

# Newsbreak

Registered Nurses  
Professional Association

## Annual Cash Out of PTO/Sick Leave Conversion

It is time to submit your Annual Cash Out of PTO and Sick Leave Conversion to PTO.

In accordance with Section 9.7—Annual Cash Out of PTO, “A nurse’s eligibility for cash out is determined by the number of occurrences of unscheduled absences, in the payroll year (twenty-six or twenty seven pay periods).” The period for cash out eligibility for 2005 begins December 20, 2004 and ends December 18, 2005. PTO may be cashed out annually subject to the following:

- a. If a nurse has no more than two (2) occurrences of unscheduled absences, the nurse may cash out up to eighty (80) hours of PTO.
- b. If the nurse has no more than four (4) occurrences of unscheduled absences, the nurse may cash out up to forty (40) hours of PTO.

Cash out is prorated for nurses other than full time on the basis of code status. If you have any questions, please contact Diane

Sandoval at (408)793-6611 at SCVHHS—Human Resources. If you wish to cash out your eligible PTO hours, submit the Authorization For Cash Out of PTO to SCVHHS Human Resources by 5:00 PM, Tuesday, February 28, 2006.

In accordance with Section 9.8—Sick Leave Conversion to Paid Time Off (PTO), “A nurse’s eligibility for sick leave conversion is determined by the number of occurrences of sick leave usage. Sick leave use attributed to Worker’s Compensation shall not be counted as an occurrence.” The period for sick leave conversion eligibility begins December 20, 2004 and ended December 18, 2005. Sick leave conversion is prorated for nurses other than full time on the basis of code status. The sick leave conversion to PTO shall be credited on March 13, 2006.

Sick leave may be converted on the following basis:

- a. If a nurse has no sick leave usage, 7 days of sick leave will be converted to PTO.
- b. If a nurse has 1 occurrence of sick leave usage, 6 days of sick leave will be converted to PTO.
- c. If a nurse has 2 occurrences of sick leave usage, 5 days of sick leave will be converted to PTO.
- d. If a nurse has 3 occurrences of sick leave usage, 2 days of sick leave will be converted to PTO.
- e. If a nurse has 4 occurrences of sick leave usage, 1 day of sick leave will be converted to PTO.
- f. If a nurse has 5 or more occurrence of sick leave usage, no sick leave shall be converted to PTO.

Submit Authorization For Sick Leave Conversion To PTO forms to SCVHHS Human Resources by 5:00 PM, Tuesday, February 28, 2006.

## Results of RNPA BOD Elections

The 2006 RNPA Board of Directors includes:

President	<i>Rosemary Knox, NICU</i>	Area Rep Chair	<i>Sue Ersted, EVC</i>
Vice Presidents	<i>Liz LaRosa, L&amp;D</i> <i>Jane Valdez, SICU</i>	Continuing Ed.	<i>Daisy Brown, L&amp;D</i>
Secretary	<i>Vicki Pham, SICU</i>	Publications	<i>Open position</i>
Treasurer	<i>Gretchen Simpkins, Referral Center</i>	Negotiating Team	<i>Eric Call, L&amp;D</i> <i>Open position</i>

We are excited to inform you that we received a large number of write-in candidates. All write-in candidates for open positions were contacted to see if they are interested in the available position. An overwhelming majority of voting members approved the recommended bylaw changes.

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# POLITICS -Why Should Nurses Be Involved?

On a personal level, politics influences:

- where children go to school
- quality of food eaten
- quality of water in your taps
- what medications are prescribed
- speed limits on highways

On a professional level, politics influences:

- where nurses work
- what they do and how they do it
- ability to organize professionally
- nurses' professional status through licensure and certification

Nurses have always been involved in politics. Florence Nightingale used her contacts with powerful men in government to obtain supplies and the personnel she needed to care for wounded soldiers in the Crimea.

Hannah Ropes was able to fight incompetence and obtain decent care for wounded Civil War soldiers because she understood who the influ-

ential people in Washington were.

Today, with many interests competing to be heard in the decision-making circles of our nation, the person who understands power and politics is the one most likely to obtain the resources needed to accomplish desired ends.

Knowing where decision making occurs, who makes the decisions, and being familiar with how you can influence that process is important.

## POLITICS INFLUENCES NURSES' PROFESSIONAL STATUS THROUGH LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION

Nurses' practice is controlled by the Nurse Practice Act (NPA) of each state. The NPA legally defines nursing and the scope of nursing practice is outlined in that document. Nurses experience the effects of government

regulation directly: Some examples include:

- nurse/patient ratio
- advance practice prescriptive privileges
- decrease in the number of nurses employed in hospitals

Since 1995 RNPA has endorsed candidates on the state and local level who support registered nurses, nursing practice and labor issues.

The June 2006 Primary Election is fast approaching. RNPA-PAC is gearing up to select candidates that will support our interests. If you are interested in being a PAC member or attending an RNPA-PAC meeting contact the office. The PAC meets the second Tuesday of the month at 3:30 PM at the RNPA office. The next scheduled meeting is February 14th.

## Professional Practice Corner

Over the next year, you will be hearing more and more about the "role of the professional nurse" around your workplace. Nursing Administration has undertaken the project to redefine and establish a consistent professional nursing practice model throughout the inpatient areas of our organization. In February 2005, Joan Smith, Director of Patient Care Services, announced her intention to take VMC Nursing on the journey towards Magnet certification by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

RNPA philosophically agrees with the establishment of consistent professional nursing practice throughout our entire organization. Article II Mission Statement of our bylaws states that "we are committed to obtaining the highest level of quality patient care and professional nursing standards by empowering each nurse to achieve their professional goals as individuals and as an organization." One of the first steps in this process, as we see it, is the reeducation of the staff to the tenets of a profession, the California RN Scope of Practice, the ANA Professional Standards and the regulations that govern our practice. In an effort to assist our members during this process we will be including information about these topics in our Newsbreaks.

If you would like more information on the above, please contact the RNPA office to set up a unit meeting with your Board of Directors.

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