



Calling a strike is the ultimate show of strength in a union's ability to effectively change its workplace. A unified, committed group of people standing together can address workplace issues, change communities by insisting on better health care standards of staffing and solidify the union's voice in the workplace.

The way this works is for everyone to be involved. No one crosses the picket line. Everyone takes a shift to walk and carry a picket sign. When a call goes out for hands needed, you volunteer.

But you already know how this works. Your willingness to wear red consistently and be a visible support for yourselves as the union has paid off huge dividends. Your attendance at the BATS meetings, the time you took to print off emails and share them with co-workers – it's the same work you've already been doing, just on a much larger scale.

This isn't some action being controlled by our national union. It is PECSH that voted for the strike authorization by a 91% majority. It is PECSH who reviewed Management's proposal and turned it down firmly. And, it will be PECSH that stands united for a fair and just contract.

So, here's what you need to know to be part of the team.



When is the strike?

The strike will begin at 7am on Monday, November 22 and conclude at 7am on Wednesday, November 24.

What happens the first morning of our strike?

On the night shift, you report off to a manager or another reasonably skilled professional. The hospital is responsible for providing care. As a professional, you must use your best judgment as to whether or not such care is available. More on this will be covered at the information meetings.

If you are required to clock in for a day shift that begins regularly before the time the strike begins, you should report to work and then leave at 7am on November 22, 2010.

If you are on the schedule for the day shift that begins at the same time as the strike, report directly to the picket line. You do not need to call in. MNA will confirm the start of the strike with management.

The first morning of the strike, all members should report to the strike headquarters to support their colleagues coming out of the facility. There will be a major rally with media coverage showing your strength and solidarity.

Is everyone expected to walk the picket line?

How do we walk the picket line?

Yes. High visibility and large numbers on the picket line will show Sparrow that we are serious. PECOSH members will sign up for 2-hour minimum shifts. During the information meetings, you will be given more information on where to meet, etc. Plan to wear red. Picketers must keep moving and stay on the sidewalk in front of Sparrow, which is public property. Don't block the flow of traffic or patients! There will be a picket captain on each shift who is in charge – direct any questions to him or her. Please do not talk to any media or anyone you don't know! Refer any questions to the picket captain.

Do I have access to my health insurance benefits?

No. Sparrow has a legal obligation to provide you with a COBRA notice which will explain when your insurance coverage ends and how much you would need to pay in order to continue your coverage. You will have 60 days to elect whether you want to make

the COBRA payments after the insurance has stopped. If you make the election and send your payment in before the 60 days is up, then it is retroactive back to day one of the strike or whenever Sparrow stopped the coverage. If the strike is short-term and nothing happens medically, you won't have to elect to take the COBRA coverage.

Can I lose my job?

The Hospital may not fire you for engaging in a strike. In addition, this strike was caused in part by the Hospital's conduct which PECOSH/MNA believes constitute unfair labor practices. If the National Labor Relations Board agrees, this would preclude the employer from permanently replacing striking employees. NOTE: An Unfair Labor Practice charge against Sparrow Hospital was filed with the National Labor Relations Board on Monday, November 8. For more details, link to <http://www.minurses.org/news-and-events/p/openItem/5050>.

Could negotiations continue?

Absolutely. The negotiating team will be available throughout the strike for negotiations.

Do probationary, per diem and PRN employees have a right to strike?

Yes. It would be a violation of the National Labor Relations Act for the Employer to discriminate or retaliate against any employee who exercises their right to strike.

Where should I park?

You can park in the side streets near the strike headquarters. Do not park in Sparrow's parking lots!

Will we get locked out?

There is that possibility, but members should plan on returning to work at their next scheduled shift starting on or after 7am, November 24, 2010.

What's the difference between an economic strike and an unfair labor practice strike?

An economic strike is a term used by the National Labor Relations Board as a designation for any strike not caused or prolonged by unfair labor practices of the employer. The implication is that it is a strike to enforce economic demands.

MNA believes the NLRB will designate this strike as an Unfair Labor Practice strike. These strikes have the greatest deal of protection extended to them. An unfair labor practice strike is one caused or prolonged, in whole or in part, by unfair labor practices of the employer. Participants in such strikes are entitled to

reinstatement of their jobs upon an unconditional request to return to work, even though it may be necessary to discharge replacements to make room for them. Back pay can be awarded from the time of an unconditional request for reinstatement if the Employer fails to return you to work.

More information from the press release about the ULP charge

UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICE CHARGE FILED AGAINST SPARROW HOSPITAL

Monday, November 8

Lansing – An Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge against Sparrow Hospital has been filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The charge, submitted by the Michigan Nurses Association (MNA), presents evidence that Sparrow Hospital restrained, coerced and interfered with its employees in the exercise of their Section 7 rights of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to join, form or assist a labor organization. In addition, the charge states that Sparrow has failed and refused to bargain in good faith with the MNA. MNA is the collective bargaining representative for the Professional Employees Council of Sparrow Hospital (PECSH), which represents the health care professionals employed by the Hospital.

The charge covers numerous reported incidents of misinformation being shared by managers with PECSH members in an attempt to make the members vote for the Employer's proposals. In some cases, the Employer submitted proposals to the PECSH membership before supplying the proposal to the PECSH bargaining team. Overall, the charge states, the Employer has engaged in surface bargaining by making very little movement from its initial proposals submitted on August 26, requesting drastic concessions, and otherwise showing no intent to reach an agreement in good faith.