

# Speak Out Now in Healthcare

*A workplace newsletter for Highland and Kaiser workers*

February 27th, 2024

## To Save a Buck, Let's All Catch TB!

We know that Kaiser is notorious for cutting corners, but the recent email sent to all Kaiser employees that the hospital would no longer be mandating tuberculosis (TB) testing, appeared almost like an early April Fool's joke. Cal OSHA mandates TB testing for all school employees and healthcare workers in the state of California, where workers are exposed to a high frequency of people or laboratory pathogens.

Let's use some common sense – healthcare workers are exposed to high volumes of people daily, and the majority of them are sick! Now let's look at the law – TB testing is mandatory under Title 22 (T22) California Code of Regulation. So what is Kaiser playing at?

Kaiser, Kaiser, you can't hide, we can see your reckless side! We know the hospital chain is trying to save a buck, but why put patients and workers in such danger?

## What's Going on With Bargaining at AHS?

Our Highland SEIU-1021 contract expires May 31st, which is only 3 months away! So far, we've had a contract kick-off rally, where we chanted, ate some burritos, and got ourselves a purple union t-shirt. We've also had some t-shirt giveaway days. But none of these events have answered: what's going on in the bargaining room?

Given that the upcoming contract could affect our workflow, our benefits, and our rights, we deserve to know what improvements, or takeaways, are being discussed.

After all, a good contract isn't won at the bargaining table - it's won when informed workers stand up for themselves, take action, and fight for what they deserve.



 [speakoutsocialists.org](https://speakoutsocialists.org)

## Trapped Indoors

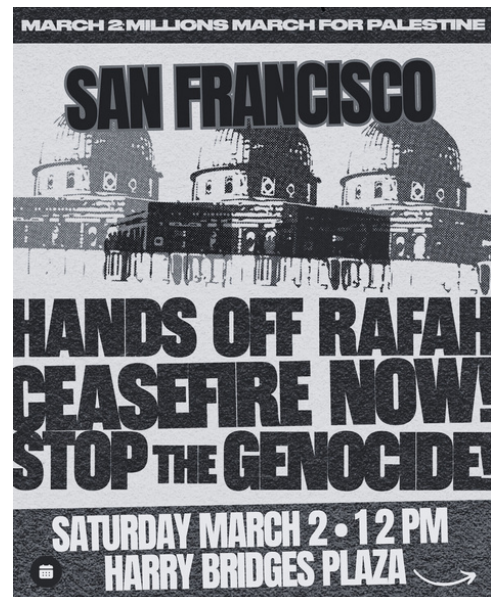
In a recent memo sent by the Kaiser administration, we were warned not to leave the downtown Oakland building during our lunch breaks. This was after a couple of workers at Kaiser were victims of theft in the nearby area. It is an awful experience to be robbed when you are winding down from long hours at work, but is hiding at our workplace really the solution? While being potential victims of crime sounds horrible, so does the idea of being trapped inside, with no place to go but the building where we already work for most of our waking hours. Once you are stuck inside, it is an easy thing to just keep working, and never take a proper mental or physical break. In sum, what is really at stake is our mental sanity.

Crime has deep roots in the way that our society is thoroughly unequal, with so many people living in poverty with no opportunities in sight. Because of that, coming up with solutions that don't address these deep-rooted causes might cause more harm than good. Especially if these solutions come from management, who consciously or not are always trying to make us work more.

In other words, before we agree with whatever easy fix management has in mind, it is worth looking at what we might be sacrificing by going along with their solutions. Still, together we can take steps to minimize our risks, such as going out to lunch in groups, or walking our coworkers to their cars. We keep each other safe!

## Come find us this Saturday!

Look for the Speak Out Now booth



IG: @sonsocialists