

# Flex Time Ruling Could Net Nurses Thousands of Dollars

“If you’re allowing Travelers to work instead of in-house registry or SRP staff, the hospital is paying out a lot more money. It doesn’t make sense financially for the hospital or for the nurses dedicated to the Providence St. Joseph family.

**Laura Thibodeaux, RN**  
4 NE  
Shop Steward

*If you think you were inappropriately flexed off during the time period of November 28, 2007 until present, please contact Union Representative Tina Bordas, LVN, by email at [bordast@seiu121rn.org](mailto:bordast@seiu121rn.org) Please list the dates and names of those involved. Also include a brief description of how you believe your call-off did not follow our SEIU 121RN contract.*

In a final ruling on what was originally six grievances filed for nurses in NICU, our Union successfully proved that St. Joseph Medical Center management inappropriately allowed traveling nurses to work while calling off permanent staff or in-house registry nurses throughout the hospital. Arbitrator Michael Prihar wrote in his Feb. 1, 2010 opinion:

- The employer violated the Collective Bargaining Agreement in the scheduling of staff and use of Travelers.
- The remedy issue is remanded to the two parties. Our Union Representative Tina Bordas will now gather information on those nurses called off inappropriately and submit her findings to management.

Arbitrator Prihar stipulated that if our Union and management are unable to come to agreement on the remedy, that he will then decide what award is appropriate.

Our Union Representative Tina Bordas says that the award could amount to “thousands of dollars in back pay for inappropriate call-offs for some nurses” since the time period of the complaint extends back to Nov. 28, 2007.

*What was happening, in short, is management would flex off an in-house nurse after flexing off one traveling nurse. However, our contract stipulates that ALL traveling nurses within a unit must be flexed off before an in-house nurse. Our contract also stipulates that management must start at the top of the call-off list each shift, not where they left off previously. Our contract is not designed to benefit higher-paid traveling nurses; it is designed to protect in-house nurses whose career is based at St. Joseph.*



“I’m so excited about this win for our Union! This is great news for all the registered nurses committed to this hospital and our patients.”

**Cynthia Triola, RN**  
ICU-CCU  
Shop Steward