

Union ★
Update

OPEIU
Local



for OPEIU Local 8 members at Kaiser Permanente/Washington



COALITION OF
KAISER PERMANENTE
UNIONS

National Bargaining Update

Welcome to the second Kaiser Bargaining update from your 2023 OPEIU Kaiser bargaining team. In the second session, we continued our talks on how to address the staffing crisis, discussed Kaiser's finances, and Kaiser's recent announcement to acquire Geisinger Health and start a new company called Risant.

Addressing the Staffing Crisis

We started with a report back from the labor-management task force working on getting 10,000 new hires into Coalition vacancies by the end of the year. Subgroups will be meeting weekly through the end of June to address internal delays in the bidding and hiring system, market limitations for harder-to-fill classifications, collaboration about high-volume hiring opportunities, and providing union leaders in the facilities input into core staffing models.

Kaiser Company & Employee Finances

Most of the second day was spent on finances: Kaiser's finances, the finances of our pension fund, and the finances of the workforce in a time of unprecedented inflation.

- **Kaiser Finances.** Kaiser CFO Kathy Lancaster and Senior VP Tom Curtin presented the challenges they see ahead in growing the membership, getting proper reimbursement for care, and managing rising expenses. SEIU-UHW President, Dave Regan, presented a counter perspective that emphasized Kaiser's incredibly strong financial position when viewed over the last five years and highlighted Kaiser's astounding investment income and management costs, spiraling executive compensation, and out-of-control payments to expensive outside contractors. Even though Kaiser lost money in 2022, it was an outlier, not the trend. Kaiser reported more than \$21 billion in profit over the last five years, and their net worth doubled between 2018 and 2022 to \$58.9B. Kaiser isn't a company that's struggling.
- **Employee finances.** We also wanted to ensure that Kaiser management understood they are not the only ones who have to manage a budget. Every Kaiser worker is struggling to adjust their family budget to rising costs of living. Shamefully, Kaiser employs thousands of workers across the country who don't make a \$25/hr living wage. [Check out our members' stories in this video we shared in bargaining.](#)

Why the Geisinger Health Acquisition and the Creation of Risant Matters

We called Kaiser out on the acquisition they [announced last month](#) of a Pennsylvania medical group called Geisinger Health and the creation of Risant, a new healthcare company that Kaiser intends to use to buy up health systems. With the announcement,

Kaiser not only failed to discuss this plan with its unions, but we learned that Kaiser's top leaders at the Medical Group weren't even involved in the deal!

Kaiser's behavior around the Geisinger acquisition has raised critical questions:

1. Is Kaiser going to use California rate increases to pay for the acquisition?
2. Does it plan to start growing a non-union, non-partnership company within Kaiser that will create pressure to lower the standards of living for all of us?
3. If they didn't talk to their labor partners or even their doctors, what is it they're trying to hide?

This week, May 22-26, Coalition Unions are having a week of action to show Kaiser execs that we have the backs of our bargaining team members who are bargaining for better staffing. Our next session of National Bargaining will be from June 22-24. Stay tuned!

[Click here to see the Coalition's official update.](#)

Your Bargaining Team:



Back row, Left to right: Marissa Wilson, Paul Bender, Brenda Huffman, Suzanne Mode, Lynda Bates

Front row, Left to right: Kenyatta McDowell, Bobbie Pringle, Misha Smith, Leslie Liddle

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