

For Immediate Release:

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SEIU 721 Serve Notice of Strike to all Riverside County Medical Provider Facilities

Moreno Valley, CA, – SEIU 721 members at the Riverside County Regional Medical Center served official notice today, Jan. 20, 2012, to hospital management that they will join with other SEIU 721 county workers on strike Jan. 31, 2012, against unfair labor practices unless the county agrees to return to the negotiation table to bargain in good faith to reach a fair settlement.

Over 35 dietitians, licensed vocational nurses, surgical technicians, respiratory therapists, and registered nurses delivered the notice to Chief Nursing Officer Annette Greenwood.

“After 25 years of county service I am delivering this strike notice,” Margaret Wisdom, LVN II, told a hospital representative. “We don’t want to strike, but we will.”

Last month, the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) issued its first of many complaints against Riverside County for committing unfair labor practices against SEIU 721 members.

Now, in a demand to have their voices heard, almost 6,000 registered nurses, health care providers and other vital public service workers are compelled to take unprecedented actions against Riverside County by holding their first one-day strike Jan. 31, 2012, in protest of these unfair labor practices imposed by Riverside County Board of Supervisors.

Health care premiums and cost of living have risen each year while wages and benefits remain reduced or stagnant. Meanwhile, the Board of Supervisors continue to gift county management, their relatives and themselves with pay raises and perks, including an expensive supplemental pension plan that costs taxpayers millions of dollars annually.

“Hospital management would rather bring in temporary and inexperienced nurses at almost \$2,000 a day to cover a 12-hour shift during a strike rather than pay standard wages to a highly trained staff that provide care to Riverside County citizens,” said Maryanne Ashton, operating room nurse.

SEIU 721 public service workers take pride in the services they provide and are reaching out to the community to highlight abuses among the county’s top brass while frontline workers at the bottom face foreclosure and bankruptcy.

SEIU 721 members will present Riverside County Board of Supervisors the official strike notice covering all other locations next week.

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Service Employees International Union Local 721 represents over 8,000 public service workers, including registered nurses, social workers, 911 dispatchers, accountants, and other professionals in Riverside County and inland area cities.