

# Negotiations UPDATE

## Parties Still Far Apart as CWA Strike Closes Day 6

Catholic Health hospitals and the CWA resumed in-person negotiations on Tuesday and met again today. CWA finally presented a comprehensive economic wage proposal days after taking approximately 2,000 Mercy Hospital associates on strike. The parties still remain far apart but are closing the gap.

We continue to believe that CWA's strike and the disruptions it has caused at Mercy Hospital and other Erie County hospitals over the past six days could have been avoided. CWA told the hospitals we were close to a deal hours before the union walked away from the table early Friday morning. We submitted a comprehensive, fair offer a week ago.

Our offer provides market-competitive wages, maintains existing benefits, and presents a strong, long-term solution to address staffing. The staffing model Catholic Health has proposed is the most progressive approach to address staffing shortages of any hospital in our region. Not only does it comply fully with the New York State Safe Staffing law set to go into effect in January, but it goes far beyond.

Our staffing proposal:

- Adds more than 300 new positions;
- Provides staffing for 10% above the average daily census; and
- Provides for bonus pay if the staffing goals aren't met.

This strike has gone on long enough. It is straining other area hospitals, and that didn't have to happen. The Emergency Departments at our other Catholic Health hospitals, at Kaleida Health and at ECMC are overflowing because of CWA's strike. Our managers and associates throughout Catholic Health deserve our thanks and praise for everything they are doing to maintain quality care and service across our system.

Mercy Hospital is continuing to serve this community just like we have for more than 170 years. We continue to be in close contact with the Department of Health, whose representatives are regularly monitoring the hospital and continue to provide positive feedback on our ability to maintain our level of safe care.

We want to welcome back our associates at Mercy Hospital, but only CWA can end its strike. We stand ready to return to the table and finalize this agreement with the utmost urgency, and expect the union to do the same. We want to reach a tentative agreement for our associates at all three hospitals, so they can see the facts for themselves and make an informed decision on what's best for them and their families.

**Because it's important to have the facts regarding bargaining, we will share regular *Negotiations Updates* with you. You may visit [www.chsbuffalo.org/negotiations](http://www.chsbuffalo.org/negotiations) at any time for the latest news and information related to bargaining and to review copies of these updates and other FAQs.**