



## JNESO

DISTRICT COUNCIL 1, IUEO / AFL-CIO  
*the professional health care union*

TEL: (732) 745-2776  
FAX: (732) 828-6343  
WEB: WWW.JNESO.ORG  
MEMBERS: (800) 292-0542

ELFRIEDA V. JOHNSON, RNC, PRESIDENT  
DOUGLAS A. PLACA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1225 LIVINGSTON AVE., NORTH BRUNSWICK, NJ 08902

Contact: Stacey Ehling, 609-408-2461, [stacey@princetonosc.com](mailto:stacey@princetonosc.com)

### For Immediate Release

## NO DEAL

### Nurses & Techs at St. Michael's Medical Center vote NOT to accept contract offer

North Brunswick (June 10, 2022) – “They said our members were ‘too BROKE, too HUNGRY, and too TIRED’ to vote against management’s offer – they were WRONG!” said Virginia Treacy, [JNESO District Council 1 IUEO-AFL-CIO](#) Senior Negotiator for the 350 nurses and techs at St. Michael’s Medical Center in Newark.

JNESO members voted “NOT” to accept the proposed contract that St. Michael’s management presented, marking the continuation of the strike which has been ongoing for three weeks and will extend until an agreement is reached.

The hospital, which is owned by Prime Health Care, is currently paying nearly TRIPLE the wages and better benefits to “temporary” (SCABS) workers covering for the strike than what JNESO members are currently making. This is also more than the union is asking for regarding salary increases.

“Our average hourly salary is \$44 and our average overtime rate is \$66 but management is currently offering ‘temps’ through agencies \$115 up to \$146 per hour, and \$172+ for overtime plus access to full health/dental coverage from day one! Remember, they also have to pay even more to the agency to hire these workers. How is this equitable and fair?” noted Treacy.

Treacy added, “Recruiters have been coming to our picket lines to entice our members. In case no one has told our employer THERE IS A NATIONAL SHORTAGE OF ALL HEALTHCARE WORKERS which is expected to get worse.” The current JNESO workforce has almost 100 members with more than 20 years of service to this hospital and several with over 40 years.

“Nickel and diming members on wages and not even attempting to raise wages to market value or even cover standard of living increases – which we all know are rising daily right now – seems to be the standard operating procedure for Prime,” said Douglas Placa, JNESO Executive Director.

Issues with Prime seem to be consistent at other facilities. Nurses at [Suburban Community Hospital](#) in Pa., held a protest earlier this week over Prime’s failure to abide by their contract, unfair wages, and the denial of claims for health care services leaving the workers to pay thousands of dollars for what should be decent care.

Placa noted that the only progress that has been made is around the issue of floating, where members are sent to other locations in the hospital to cover for vacancies. “We have finally made them recognize that you can’t just float people anywhere, they have to have the correct orientation and training and qualifications to work in those units to protect both the patients and our members whose licenses could be at risk if something goes wrong.”

The same sticking points remain – increase wages to bring them up to par with current market rates for nurses and techs, provide access to higher quality healthcare coverage, pension coverage, and protecting the safety of nurses, techs and patients.

“This isn’t a game of chicken, but the hospital management seems bent on achieving only one outcome -- hospital wins,” said Elfrieda Johnson, President of JNESO, the professional health care union. “We want to come to an agreement on a fair contract that benefits everyone in the long run, nurses, techs, patients, and this hospital which is vital to our local community.”

###

[Jneso.org](http://Jneso.org)