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## Strikes among healthcare workers in 2022

As more contracts covering workers on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic come up for expiration, nurses, technicians and other staff are pushing for measures to improve working conditions.

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As more contracts covering unionized healthcare workers on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic come up for expiration, nurses, technicians and other staff are pushing for measures to improve working conditions and safety in the years following the historic public health crisis.

They're taking the opportunity to broker deals improving wages and staffing, just as hospitals continue grappling with recruitment and retention issues driven by burnout and persistent, heightened labor costs in recent quarters.

Workers are using that as leverage to help negotiate the terms they want, though for some that still means heading to the picket line.

A number of major strikes occurred last year, including one at a Tenet hospital in Massachusetts where 800 nurses held a picket line for 285 days.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics only tracks strikes involving 1,000 or more workers. In 2020, the agency tracked eight such strikes across all industries, with five of those strikes involving healthcare workers. In 2021, the BLS tracked 16 strikes involving 1,000 or more workers across all industries, and four of those involved unions representing healthcare workers.

Healthcare Dive has developed a tracker to keep up with work stoppages waged by healthcare workers so far in 2022, including those involving 500 or more workers.

**Dec. 20, 2022**

## New York hospitals



About 17,000 nurses from 12 private hospitals around New York are voting on whether to authorize a strike. The voting runs through the end of the year, when the nurses' contract expires.

Nurses want new staffing and wage measures as well as health benefits, according to a statement from the New York State Nursing Association.

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**Dec. 14, 2022**

## Sutter Health



Northern California

More than 8,000 nurses and other healthcare workers at 15 Sutter Health facilities in Northern California voted to authorize a strike in March as they negotiated new contracts with the system. Those nurses, represented by the California Nurses Association, wanted policies to ensure better staffing, safety and pandemic readiness.

They waged a one-day strike on April 18. The two sides did not reach a deal on new contracts. They have been in negotiations since June 2021.

On Oct. 18, about 1,800 Sutter nurses who already went on strike this April announced plans to wage another work stoppage from Oct. 24 to Oct. 28, according to the union.

Nurses at Sutter's Alta Bates Summit Medical Center facilities said they are striking in response to persistent patient care issues, including workplace violence and high turnover rates, while working under expired contracts, according to the union.

A deal was not reached and nurses started striking again Oct.

24. The nurses returned to work afterward, still without reaching a deal.

**Dec. 6, 2022**

On Dec. 14, nurses at Alta Bates Medical Center facilities announced they intended to wage another strike, this time for **Minnesota Hospitals**  **days starting Dec. 24.** **Twin Cities and Twin Ports areas**

Some 15,000 nurses in Minnesota voted to authorize a strike Aug. 15, according to the Minnesota Nurses Association, which represents them.

The nurses work at 15 hospitals across the state owned by seven different health systems: M Health Fairview, Essentia Health, HealthPartners, Allina Health, Children’s Hospital, North Memorial and St. Luke’s.

The nurses and systems have been in negotiations for new contracts since March, and nurses want measures in new contracts to help remedy staffing shortages and retention concerns.

They’re also highlighting the nonprofit status of their hospitals with an advertising campaign in a bid to “put patient care before profits,” according to the union.

Only two hospitals in Minnesota are for-profit, while the rest are

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**Dec. 5, 2022**

**Kaiser Permanente** 

Northern California

More than 20,000 healthcare workers at Kaiser Permanente facilities in Northern California voted in favor of authorizing a two-day strike from Nov. 21 to 22, according to a release from the California Nurses Association, the union representing them.

Those planning to strike include nurses and nurse practitioners at 21 Kaiser facilities in the region. They have been in negotiations for new contracts with the system since June, and want measures to improve staffing levels and boost hiring amid ongoing shortages, the union said in a release.

On Nov. 17, the nurses and system reached a tentative agreement, averting the strike. New contracts will include workplace violence prevention measures, pay raises and the addition of more than 2,000 new registered nurse and nurse practitioner roles, according to a union release.

The workers voted in favor of ratifying the deal, according to a Dec.

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**Dec. 2, 2022**

## **Tenet's Fountain Valley Regional Hospital**



Fountain Valley, California

Over 800 registered nurses, pharmacists, social workers, laboratory technicians and other healthcare staff at Tenet's Fountain Valley Hospital in Southern California voted in favor of authorizing a strike Friday, according to a release from the National Union of Healthcare Workers.

The hospital and workers have been negotiating over new contract terms since June. Those planning to strike want new work agreements addressing staffing shortages and safety issues, namely regarding adequate medical equipment.

Hospital workers filed 158 complaints to California's Department of Public Health from June to August, alleging violations of nurse-to-patient ratios, broken equipment and other safety issues, according to NUHW.

The union still needs to set a strike date, and said it has not yet determined a planned duration for the potential work stoppage.

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**Nov. 10, 2022**

## **Kaiser Permanente**



Los Angeles, California

Registered nurses at Kaiser Permanente's Los Angeles Medical Center voted in favor of authorizing a two-day strike from Nov. 21 to 22, according to a release from the California Nurses Association, the union representing them.

About 1,200 nurses plan to strike over nurse recruitment and patient assignment concerns they want addressed in new contracts, the release said. They've been in negotiations for new contracts with the system since September.

On Nov. 17, the nurses and system reached a tentative agreement,

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Oct. 14, 2022

## Temple University Hospital



Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Over 2,000 nurses and other healthcare workers at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia voted in favor of authorizing a strike Oct. 13 after failing to reach a deal on new contracts.

The workers want measures in new contracts to improve staffing and the retention, along with terms to prevent workplace violence.

The nurses are represented by Temple University Hospital Nurses Association, while the other healthcare workers are represented by Temple Allied Professionals — both affiliates of the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals.

The healthcare workers will need to give 10-day notice to the hospital before waging the strike.

The two sides reached a deal Nov. 7, averting the strike.

New contracts include enforceable staffing guidelines that are equivalent to nurse-to-patient ratios, according to the union. Other

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Sept. 26, 2022

## KPC Health



## Southern California

About 1,400 healthcare workers at six KPC facilities across Southern California voted in favor of authorizing a strike while negotiating new contracts with the system.

They planned to wage a five-day strike at the for-profit system starting Sept. 26, though the two sides reached an agreement the day prior, according to a release from Service Employees International Union United Healthcare Workers West, which represents the workers.

New agreements significantly raise wages and address workers' concerns around chronic short staffing and high turnover — key issues that led those workers to plan waging their strike, according to the union.

New contracts will cover a variety of job classes, including respiratory therapists, licensed vocational nurses, certified nursing assistants, radiology technologists, food service workers, operating

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**Sept. 15, 2022**

## Kaleida Health



Buffalo, New York

More than 6,300 healthcare workers at Kaleida Health in Buffalo, New York, could go on strike after voting in favor of authorizing a work stoppage Sept. 15.



Those who would strike include staff at Kaleida Health's Buffalo General Medical Center, Oishei Children's Hospital, Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital, HighPointe on Michigan, DeGraff Medical Park and various community-based clinics, according to a union release.

Staff within the nursing, clinical, technical, service and clerical departments have extended their contracts twice following months of bargaining without reaching an agreement on new contracts with the system, according to the Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 1168 and 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, which represent the workers.

Staffing is a key point of contention. Under New York's new staffing

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**Sept. 13, 2022**

## University of Wisconsin



Madison, Wisconsin

Hundreds of nurses at the University of Wisconsin voted in favor of authorizing a three-day strike in a bid to gain union recognition and the ability to engage in collective bargaining with the system, according to a release from SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin.

A 2011 state law bans collective bargaining for public workers with the exception of cost-of-living raises, and when a 2014 contract covering about 2,000 UW healthcare workers represented by Service Employees International Union expired in 2014, they lost union recognition, according to reporting from Wisconsin Public

Radio.

The state's attorney general in June said that hospital administrators can voluntarily engage in collective bargaining with employees. Nurses want the ability to bargain for new contracts that would include measures to improve staffing, turnover and other pandemic-driven challenges, according to the release.

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**Sept. 2, 2022**

## University of Michigan



Ann Arbor, Michigan

About 4,000 nurses at the University of Michigan voted in favor of authorizing a strike Sept. 2 while bargaining for new contracts with the system.

Nurses' contracts expired July 1 and in new contracts they want measures including language outlining the number of patients assigned per nurse, according to a release from the union representing them, the Michigan Nurses Association.

On Sept. 22, the nurses and system reached a tentative agreement on new contracts, effectively averting the strike, according to a release from the union.

The agreement includes an end to mandatory overtime, improved mechanisms for enforcing contractual workload ratios and competitive wages to boost recruitment and retainment efforts, the release said.

Nurses still have to vote to ratify the new terms.

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**Aug. 15, 2022**

## **Kaiser Permanente**



Northern California

More than 2,000 mental health clinicians at Kaiser Permanente facilities in Northern California said they plan to start an open-ended strike Aug. 15, according to a release from the union representing them, the National Union of Healthcare Workers.

Those planning to strike include psychologists, therapists, chemical dependency counselors and social workers who want increased staffing for behavioral health services and more manageable caseloads to provide adequate care in new contracts, according to the union.

The two sides have been in negotiations for new contracts for over a year and were near an agreement, according to an email statement from Kaiser.

During bargaining sessions in the days leading up to the strike date, clinicians accepted a wage offer from Kaiser, though were unable to get provisions around staffing and wait times they sought,

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**June 23, 2022**

## Kaiser Permanente Medical Center



Los Angeles, California

A thousand nurses at Kaiser Permanente's Los Angeles Medical Center voted to authorize a strike in June while negotiating new contracts with the system. Those nurses, represented by the California Nurses Association, want measures in new contracts that ensure they have adequate supplies and ancillary staff.

Nurses waged their one-day strike on June 23. The two sides have not yet reached a deal on new contracts. The hospital and nurses have been in negotiations since September 2021.

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**June 21, 2022**

## Palomar Health



San Diego, California

About 3,000 registered nurses and other healthcare workers at Palomar Medical Center Escondido and Palomar Medical Center Poway in San Diego voted to authorize a strike on June 8.

The nurses, represented by the California Nurses Association, and the system, had been negotiating new contract terms for 14 months, and were unable to reach an agreement on language around staffing and recruitment and retention efforts, among other items, according to the union.

Nurses gave notice on June 13 that they planned to strike for one

day on June 23. They reached a tentative agreement with the system June 21, averting the strike.

Those nurses voted to ratify three-year contracts, which include wage increases to better help recruit and retain staff, the hiring of more break nurses to allow others to rest and other staffing improvements focused on safety, according to the union.

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**June 5, 2022**

## Los Angeles County Hospitals



Los Angeles, California

Over 1,000 physician residents and interns at Los Angeles County Hospitals voted to authorize a strike on May 31. Those workers, represented by the Committee of Interns and Residents, a local of the Service Employees International Union, sought better wages amid rising inflation and high costs of living in the region.

On June 2, they notified the county they intended to strike from June 13 to June 15. The two sides reached a tentative agreement June 5 and the strike was averted.

The deal included salary and benefit proposals in line with resident demands, according to the union.

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**May 9, 2022**

## Cedars-Sinai Medical Center



Los Angeles, California

Hundreds of certified nursing assistants, technicians, environmental service and food service workers at Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles voted to authorize a five-day strike on April 9, in a bid to get measures in new contracts that address what they said is inadequate staffing, patient and worker safety concerns and low wages amid high inflation.

On May 9, those workers represented by Service Employees International Union United Healthcare Workers West began their strike, and they returned to work afterward without reaching a deal with the system.

The two sides reached an agreement and nurses ratified a three-year contract May 27 that increases the minimum wage to \$21 per hour by 2024, and includes average raises of more than 17% at the end of the contract, along with other wins for the union, according to a union release.

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**April 25, 2022**

## Stanford Healthcare



Northern California

About 5,000 nurses represented by the Committee for Recognition of Nursing Achievement voted to authorize a strike on April 8

at Stanford Healthcare and Stanford's Lucile Packard Children's Hospital in Northern California when they were unable to reach an agreement with the system on new employment contracts. Nurses wanted better staffing policies and higher wages to keep up with inflation and to help retain and recruit more staff.

On April 25, nurses waged their strike with no set end date. They reached a deal with the system about a week later and returned to work May 3.

New contracts include measures ensuring staffing is based on acuity, and nurses in units with high-acuity patients — which have been difficult to staff — will receive additional pay.

The deal also includes a 7% wage increase in the first year of the

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