

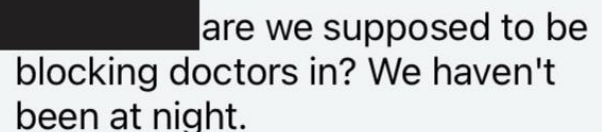
October 15, 2021**Immediate Release****Contact:** JoAnn Cavanaugh, Director Public Relations**Office:** (716) 706-2061 | **Cell:** (716) 228-4886 | **Email:** jcav@chsbuffalo.org

Catholic Health Statement in Response to Huffmaster Companies Work in New York State

Mercy Hospital is continuing to provide safe, high-quality care to patients during CWA’s strike. Having adequate security through this ongoing work stoppage, which has included intimidating actions, verbal threats, and possibly illegal behaviors by individuals on the picket line, is a critical element in protecting Mercy Hospital’s patients, visitors, suppliers and others. Huffmaster, the company providing replacement healthcare workers and security staff to Mercy Hospital during the strike, believes it has operated legally in New York for many years and is working closely with the Attorney General’s office to resolve this situation.

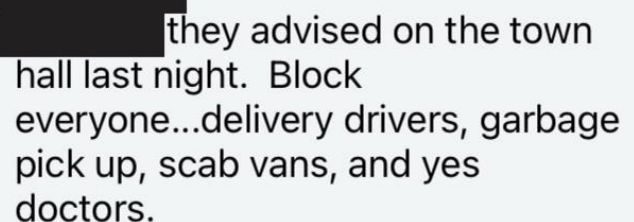
The Attorney General’s argument hinges on her office’s interpretation of the law and whether Huffmaster is acting as an employment agency. Catholic Health’s counsel notes that “Huffmaster is supplying Mercy Hospital with temporary healthcare workers and security staff to ensure patient health and safety during the CWA strike. Concerns have been raised that Huffmaster is not licensed by New York State as an employment agency. Huffmaster, however, is not acting as an employment agency, but rather is using its own employees to provide short-term, emergency nursing and security services. Huffmaster does not need to be a licensed employment agency in order to supply these emergency services with its own employees.”

Proving why Mercy Hospital needed to bring in additional security during CWA’s strike, on Tuesday evening during a CWA-led town hall meeting, the union advised strikers to “block everyone...delivery drivers, garbage pickup, and doctors.” Screenshots (pictured here) of posts made on an active union member’s Facebook page, reveal the direction CWA provided. After Catholic Health reported the harassing posts to Facebook, they were removed. Union guidance for intimidation like this, and other actions on the picket line, only validates the need for additional security as we focus on ensuring continuity of care for our patients while working to resolve these negotiations.



[redacted] are we supposed to be blocking doctors in? We haven't been at night.

4h Like Reply



[redacted] they advised on the town hall last night. Block everyone...delivery drivers, garbage pick up, scab vans, and yes doctors.



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As CWA's strike passes the two-week mark today, Catholic Health maintains it has presented a fair, market-competitive offer on wages and benefits, and addressed the union's staffing concerns with a progressive staffing proposal.

During her brief visit today to CWA's strike, the Attorney General led picketers in a chant: "What do we want?/A contract!/When do we want it? Now!"

We completely agree. We are ready to welcome Mercy Hospital associates back to work and settle these negotiations for our associates at Kenmore Mercy Hospital and Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus as well.

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