



Frequently Asked Questions about Catholic Health, Its Affiliates and the Unions

The Unions that represent workers in the Catholic Health system have been working jointly on a number of issues. One of our primary goals is to have one contract covering all Union employees within Catholic Health with one high standard of wages, benefits and working conditions. The Unions wanted to try and answer some of the most frequently asked questions regarding this issue.

1. Who is Catholic Health? Is Catholic Health my Employer?

Catholic Health was formed in 1998 when several religious orders and the Diocese of Buffalo affiliated their healthcare facilities into what was then known as the Catholic Health System. Catholic Health includes many hospitals, primary care centers and skilled nursing facilities.

While Catholic Health has the final say over what happens in the facilities, especially in contract negotiations, they are not the Employer of most employees. If you work in one of the hospitals, Kenmore Mercy Hospital let's say, Kenmore Mercy Hospital is still your Employer.

2. Which Catholic Health employees are represented by a Union? Who are those Unions? When does my contract with my Employer expire?

Many employees that work in the Catholic Health system are represented by a Union. The Unions that represent employees in Catholic Health include 1199/SEIU, the Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO (CWA), the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). Below is a chart that includes the bargaining unit, where the unit is located and when the contract expires.

Employer	Bargaining Unit	Contract Expiration
UFCW - Kenmore Merch Hospital	Service	July 21, 2015
CWA - Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus	Registered Nurse	August 31, 2015
CWA- Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus	Service	August 15, 2018
CWA - Kenmore Mercy Hospital	Technical	November 30, 2015
CWA - Mercy Hospital of Buffalo	Registered Nurse	June 3, 2016
CWA - Mercy Hospital of Buffalo	Technical Service Clerical	June 3, 2016
CWA - Kenmore Mercy Hospital	Registered Nurse	January 31, 2017

IUOE - Mercy Hospital of Buffalo	Maintenance	September 30, 2017
UFCW - Kenmore Mercy Hospital	Plant Operations	January 15, 2018
1199/SEIU – Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus	Technical	May 31, 2017
1199/SEIU – Mount Saint Mary’s Hospital	RNs, Techs, Pros, Service	October 31, 2015
1199/SEIU - St. Catherine Laboure Health Care Center	C.N.As, Unit Clerks, LPNs	December 1, 2016
1199/SEIU - McAuley Residence	C.N.As, Service Uit	April 30, 2017
1199/SEIU - Sodexo/ Sisters	Housekeeping	July 16, 2016

3. What is there to gain by bargaining at the same table?

Catholic Health affiliated in 1998 to gain greater operational efficiencies and to better coordinate the delivery of care. Over the years they have taken additional steps to consolidate operations and control what goes on in the various facilities. The Unions should be doing the same thing. We can negotiate a fair, standard set of wages and benefits for all Catholic Health employees, regardless of the facility you work in.

4. How will my contractual rights and bargaining demands be protected?

Every Union and every bargaining unit would have a seat at the bargaining table. Through our system of surveying employees, tabulating results and election of bargaining committee members from the bargaining units, we will guarantee that every voice will be heard and represented at the bargaining table.

5. Is this method for bargaining used in other health systems or hospitals?

Yes, the method described above is utilized in negotiating the Kaleida Health Master Agreement. It’s not easy work, but it is a fair process for negotiating a contract that covers employees that work at a number of facilities in a number of different bargaining units.

6. What are the next steps?

We would like all Union employees that support joint bargaining to sign the petition that is being circulated by Chief Stewards, Stewards and Mobilizers. Once we get the required signatures the petition will be presented to Catholic Health accompanied by a Joint Union Proposal on bargaining.