



NETWORK

A PUBLICATION OF THE WISCONSIN FEDERATION OF NURSES & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, LOCAL 5000, AFT, AFL-CIO

The Union Difference

by Jamie Lucas, Executive Director

What an interesting time to be alive, isn't it?

We are truly living in unique circumstances. With so much demanding our attention, and especially with so many very important matters needing our attention, it can become hard to find the right balance in what news we consume, how much we consume, and what we do with that information. As a union, we have been busy, guided by the wishes and needs of our membership across the state, putting time and energy into the things that matter most as we seek to build a better world and healthcare system that works for all of us. We are working to bring that union difference to all.

To focus specifically on the world of healthcare in Wisconsin, we are fighting to build a more humane healthcare system. We have been bargaining, organizing, and advocating to raise standards for all nurses and healthcare workers in the state. In Antigo, our union RNs will now have contractually guaranteed staffing plans and a forum to discuss and affect those staffing plans to account for changes in volumes, acuity, etc. With their new CBA, not only do our members get guaranteed raises in each of the next two years, and their staffing language is entirely new, but they get the direct input into their staffing that few others in the Aspirus system will have. **That's the union difference.**



WFNHP members and Sens. Larson and Ratcliffe, speak at a press conference at the State Capitol on 2/25/26, reintroducing the WI Nurse Staffing and Patient Protection Act.

At Planned Parenthood, our bargaining team has been incredibly hard at work crafting their first contract. This process takes time in the best of circumstances, but the political and economic backdrop of the current times are adding significant challenges. Our members and the bargaining team, representing healthcare workers all across the state at around 20 different locations, are undeterred. They have been continuously engaged in this long, drawn out process of bargaining a first contract, navigating the difficulties together to ensure that the perspective and needs of our members are centered in the decisions made within the organization. To date, we are closer than ever to securing a strong first contract that will meaningfully improve the lives of the people who provide care to every patient who goes to Planned Parenthood. Members have been wearing their red union shirts on bargaining days, attending bargaining update meetings, and taking advantage of the ways in which they can now directly affect the decisions of their organization and assert their own rights in their day to day. **That's the union difference.**

In February, we re-introduced the Wisconsin Nurse Staffing and Patient Protection Act, a bill that will set safe staffing ratios, end mandatory overtime, protect nurses against retaliation when refusing an unsafe assignment, and create staffing committees consisting of a majority of frontline nurses at every hospital across the state to develop their hospital's publicly posted staffing plans that will account for all direct care staff (not just RNs). At the introductory press conference with Sens. Larson and Ratcliffe, WFNHP nurse Dan Gage from Burlington shared how his experience as a patient in the ICU being cared for by kind, dedicated, intelligent nurses led to him pursuing a career as an RN. Now, as an RN, he strives each day to provide the kind of life-changing care that he received, and safe staffing ratios are essential to that goal. WFNHP President Connie Smith said that we will do everything in our power for as long as it takes to make safe staffing the reality in Wisconsin, because corporate healthcare will only continue to burn out good healthcare workers and deprive patients of the care they deserve unless we do something about it. That's exactly why we're doing something about it with this bill and any future efforts, since the legislature is inexplicably calling it quits for this legislative session. In the meantime, we have generated hundreds of letters of support from

(continued on page 4)

OFFICIAL NOTICE:

Nomination & Election of WFNHP-Local 5000 Officers/Delegates

It's time to nominate and elect the Officers who will lead our union for the next two years; the delegates who will represent our union at the 2026 American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Conventions; and the delegates who will represent our union at the monthly meetings of the Milwaukee Area Labor Council (MALC).

Officers to be Elected:

President—the leader and official spokesperson of the organization. Responsible for running meetings, setting policy, and creating vision and direction for our union. The President also works in close consultation with the Executive Director, to make sure members' needs are being met.

Executive Vice President—assists the President in all delegated tasks and will assume the duties of the President in the event of their absence.

Treasurer—responsible for overseeing the finances of the organization and maintaining membership records.

Secretary—responsible for recording minutes of all meetings and assisting with necessary correspondence.

(3) At-Large Vice Presidents—whose duties are assigned by the President or Executive Board.

Term of Office: January 1, 2026-December 31, 2027. Elected Officers will assume office after election results are finalized and will serve thru December 31, 2027. These (7) elected Officers will make up the Executive Board of Local 5000 and be required to meet at least (4) times each year.

Delegates to be Elected:

(6) delegates to the 2026 American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Convention. The President is an automatic delegate. Therefore, **5** additional delegates are to be elected. The AFT Convention will be held July 16-19, 2026 in Washington, DC. WFNHP will pay the registration fee of all delegates who attend. All other expenses will be paid by the delegates. Delegates must attend on their own time.

(4) delegates to the 2026 Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Convention. The President is an automatic delegate. Therefore, **3** additional delegates are to be elected. The Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Convention will be held late September 2026. WFNHP will pay the registration fee of all delegates who attend. All



other expenses will be paid by the delegates. Delegates must attend on their own time.

(10) delegates to the Milwaukee Area Labor Council (MALC). The Labor Council meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm at 633 S. Hawley Rd. in Milwaukee. MALC delegates will have the same two-year term of office as WFNHP Officers.

Nomination Procedure:

In order to run for office, one must have been a member in good standing (dues-paying member) of Local 5000 for at least three (3) months. You may nominate yourself or other members you believe will be the best team to lead our union for the next two years. To nominate individuals, you must submit their name(s) on the **official nomination form on page 3.** (Please have a conversation with the individuals you intend to nominate, to make sure they are willing to run for the position prior to turning in your nomination form.) **PLEASE NOTE: There will be no write-in candidates on the final ballot, so only those nominated using the formal nomination process will be considered nominated. Nominations must be received by the union office no later than NOON on Friday, May 29, 2026.**

Nominations will be reviewed by the Election Committee and approved nominees will be notified via email. **IMPORTANT: Only candidates with opposition will appear on the ballot.** In the event there is only one candidate nominated for a position, they will be considered automatically "elected" after review by the Election Committee and will take office once results are finalized and they accept the position in writing. (Elected Officers will be asked to sign a Consent to Serve Form.) If there is no nomination received for a position, that position will remain vacant and be filled by the Local Executive Board. Candidates with opposition may request a statewide membership list from the union office so they can equally and fairly campaign. Candidates will also be allowed one (1) observer of their choice to observe the election process, including absentee ballot mailing, in-person voting, and final ballot tallying in Milwaukee.

Eligible Voters: Only full dues paying members in good standing are eligible to vote. However, if you are not currently a member, you can become a member and vote before or on election day. If you work for an employer with payroll deduction for union dues, you must sign a membership card and payroll deduction card before you can receive a ballot. If you do not work where there is payroll deduction for dues (i.e., Non Bargaining Unit), you can become a member by signing a membership card and paying two (2) months back dues. If you have questions about your membership status or want to sign up prior to election day, please contact our Administrative Assistant, Amy at akosloske@wfnhp.org or 414-475-6065.

In-Person Voting: Members can vote in-person during the Membership Meeting on **Sunday, June 7, 2026 between the hours of 1:30pm to 3:30pm at Reunion Restaurant** (6610 W. Greenfield Ave, West Allis, WI). You do not have to attend the entire Membership Meeting to vote. More information on the Membership Meeting can be found on page 4.

Absentee Ballots: There will be no early voting on the day of the election. If you are unable to vote in-person and wish to cast a ballot, you must request an absentee ballot by completing our online request form: <https://tinyurl.com/absenteeballotWFNHP> or contacting our Administrative Assistant, Amy at akosloske@wfnhp.org or 414-475-6065. **Absentee ballot requests must be received by the union office no later than 5pm on Monday, May 25, 2026.** Eligible members who requested an absentee ballot by this deadline will have their ballot mailed to their last known home address on June 1st. **Absentee ballots must be mailed back and received no later than Monday June 22, 2026.** Ballots received after that date will not be counted.

Election Results:
All in-person and absentee ballots will be secured in a lockbox. **The Election Committee will count all ballots the week of June 22nd.** Candidates will be emailed the exact date to have an observer present for the final vote tally. In case of a tie, a runoff election will be held for that office. Elected Officers & Delegates will be notified of the results of the election via email as soon as administratively possible. Candidates will have 5 days to register any objections in writing after the final tally. If objections are filed, the Election Committee has 10 days to meet, review, and finalize. If no objections are filed, the election will be considered finalized and elected Officers will take office upon acceptance of their position in writing (signing a Consent to Serve Form). In accordance with the WFNHP constitution and bylaws, the election results will be published or distributed to the membership within thirty (30) days of the count. Results will be posted on our website www.wfnhp.org.

Official WFNHP Nomination Form

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

I nominate the following as Local 5000 Officers:

President: _____

Exec. Vice President: _____

Treasurer: _____

Secretary: _____

(3) At-Large Vice Presidents:

I nominate the following as Local 5000 delegates to the 2026 AFT Convention: (5 to be elected)

I nominate the following as Local 5000 delegates to the 2026 State AFL-CIO Convention: (3 to be elected)

I nominate the following as Local 5000 delegates to the Milwaukee Area Labor Council: (10 to be elected)

Signature _____ Date _____

Personal Email: _____

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no write-in candidates on the final ballot. Only those nominated using this official form will be considered nominated. Form not valid without signature & date.

Forms can be submitted via email to akosloske@wfnhp.org, faxed to 414-475-5722 or mailed to WFNHP, 9620 West Greenfield Avenue, West Allis, WI 53214.

Nominations must be received no later than NOON on Friday, May 29, 2026.



**Wisconsin Federation
of Nurses & Health
Professionals** AFT,
AFL-CIO

A Union of Professionals

9620 West Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214-2645
414-475-6065 or 1-800-828-2256
www.wfnhp.org

Return Service Requested

Important Nomination/Election Information is Enclosed

The Union Difference...from page 1

constituents to their representatives. We have been the driving force in getting this bill introduced, and we will continue to fight for safe staffing next legislative session and beyond. **That's the union difference.**

The union difference is real and measurable, but it is also a feeling. It's the legitimate and concrete establishment of a grievance clause in a legally binding contract, but it's also the feeling that empowered nurses and healthcare workers get when they advocate for what they and their coworkers and patients need in a meeting with their employer, in a rally on the street, or in the halls of our legislature in Madison. It's the right to representation when you need support in that meeting with your boss, and it's also the confidence of knowing that you're in this with someone who has your back. It's the legal right to speak out about why we need safe staffing ratios in Wisconsin, and it's the feeling of knowing that we're representing the needs and wishes of healthcare workers across our state who might be too tired, too intimidated, or too overworked to come themselves to speak with their legislator. The union difference isn't just for union members, but it will only exist for as long as good people make it real.

Your union leaders at the state level of WFNHP (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and VPs at large) have been steering this ship and fighting for that union difference for all. In this newsletter, you'll find a timeline for union elections and nomination forms, and instructions to complete them, if you are so moved. This union is of and for its members, with elected leadership in your own chapters (people at your

worksite) and statewide (the positions that are listed in this paragraph). However, elected leaders can only do so much because the union is about the collective. As a member of WFNHP, you make this union run. So, thank you for reading this letter. Please make sure you are paying your dues so that we can continue to do this important work and advance our collective interests. Thank you for doing what you can to build a better world and raise standards for healthcare workers, patients, and everyone we touch.

JOIN US!

**MILWAUKEE
Brewers**

**WFNHP-LOCAL 5000
MEMBERSHIP MEETING &
BREWERS WATCH PARTY**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 2026 - 1PM
REUNION RESTAURANT**
6610 W GREENFIELD AVE, WEST ALLIS

- Connect & meet fellow union members
- Family friendly event
- FREE Pizza, Wings & Soda / Door Prizes
- Open to all WFNHP bargaining unit employees
- Union Update/Election of Local Officers

WFNHP **MUST RSVP by 6/5:** <https://tinyurl.com/ypxseptm6>