

KANSAS CITY VETERANS AFFAIR NURSING UPDATE

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Pay Scale: A nursing salary review was completed in 2022 and it was discovered that many of the KCVA nurses salaries are lower than nurses working outside VA hospitals.

The KCVA has 17 different Nurse salaries based on their different skills and certifications. It is difficult to compare other hospitals nurses' salaries with the 17 scales at the KCVA. The salary review showed that in order to make sure all of our nurses get an increase, the KCVA needs to move to one pay scale. At this time agency will continue to review pay periodically in order to stay in line with the community. After HR/Payroll processes the new pay scale every RN at the KCVA will get a raise averaging between 5k-10k or more per year. The VA realizes that all nurses are valuable and are to be rewarded. The weekend and night differentials will remain the same. Each nurse will remain at their current step and level.

Retention Incentive Pay: The retention incentive will be going away soon (amount varies from 10-20%). This money was given to nurses in hard to retain and recruit areas. Some managers have been calling the retention pay "critical care pay", however, this extra pay was recruitment and retention pay. Nurses will still be eligible for awards if you do additional training or apply for certifications.

Compressed Work Schedule: The 72/80 schedule is not going to be for everyone. However, those who are in patient and who work 12 hour shifts can opt in for this scheduling. It is noted that some units are interested in this scheduling option but for the time being it is going to be utilized in the hard to retain areas which only include in patient 12 hour shift nurses.

The 72/80 scheduling is part of the VA handbook which only applies to Registered Nurses. KCVA is one of only four VA Medical Centers in the country who is utilizing the 72/80 scheduling. AFGE realizes that management is excluding some areas in which RNs work. HR has offered the compressed tour to the nurses they find hard to recruit and retain. AFGE cannot file a grievance unless the agency has violated the master agreement, MOU, policy, law, statute or handbook regulation. Implementing the compressed work schedule is not a violation of any of the above. Offering the compressed work tour to only a select few is not a violation and it is actually a management right.

Float Pay: The KCVA does not offer float incentives or awards. HR has no plan to change this.

Making changes: Employees, and anyone who wants to see changes, needs to call or write their politicians and urge them to support VA initiatives.

