change nurse work schedules in clinic programs, adult correctional facilities, and juvenile detention, including greater flexibility when scheduling evening and weekend work.

The CBA advances equity and social justice interests by eliminating seniority as the sole factor in transfer selection and provides new management tools for how staff positions are filled, whether by transfer or hiring. The layoff provision was updated to increase administrative efficiency when processing layoffs and eliminates potential staffing/program disruptions caused by employee bumping from one Public Health division to another on the basis of seniority. Finally, the grievance procedure has also been updated to clarify what information the union must provide when filing a grievance, standardizes grievance step timelines to align with the MLA, and eliminates the ability for grievances of verbal and written reprimands to go beyond step-3 to arbitration.

The general wage increases for the negotiated WSNA Staff Unit CBA are the same as the WSNA Supervisor Unit, and generally correspond to the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue. The June 2019 to June 2020 CPI-W change was 1.01 percent, which informed the 2021 wage adjustment of 1 percent, and the projection for June 2020 to June 2021 CPI-W is (2.36 percent), which informed the 2022 wage adjustment of 2 percent.

Adoption of this proposed ordinance, which will ratify the negotiated CBA, advances the King County Strategic Plan's guiding principles and goals of efficient, accountable regional and local government by increasing management flexibility in providing and modifying nurse work schedules, including terms for evening and weekend coverage. Employment terms of this CBA are designed to continue to develop a highly engaged, diverse, culturally responsive, and high performing workforce. The CBA will advance the Strategic Plan goal of improving the health and well-being of people in our community by ensuring vulnerable and at-risk populations in our community continue to receive nursing care and services.

A supplemental budget authority request is necessary for this CBA and will be transmitted at the same time as this proposed legislation. 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.

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.

The Honorable Claudia Balducci

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

Sincerely,



for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Shannon Braddock, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Karan Gill, Director, Council Relations, Office of the Executive

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

Megan Pedersen, Director, Office of Labor Relations