

Just for our nurses.

Why is the Union asking nurses to pay more in agency fees or risk being fired?

National Nurses United has proposed raising the agency fees it charges non-member RNs to the full NNU member dues rate, unless a nurse files a “proper” objection. Under the current contract and NNU’s proposal, the union has the right to demand that nurses who don’t pay dues or fees be fired. In its new proposal, NNU wants to be able to demand termination of nurses who fail to pay the increased agency fee.

Current contract language

All bargaining unit members are required to pay either Union dues or agency fees. Any Nurse who fails to pay such dues or agency fees shall, within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of written demand from the Union to the Hospital requesting his/her discharge, be discharged, if during such period, the required fees have not been tendered.

NNU Proposal

All bargaining unit members are required to pay either Union dues or agency fees.

Agency fees shall be equal to the full member dues rate, unless and until NNU NNOC notifies Medstar that such an individual has filed a proper Beck objection. NNU NNOC will notify a Nurse who has failed or fails to remit proper payment of dues or agency fees within sixty (60) days of the Nurse’s failure to remit payment. Upon notice from NNU NNOC, Nurses who fail to pay such dues or agency fees for which they were given notice in accordance with this Section shall be given thirty (30) days’ notice of termination by the Hospital. If any Nurse, within the thirty (30) day period, fails to tender the required dues or fees, and the Hospital is so informed, the Nurse’s employment will be terminated by the Hospital.

Know Your Rights

The Beck decision is a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that limits what unions can charge non-member employees in workplaces covered by union-security clauses. Employees cannot be required to join a union, but they are required to pay agency fees to cover the cost of representation with a union security clause similar to the one in the NNU contract with MWHC. However, the Court ruled, those mandatory fees **must be limited only to the union’s costs of collective bargaining, contract administration, and grievance handling.** Beck gives employees the right to opt out of the portion of union fees that subsidize political or ideological activities unrelated to workplace representation.

As we told the Union, the Hospital does not agree with raising Union agency fees to the full membership level and, in negotiations, will stand up to prevent nurses from being unfairly and unlawfully charged. In addition, the hospital will not agree to fire RNs who have a valid objection to the agency fee increase.