

## **Mount Sinai Bargaining Update**

Dear Colleagues,

We write to provide you with the latest updates on our collective bargaining negotiations with the Sinai Postdoctoral Organizing Committee (SPOC-UAW).

On Thursday, September 21, Mount Sinai had its 27<sup>th</sup> bargaining session with the union. During this session, the parties focused on a few remaining non-economic proposals. The union provided Mount Sinai with counterproposals on Grievance and Arbitration, Research Integrity, and the Prohibition Against Discrimination and Harassment. The union also responded to some of Mount Sinai's management proposals, including No Strike No Lockout and Policies and Procedures. Mount Sinai provided the union with a verbal response on the parties' "Just Cause" Package (a packaged proposal discussing Performance Reviews, Discipline and Dismissal, Probationary Period, Appointments and Reappointments, and Appointment Security).

In our response on the parties' "Just Cause" package, we emphasized Mount Sinai's need for a probationary period. Specifically, we explained how, without agreement on this proposal or another similar provision, Mount Sinai cannot agree to the remainder of the parties' "Just Cause" package. We asked the union to engage with us on this article and are looking forward to its counterproposal.

On Friday, September 29, as promised, Mount Sinai provided the union with a comprehensive set of initial economic counterproposals.

Mount Sinai's economic package contained competitive proposals that, if accepted, would put Mount Sinai wages above those currently received by postdocs at peer institutions. For instance, Mount Sinai proposed increasing the current minimum postdoc salary from \$58,661 to \$65,000. This 10 percent increase would put Mount Sinai minimum salaries above the minimums currently received at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and Weill Cornell Medical College. \$65,000 is also the new minimum salary agreed to recently by the University of California schools with their postdoc union. Mount Sinai's compensation proposal also included an experiential scale in which, for each additional year of service as a postdoc at Mount Sinai, a postdoc's salary would increase by 1 percent. Many peer institutions recognize years of experience, and increasing salaries by 1 percent for each additional year of service would be largely in line with the scale used by the National Institutes of Health. Further, as part of this economic package, Mount Sinai proposed increasing numerous entitlements for postdocs, including: (i) increasing the number of vacation days from 15 to 18; (ii) increasing the number of sick days from 12 to 15; and (iii) providing postdocs with three days of bereavement leave.

In response to these economic proposals, the union asked clarifying questions to better understand Mount Sinai's position. Mount Sinai provided the union with written responses to a majority of its questions prior to our most recent bargaining session on Thursday, October 12.

During our bargaining session on October 12, Mount Sinai provided the union with responses to its proposals on Grievance and Arbitration, Research Integrity, No Strike No Lock Out, Policies and Procedures, and the Prohibition Against Discrimination and Harassment. Mount Sinai continues to modify its positions in an attempt to bring the parties closer together. For example, in Grievance and Arbitration, Mount Sinai agreed to impose deadlines as to when arbitration

hearings must take place and when arbitration decisions must be rendered. Similarly, in Policies and Procedures, Mount Sinai agreed to the union's proposal to bargain over the effects of any changes to policies that are applicable to postdocs. During this session, the union asked many questions regarding Mount Sinai's economic proposals from September 29 and provided Mount Sinai with a few initial economic counterproposals, including Compensation, Childcare, Housing, and Insurance Benefits. The union plans to explain the nature of these proposals to Mount Sinai at our next bargaining session.

The parties are scheduled for two additional sessions on Wednesday, October 18, and Friday, October 20. We will continue to keep you updated on the bargaining process, including through a website we have set up at <https://icahn.mssm.edu/education/postdoc/supporting-our-postdocs> where these bargaining updates can be found. Please stop by and check it periodically. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact either of us directly.