

# Why We Have a Union » Part 2

## OUR UNION RAISES

By organizing, fighting for, and winning our first union contract, we won historic pay raises. Starting the first full pay period of 2024, there are four distinct raises that nurses are eligible to receive »

1. **Our annual across-the-board increases.** This is a 2% raise that goes to everyone who is on the wage scale as we move from last year's pay scale (page 66 of the contract) to this year's pay scale (page 67 of the contract).\*
2. **Our annual "step" increases.** Each nurse on the wage scale that gains another year of experience as a registered nurse since Jan. 1, 2023 will receive an additional 2% increase (in addition to the 2% across-the-board increases above). Most nurses at Maine Med will receive this additional 2% increase.
3. **Increases to those with more than 15 years of nursing experience.** On Jan. 1, 2024, the union wage scale expands from 1-15 years to 1-20 years. So every nurse who is at the top of the current scale, but has more than 15 years of experience will receive additional 2% steps for each year of experience up to 20 years. For example, if a CN2 has 18 years of experience as of Jan. 1, 2024 and they are being paid right now at the 15-year rate (\$48.54), that nurse will now be paid \$52.54 (a \$4 per hour increase, or 8%).
4. **Fair increases for senior nurses.** Before the union, senior nurses were often "redlined," meaning they were told that they would not receive any more pay increases like those given to less senior nurses. This was a terrible practice at Maine Med, one that punished instead of rewarded those who had dedicated the most years to our patients and community. So, two things we fought hardest for in our contract negotiations were 1) eliminating the "redlining" of senior nurses and 2) winning fair increases for all nurses in the hospital, but especially senior nurses. While we believe nurses "above the scale" deserve much more, every senior nurse who is being paid at the top of the current scale will get at least a 4% increase in the first full pay period of 2024.

**It is obvious why we can win things now that we never could before. Now, we are a union. And now, when we fight, we win!**



*“Before the union, we depended on management’s subjective assessment of our value to this hospital to get our raises. This opened the door to favoritism and inappropriate retaliation against nurses who strongly advocated for their patients. Together, we put an end to the unfair “merit system” of pay increases, and won the highest pay raises in Maine Med history. I am proud to have been a member of our bargaining team, but I’m even more proud to work every day with my union coworkers across this hospital. We still have so much to improve here at Maine Med, but we have already made recruitment and retention of skilled, caring nurses a top priority where we work.”*

— MMC RNs, Steward Mary Kate O’Sullivan, R9 (left) and Meghan Garrard, P3CD (right)

*\*For more copies of the contract, please contact any union steward or Labor Rep Jenn Nappi: [jnappi@nationalnursesunited.org](mailto:jnappi@nationalnursesunited.org).*

**OUR PATIENTS. OUR UNION. OUR VOICE.**

**MSNA**  
Maine State Nurses Association



**National Nurses  
Organizing  
Committee**



**National  
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