

Union ★
Update

OPEIU
Local



For Local 8 Members at Friends of Youth

March 11, 2025

Layoff Agreement Update

Last week, Friends of Youth suddenly announced they were making the preemptive decision to close programs and issue layoffs rather than navigate federal funding uncertainties and the Trump Administration's attacks on trans and immigrant communities. In response, we quickly held three membership meetings and then met with management on Friday March 7th to negotiate expanded benefits for those being laid off.

Ana Herrera, After Hours Case Manager, bravely and passionately spoke directly to FOY management, including their attorney, questioning how closing these programs would impact clients and staff alike. She spoke the truth—this decision is not in the best interest of our clients and we are very concerned for their welfare.

Here's what we were able to negotiate for impacted employees:

- Continued employment through April 30th
- Pay out of all accrued vacation leave and 25% of accrued sick leave up to 72 hours
- The equivalent of 4 months of COBRA premiums for employees on FOY's health insurance

- Preference in hiring over other candidates and recall rights for a 12-month period
- Agreement that FOY will not challenge claims for unemployment benefits
- A letter of reference from the employer stating that this was a layoff, not related to performance or other issues

Healthcare – COBRA extension

COBRA is a federal program which provides continued health insurance through private plans to help prevent gaps in coverage between jobs. Because many of us are unsure of our next step and have medical needs, we prioritized extending COBRA coverage by an additional month and were successful.

Unemployment Benefits

You can apply for unemployment benefits through the State of Washington online, though you must wait until your last day of work to submit an application. Find out more on their website: <https://esd.wa.gov/get-financial-help/unemployment-benefits>

Job Search

It can be scary looking for a new job, but our labor community is here to help! Check out MLK Labor's [Union Hiring Hall](#) for good jobs represented by OPEIU Local 8 or other unions in our area.

We will share updates as we have more information. If you have any immediate concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Phoebe Feldsher at Phoebe@opeiu8.org or Byram Simpson at Byram@opeiu8.org.



OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION LOCAL 8

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