

I am a Registered Nurse (RN) with 17 years of experience, currently working at Barton Memorial Hospital in South Lake Tahoe (Barton). In November of 2017, I participated in a union election at my facility conducted by the National Labor Relations Board. Based on my experience, I am writing to encourage the Board to maintain and enforce its current election rules.

The election process was relatively easy and generally clear to understand. This made it easier for union representatives and union-supporting nurses to accurately relay information about the process and timeline of the election with nurses. When issues came up, there was a clear process to follow in order to quickly resolve disagreements and proceed with the election. For example, when we were figuring out election logistic details, management originally suggested holding election polling at a gift shop warehouse in the hospital. Nurses had no idea where their suggested location was and we were therefore concerned that holding the election in such an unknown area might deter voter turnout. Because we were quickly informed of the hospital's location proposal, we were able to quickly respond with a better location suggestion. The Board Agent was then able to work with representatives from the union and the hospital to secure the more appropriate location. If there were not clear rules and guidelines in place, we may have been stuck with an undesirable voting location.

The time from petition filing to election was just about a month. In that time, the hospital had every opportunity to communicate to every RN—and management certainly did not waste that opportunity. The hospital held at least 8 mandatory meetings about the union where all RNs had to attend on work or paid time. The hospital also sent emails to nurses, distributed flyers, made videos, created a webpage, and even had doctors sending letters to nurses—all discouraging nurses from voting for the union. Every nurse got their message. During the month before the election, the environment was tense at the hospital in a way that I felt advantaged management in their anti-union messaging. If the process had been longer, management would have been even further advantaged. To be honest, it likely would not have made a difference at my facility—it would have just meant more wasted time and unnecessary tension—but I could see at other facilities where workers are more intimidated, added delay to election could seriously undermine the integrity of the election process.

Nurses of course did not have the same platform as hospital management in sharing pro-union messages. We could not host mandatory meetings; we weren't even allowed to talk about the union in the hallways. However, nurses were determined and, thanks to the Board's rules, we were able find ways to share information. Because the union was provided with the phone numbers and email addresses of nurses eligible to vote, we were able to make calls and provide text updates to interested RNs about union meetings and other information. This was especially important at our facility because some of the units are located in remote buildings. For example, one of our surgery centers is located across the state line. It would have been near impossible to share information with one another without the appropriate contact information. Having this information helped level the playing field and ensured that nurses could get information from both sides, not just from management.

Having the ability to file the petition electronically was also very helpful. The nearest NLRB office to our facility is over four hours away by car. It would have been a real hardship

for any Barton nurse to have to make that trip in-person, especially in the winter where our weather makes long drives daunting and dangerous. The e-filing process was simple and reliable. It's just common sense to have e-filing as an option.

For all of these reasons, my colleagues and I would like to see the Board's current election rules remain in place as they are.

Thank you for your consideration,

D. Dean RN.

Dorothy Dean