

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

FAQ: KP Northern California CRNA and CNM Strike

Q: Why go on strike? Can't we simply continue to negotiate?

If we need to go on strike, we are striking to stand up for our patients and our community. If we settle for takeaways or reductions now, we may never get them back. We've got to give this negotiation everything we've got. Striking is a last resort option, we will continue to negotiate with the employer, but if Kaiser refuses to meet us in a meaningful way we will have no choice but to stand up to management and say no in the strongest way—for our patients, our licenses, our practice and our contract.

Q: Why isn't Kaiser listening to us?

Kaiser is hoping that we won't show up and take action. We know that negotiations are about power. Tens of thousands of healthcare professionals across California and Hawaii are united and ready to take action. We must remain strong and united to win the contract our patients and professions deserve.

Q: Who can strike?

All UNAC/UHCP Northern California CRNAs and CNMs are covered by the 10-day notice to strike—all new hires, or on probation, or employed under a work visa—are protected under federal law when participating in a strike.

Q: I'm a Northern California UNAC/UHCP PA or Acupuncture provider. I heard we are going on sympathy strike to support our CRNA and CNM colleagues. Can I join the picket lines?

Yes! A 10-day notice was submitted for both the Acupuncture providers and the PAs that notifies the employer that you will be withholding labor to attend the picket line. However, you may only strike if there are CRNAs and CNMs who work at your hospital or medical office.

Q: Can I get in trouble or fired for striking?

No. Federal law (Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act) protects your right to strike as a form of collective action. Retaliation or threats for participating in a protected strike are illegal and should be reported to your union representative.

Q: Who decides whether we go on strike?

We all do. We would vote in a secret ballot to authorize our elected leadership to call for a strike if necessary. If members vote to authorize a strike, we will only go on strike at the right time to achieve our patient care goals after we have delivered a 10-day notice to the employer.

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Q: If we went on strike, how can we ensure our patients are cared for?

Ultimately, going on strike may be the best way to take care of patients in the long term. We are required by law to give 10 days' notice of a strike so that the employer has time to arrange proper care for patients. A strike is a protected union activity and does not constitute abandonment of our patients because we will notify the employer well ahead of time.

Q: Why is it important that I participate in the strike?

A strong, united strike sends a powerful message to Kaiser Permanente, the public, and the media that unsafe proposals will not be accepted. When we stand together, we show our collective power to win improvements for our patients, our professions, and our communities. Staying home or crossing the picket line undermines our ability to achieve these goals.

Q: How long does a strike last?

The Northern California CRNA/CNM strike will begin Sept. 8 at 7:00 a.m. and end Sept. 9 at 7:00 a.m. Even a one-day strike by tens of thousands of healthcare professionals sends a strong message to Kaiser.

Q: Can I use PTO, vacation, or sick time during the strike?

- Vacation: If pre-approved before the strike announcement, you keep your vacation time, even if you choose to picket.
- PTO or Sick Time: No, you cannot use PTO or sick time during the strike (unless you are out on a pre-approved leave prior to the strike).
- Leaves (Maternity, Medical, FMLA, Disability): If you are already on approved leave or receiving workers' comp/disability benefits, your leave and benefits continue through the approved duration of your leave. Be mindful about picketing while you are under medical restrictions.

Q: Does management have the right to ask if I intend to strike or not?

Management may ask but cannot legally force you to answer. The best response is: "I'm standing with my co-workers for our patients and our profession." It is illegal for management to intimidate, interrogate, or retaliate against you for participating in union activity. Report any harassment to your union representative immediately.

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Q: Do I need to notify my manager?

There is no need to call in as the 10-day notice of strike serves as official notice for all covered UNAC/UHCP members of the bargaining unit(s).

Q: Can my manager guilt or pressure me into not striking?

No, If managers guilt or pressure you to work in order to continue patient care you should tell them you are standing with your coworkers to strike for the strong contracts our professions and our patients deserve. Report instances of guilt, pressure, or retaliation to your Union representative because the managers' conduct might be illegal.

Q: What happens to my health benefits during a strike?

Kaiser has historically maintained health benefits for striking workers. If benefits were ever stopped, Kaiser is legally required to provide COBRA notice, allowing you to continue coverage or purchase an Affordable Care Act plan. Discontinuing coverage during a strike is rare and logistically difficult for Kaiser to carry out.

Q: Will the union keep negotiating during the strike?

Yes. The goal is always to reach a fair agreement without a strike. Even during a strike, our union is ready to meet with Kaiser management to reach a resolution that improves patient care and respects healthcare workers.

Q: How can I prepare for a strike?

- Attend union meetings, rallies, and town halls.
- Wear union visibility items to show unity.
- Educate yourself on proposals and vote in strike authorizations.
- Save funds or pick up extra shifts ahead of time.

Visible, united action increases our bargaining power and may help win a fair contract without needing to strike.

Q: Can my coworkers who are not in the union join our strike?

Federal law gives all employees the right to honor a picket line. If you are part of another union, check your contract for specific guidance.

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FAQ: KP Northern California CRNA and CNM Strike (continued)

Q: Is there a strike fund?

There is no strike fund. Many members prepare by picking up extra shifts beforehand or taking per-diem shifts at non-Kaiser facilities during the strike period.

Q: Should I discuss the strike with my patients?

At your discretion, within a limited scope, provided no pressure whatsoever is imposed on any patient to support the strike. You may inform your patients, but you should not lobby them. You may provide factual answers or materials in response to patient questions regarding the strike, the issues, and how patients can help, but with no pressure, request, or expectation that they participate in or support the strike.

Q: What should I do on the day of the strike?

- If your shift starts before 7:00 a.m. on strike day: Report to work, give report, clock out at 7:00 a.m., and walk out with your co-workers.
- If your shift starts at 7:00 a.m. or later: Do not report to work. Join the picket line.
- If your facility is closed: Go directly to a picket line.
- Night shift before strike day: Give report and clock out at 7:00 a.m. to join the strike.

Q: My shift would normally end at 7:30am on Tuesday morning. Do I need to come into work from 7:00am to 7:30am on Tuesday , Sept 9th?

Yes. Unless management sends written confirmation otherwise, you must complete the remainder of your shift from 7:00am until the end of your shift on Tuesday, Sept 9.

Q: So what if I work my shift after the strike has begun and then join the picket line when my shift is complete?

The best way to support your colleagues and show the employer the value of your labor is to not report to work during the strike.

Q: I'm a Northern California UNAC/UHCP Rehab Therapist- What should I do?

You are not going out on strike. You can wear "I Support Midwives and Nurse Anesthetists" stickers and UNAC/UHCP blue.

Q: What is the most important thing to remember?

Do not feel guilty about striking. Kaiser Permanente's refusal to negotiate in good faith created this situation. Not only do we have a legal right to strike, but we are also in the moral right. Striking is how we protect our patients, our licenses, and the future of our professions. **4**