

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
AND
THE WASHINGTON FEDERATION OF STATE EMPLOYEES
AFSCME COUNCIL 28

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Temporary Voluntary
Recruitment and Retention Incentives

The parties agree there are significant recruitment and retention issues with the Nursing Assistant (NA) and Nursing Assistant-Lead (NA-Lead) classifications at the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. The recruitment and retention issues are impacting the agency's capacity to provide adequate resident care to our vulnerable veterans we are here to serve, as well as business operations, and are contributing to a significant loss in federal revenue as we are not admitting residents in our facilities because of staffing issues. Additionally, measures need to be taken immediately to recruit and retain valued and critical nursing staff to proactively meet the overall mission of, "serving those who served."

The terms of the MOU may be subject to change if a renewal is agreed upon by all parties, prior to the expiration date. This MOU is directly tied to the receipt of federal matching funds through the Veterans Home Nursing Recruitment and Retention Grant Program and may be subject to change depending on financial feasibility, to include receipt and timing of such said funds. Further, the voluntary incentives will be taxed like all other taxable income.

To that end, the parties agree to:

- 1) **Voluntary Recruitment Incentive:** WDVA will provide a recruitment incentive payment(s) to new NA or NA-Leads at all WDVA Skilled Nursing Facilities. Employees will need to apply for the voluntary incentive with their local Human Resources office.
 - a) An incentive payment of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) will be paid to employees who are hired into a permanent, full-time NA or NA-Lead position, effective on their official date of hire, no earlier than the date of signing this MOU. The incentive will be required to be paid back if the employee is separated prior to the completion of their probationary appointment.
 - b) An incentive payment of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) will be paid to employees hired on or after October 1, 2022, and who are currently in a probationary period for a permanent, full-time NA or NA-Lead position on the effective date of the MOU. The incentive will be required to be paid back if the employee is separated prior to the completion of their probationary appointment.

- c) An incentive of two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) will be given to a permanent, full-time NA or NA-Lead effective after successful completion of their probationary period, paid in two quarterly installments of one thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$1,250.00) each. The first one thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$1,250.00) installment will be given in the subsequent quarter after the completion of the probationary period, and the next one thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$1,250.00) installment will be given in the subsequent quarter after the first installment. No payback will be required as each installment is in recognition of the quarter worked.

2) **Voluntary Retention Incentive:** WDVA will provide a retention incentive payment for existing permanent, full-time NA or NA-Lead staff at all WDVA Skilled Nursing Facilities.

- a) A retention incentive payment of three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) will be paid to permanent, full time NAs or NA-Leads at all WDVA Skilled Nursing Facilities who have been a permanent full-time NA or NA-Lead for one (1) calendar year, and those who have at least one calendar year employment as an NA or NA-Lead between October 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, and who are meeting performance and work-related standards as described in the performance plan process.
- b) The incentive will be paid in four installments of seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00) for each calendar quarter worked. No payback will be required as each installment is in recognition of the quarter worked.

3) WDVA recognizes that it needs to increase its recruitment efforts for NAs, NA-Leads, and LPNs beyond the local area, particularly in more remote or rural areas. This includes more statewide, regional, and potentially national or international recruitment campaigns. To incentivize NAs, NA-Leads and LPNs to move or commute to the local area where our Homes are located, the WDVA would like to offer a sign-on incentive for both qualifying permanent, full-time NAs and LPNs who live outside the local area as follows:

NAC or Nurse Residence from Home in Which Hired	Maximum Incentive
300 miles and over	\$8,000.00
51-299 miles	\$2,000.00

The incentive will be paid back if the employee terminates employment within 12 months of receiving the incentive payment for relocation or transportation, in accordance with RCW 43.03.120.

Employees applying for the relocation incentive must provide proof of permanent residence to establish relocation distance.

4) Participation in any incentive program is voluntary and any employee who elects to

participate will be required to sign an agreement with all relevant terms prior to receiving any incentive payment(s).

- 5) In the event state matching funds are budgeted for Fiscal Year 2024, the parties agree to reconvene to discuss an extension of these incentives.

This MOU will expire on June 30, 2023.

For the Employer:

Melanie Schwent 02/03/2023
Melanie Schwent Date
Labor Negotiator
OFM/SHR/LRS

For the Union:

Ron Heley 2/3/23
Ron Heley Date
Labor Advocate
WFSE/AFSCME Council 28