



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 9, 2025

Contact:

Hilary Crowley, Public Information Officer
(209) 468-2997 / hcrowley@sigov.org

San Joaquin County Provides an Update on Labor Negotiations with the California Nurses Association

Stockton, CA – On January 7, 2025 the California Nurses Association (CNA) issued the County a Notice of Intent to Strike on January 17, 2025. CNA represents approximately 888 registered nurse employees who work at San Joaquin General Hospital, Public Health Services, Correctional Health Services, Behavioral Health Services, Emergency Medical Services, and SJ Health Clinics.

San Joaquin County and CNA began bargaining a successor Memorandum of Understanding on March 14, 2024, have met a total of 18 times and reached ten tentative agreements, but have been unable to reach a compromise that would be both reasonable and fiscally responsible. The County is always mindful of its responsibilities to the taxpayers; any agreement that is reached with CNA must be viable in the long term. CNA rejected the County’s December 18, 2024 offer. The County is scheduled to present a counter proposal on January 16, 2025 to CNA, the County is hopeful the additional movement will result in additional tentative agreements. The County will do its best to mitigate any hardships the strike may cause San Joaquin County residents.

“The County has spent many months crafting several proposals that reflect the deep value we place on the work of our dedicated County nurses, while balancing the economic realities of operating a county-run hospital,” said Paul Canepa, Chair of the Board of Supervisors. “Our goal is a multi-year contract that is both fair and fiscally sustainable ensuring that we are able to provide quality care to all of our residents, regardless of their ability to pay.”

This table provides details on the current status of negotiations:

Summary of CNA Economic Requests and County's Economic Proposals	
December 18, 2024 CNA Proposal	December 13, 2024 County Proposal
Term: 27 Months	Term: 36 Months
Base Wage Increases Totaling 19%	Base Wage Increases: Inpatient Nurses at SJGH up to 14% All other nurses 9%
Expanding Holiday Pay Accrual Rates	Maintain current benefits of 14 Paid holidays
Expanding Floating Holiday Accrual Rate	Maintain current Floating Holiday accrual rate
Increase to Extra Shift Premium by \$15.00/hr.	Increase to Extra Shift Premium by \$5.00/hr.
Bilingual Pay	-
Increase to Longevity Pay	Maintain Current Longevity Pay
Increases to Several Other Supplemental Pays	Increase to Charge Pay and Preceptor (Trainer) Pay by \$1/hr.
Total Cost to County \$ 76.7 million	Total Cost to County \$52.8 million

What is the current base wage being asked for by CNA and offered by the County?

- The request from CNA is for a 19% cost-of-living increase over a 27-month agreement.
- The County is offering a 14% cost-of-living increase with an initial wage increase of 10% for most SJGH inpatient nurses and a 9% cost-of-living increase with an initial 5% wage increase for all other nursing classifications over a 36-month agreement (the 10% & 5% base salary increases would be effective the first pay period following adoption, with the additional 2% effective one year (26 pay periods) after the first increase, and the final 2% increase following another 26 pay periods).

What does an average experienced nurse make in a year?

The average experienced inpatient nurse at SJGH makes \$163,105 annually, not including overtime compensation. The value of County paid benefits like health care and pension equal \$111,386 for a total cost of an experienced nurse of \$274,491 annually.

What is the total cost of the CNA proposal versus the County proposal to taxpayers, over the life of the contract?

In May 2024, the cost of CNA's initial proposals totaled nearly \$457 million over a 44-month term. Given that SJGH's annual operating budget is approximately \$515 million, the initial proposal was not fiscally sustainable for SJGH and the County.

CNA's most recent proposal will cost the County an estimated \$76.7 million over the proposed 27-month period. In contrast, CNA's current proposal is nearly triple the amount of the last contract. The County's proposed enhancements which were rejected by CNA would have an overall County cost of \$52.8 million over 36 months.

What did CNA receive in the last negotiated agreement?

The term of the last negotiated agreement was from April 2021 to April 2023 in which CNA received an 8% wage increase for all nurses, an additional 6% increase for specified nursing classes, and an additional 4-6% increase for other nursing classes. This agreement was extended through April 2024 with all nurses receiving an additional 8.5% increase.

What happens next?

The County will continue to bargain in good faith with CNA and is scheduled to meet for the 19th bargaining session on January 16, 2025. The County is hopeful that a reasonable and sustainable compromise can be reached. In the meantime, the County will make all efforts to ensure continued health care services to the residents of San Joaquin County.

Additional Background

SJGH is a public hospital with roughly 65% of its patients on Medicare or Medi-Cal. County health care services should not be affected during the strike.

###