

# GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## Department of Employment Services



MURIEL BOWSER  
MAYOR

DR. UNIQUE MORRIS-HUGHES  
DIRECTOR

January 15, 2019

The Honorable Elissa Silverman  
Councilmember At-Large  
Chair, Committee on Labor and Workforce  
Development  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Providence Hospital

Dear Councilmember Silverman:

In response to your letter of concern for the anticipated closure of Providence Hospital, the Department of Employment Services (DOES) has provided the requested information regarding a Point of Contact, the Rapid Response plan, Unemployment Insurance, Final Paycheck, and Employee Rights. As we coordinate our plan of action to support District residents employed at Providence Hospital, we look to you and your office to serve as a supplementary conduit for the dissemination of this information. It is important that all District residents stay informed, engaged, and supported during economic transitions to identify new opportunities.

### **Point of Contact**

As the Bowser Administration addresses the needs of District workers, please be assured DOES will provide the workers at the Providence Hospital with world class service and the highest level of attention. Our Customer Navigation Center, which can be reached at (202) 724 – 7000, will serve as the main point of contact for all workers affected in the closure by assisting them in navigating the District's workforce system.

### **Rapid Response Plan**

The DOES Rapid Response (RR) plan for Providence Hospital deployed on September 25, 2017, during an Open House meeting at Providence Hospital. Over 200 Rapid Response packets were delivered during the initial meeting.

As required in the deployment of the Rapid Response plan, the DOES Rapid Response Coordinator contacted Judith Welch, in the Providence Hospital Human Resource Department, via email within 48 hours of receiving notice of the impending layoff and closure. The Rapid Response Coordinator's message explained the workforce services available to the employer and employees,

as a result of the closure, and arranged a way to get information about the services to affected workers as soon as possible.

During the initial communications, the Rapid Response team provided Providence Hospital with information about the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker program, the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (W.A.R.N.) Act notice, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA), and National Emergency Grants (NEG) that might possibly apply to this situation.

The Rapid Response team met with the affected workers on five (5) separate occasions at Providence Hospital worksite – September 25, 2017; October 13, 2018; November 9, 2018; November 19, 2018; and December 13, 2018. Over 393 workers attended the meetings and received Rapid Response packets detailing the services, programs, and benefits available. Of the attendees, 57 workers registered for DC Networks. At each meeting, the Rapid Response team included staff from Unemployment Insurance (UI) team, Workforce Development Specialist, Business Service Group (BSG), and the Workforce on Wheels (WOW) team to provide issue-specific information. The Workforce Development Specialist discussed all of the services provided at the American Job Center (AJC) – career counseling, job search assistance, resume preparation, interviewing skills workshops, and job training program. The UI team member explained how to file a claim, when to file a claim, provided a UI overview, UI benefits information, factors that may affect the weekly benefit amount, and much more.

Additionally, the Rapid Response team coordinated with partners in the Business Service Group (BSG), the Unemployment Insurance team, and American Job Center (AJC) staff to organize industry-driven hiring events or customized recruitments to ensure timely employability to participants affected by the layoff and/or closure. (Attached document for Healthcare Openings within the last 30 days)

The Rapid Response team is also working with external partners, such as the Mayor's Office for Planning Economic Development, the Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity, the Workforce Investment Council, the D.C. Chamber of Commerce, and other foundations, philanthropic and charitable organizations that offer supportive services to dislocated workers. These external partners also attended the Rapid Response meeting and presented their program information to the workers. Through coordination efforts with these agencies, the Rapid Response team has given workers at Providence Hospital an advantage in accessing newly created jobs by emerging and expanding businesses.

More details regarding each meeting are listed below:

**September 25, 2017: Open House 9am-1pm**

- Rapid Response Information Session
- DOES distributed over 200 Rapid Response packets detailing the services, programs, and benefits available.

**October 13, 2018 9am-4pm (\*\*Official Rapid Response Event\*\*)**

- WOW Mobile Bus on site from 9am-4pm

- Rapid Response Presentation
- DOES distributed detailed information packets to attendees
- Rapid Response packet attached

**November 9, 2018: Open House/Employment Fair** (Flyer attached)

- DOES distributed detailed information packets to 101 attendees
- 28 out of 101 registered in DC Networks
- Five (5) have opened UI Claims

**November 19, 2018: Open House/Resource Fair**

- DOES distributed detailed information packets to 69 attendees
- 12 out of 69 registered in DC Networks
- Two (2) retired
- RR packets hand delivered with explanation of benefits provided

**December 13, 2018: Information Session**

- Provided detailed information to 24 attendees
- 17 out of 24 registered in DC Networks
- Two (2) have opened UI Claims
- RR packets hand delivered with explanation of benefits provided
- 69-page packet hand delivered of open healthcare positions provided by the BSG team

**Unemployment Insurance**

The Unemployment Compensation team has provided support and personnel assistance as a part of the Rapid Response meetings at Providence Hospital. The DOES staff disseminated information regarding how to apply for Unemployment Insurance (UI) and what is needed to certify for weekly benefits during these meetings.

It is important to note that Providence Hospital, as a reimbursing employer under the District's Unemployment Compensation Act, is self-insured and billed quarterly – on the first day of the month following the end of a quarter for the reimbursable benefit charges paid to eligible claimants during the quarter.

As a reimbursing employer, Providence Hospital has filed and reimbursed all UI tax liabilities in a timely manner over the last three (3) years to the UI Trust Fund. As of the third quarter of 2018, Providence Hospital filed and reimbursed all required wages in the third quarter of 2018 and does not have a tax balance.

For Providence Hospital to remain in compliance with the District's Unemployment Compensation Act after it ceases operations, it must file Wage & Contribution reports on January 31, 2019, for the fourth quarter of 2018, and on April 30, 2019, for the first quarter of 2019. This will allow DOES to insure proper reimbursement of the UI Trust Fund for Providence Hospital workers paid as a result of the closure.

Providence Hospital is owned by Ascension Health Ministry Services, one of the largest Catholic health systems in the world. Should Providence Hospital fail to remit payments due to reimburse the District's UI Trust Fund for benefit charges paid to its former employees, Ascension Health Ministry Services would then become liable for reimbursements and any applicable interest and penalties.

### **Final Paycheck/ Employee Rights**

As DOES strives to identify and recover every payment owed to workers under the District's sick leave, minimum wage, and employment laws, we continually look to engage, educate, and inform residents of their rights.

As a part of our comprehensive strategy to engage employers and employees in the District, the DOES Office of Wage-Hour initiated annual Business Roundtable trainings in October 2015 with Providence Hospital and others in the DC Hospital Association to educate them on the DC Wage-Hour laws. The trainings provided information on the following:

- Timely Wage Payment during employment and at termination;
- Hiring Notices and Record Keeping;
- Accrued Sick Leave;
- Minimum Wage and Overtime;
- Commuting Benefits; and
- How to address potential Wage Claims.

To date, Providence Hospital does not have any open investigations regarding wage theft. The only complaint received was voluntarily withdrawn and closed on October 11, 2017.

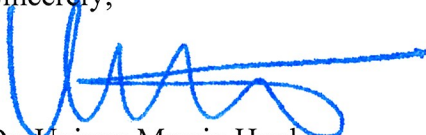
### **Attachments**

As noted in the information provided above, additional attachments have been included to facilitate support and access to all residents. The following information is attached:

- MedStar Washington Hospital Openings
- Rapid Response Presentation

The information provided should assure you of our commitment to serving the residents of the District of Columbia. If you have any questions, please contact me by email at Unique.Morris-Hughes2@dc.gov or by phone at (202) 671-1900.

Sincerely,



Dr. Unique Morris-Hughes

Cc: Muriel Bowser, Mayor  
Brenda Donald, Interim Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Development  
Ahna Smith, Executive Director, Workforce Investment Council