

Nursing Home Workers Begin Strike Authorization Process.

WHO: SEIU 1199 New England Healthcare workers from Nursing Homes , Group Homes will be joined by faith leaders and legislative leaders.

WHERE: Hall of Flags, State Capitol Building 210 Capitol Avenue Hartford

WHEN: Today, Tuesday April 1st, 2025 at 11 a.m.

HARTFORD, Conn. -- In a powerful call to action, members of SEIU 1199NE's Nursing Home Division are urging the state legislature and governor to address their expired contracts and recent federal cuts to public health programs. With the state still in its budget session, workers say now is the time to act. Their contracts expired two weeks ago, yet no negotiations or discussions have begun. Staff at over 50 nursing homes are deeply concerned about their own futures and the well-being of the residents they care for.

"If things don't change, if we continue to undervalue and underpay the very people who care for our most vulnerable, then we will lose skilled, compassionate, and dedicated workers."

KellyAnn Efstathiou, CNA, Member SEIU 1199 New England

Many of those residents depend on Medicaid which is constantly under attack. Attacks that are far too close to a reality after the federal administration chopped funding to many of our vital public health programs just last week. Programs that help keep newborns safe and provide immunization services. We know it's only a matter of time before our seniors are next.

Governor Lamont has an opportunity to step in and help protect nursing homes allowing them to stay open for those who need the care and truly have no other option. Make sure Medicaid funding not only continues, but increases so we can continue to do the vital work for those who depend on us. So that we're not coming in finding facilities without soap or other necessary supplies to provide treatment.

Finally - make sure the staff in these facilities, from CNAs to dietary staff, LPNs to housekeepers and every single one in between can afford to continue doing this vital job by agreeing to increase their wages. Protect their future, give them a fighting chance.

We're at a breaking point, if Connecticut won't take a stance and protect our caregivers and the residents they care for. On Tuesday we will stand together and announce our plans to begin the process of authorizing a strike at our nursing homes.

This initial vote is expected to have overwhelming support.

"These workers are the backbone of our healthcare system. They are the ones who show up every day, providing essential care with dedication and compassion. They do this work not for recognition, not for wealth, but because they believe in caring for people who need it most."

Rob Baril, President, SEIU 1199 New England

Nursing home programs are already in trouble, it's only a matter of time before it becomes dangerous. We need to fix the following to provide our patients with the care they truly deserve and allow our staff to live healthy and happy lives.

Staff Wages: Many staff members, despite having 10 years or more of experience, are still earning less than \$20 per hour. A wage you can't support a family on.

Lack of Supplies: Our nursing staff should not be spending their hard earned wages on supplies for their patients, but they are. They are buying soap, gloves, rash cream, wash clothes and antacids.

Facility Management Oversight: We need the state to enforce the laws set in place to keep these nursing homes properly running. From safe staffing ratios to making sure the money gets to what it's intended for.

Nursing home staff are not alone, they'll be joined by staff from our group homes and community programs on Tuesday who will stand united with them. These members are also about to enter into negotiations as all their contracts have officially expired as well, and if their demands also remain unmet they will be the next group you hear from announcing similar actions.

We're going to keep standing united and calling on Governor Lamont to take action. He must stand up to the federal government and protect our Medicaid funding. We're also urging the state to loosen its fiscal guardrails and use available resources to support our healthcare system—from restoring funding to vital public health programs to ensuring nursing homes and group homes can stay open by paying workers enough to stay on the job. These are urgent needs, but we believe this is a common-sense path forward that everyone can get behind.

To speak directly with members contact;

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MEDIA CONTACT

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ABOUT SEIU 1199NE

District 1199 SEIU New England represents 29,000 health care and service workers in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Southeastern Massachusetts. In Rhode Island, 1199 SEIU NE represents almost 5,000 members. 1199 SEIU NE is affiliated with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) - a union of over 2 million members across the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada. SEIU has been a national leader in pushing the growing Fight for \$15 and a Union movement.