



# **COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

**BETWEEN**

**THE GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA**

**&**



***ST. LUCIA NURSES ASSOCIATION***

**April 01, 2016 ~ March 31, 2022**

**BETWEEN**

**THE GOVERNMENT OF ST. LUCIA**  
(Hereinafter referred to as the Employer)

**AND**

**THE ST. LUCIA NURSES ASSOCIATION**  
(Hereinafter referred to as the Association)

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## **PREAMBLE**

### **BARGAINING UNIT**

CNO – Chief Nursing Officer  
ND – Nursing Director  
PNO – Principal Nursing Officers  
DS – Departmental Sisters  
NA – Nurse Anesthetist  
PHNS – Public Health Nursing Supervisors  
NP – Nurse Practitioners  
WS – Ward Sisters  
CN – Charge Nurse  
CHN – Community Health Nurses  
PHN – Public Health Nurse  
SN – Staff Nurse  
RNA – Nursing Assistants

### **Intent and Purpose of Agreement**

It is the intent and purpose of the Employer and the Association to set forth herein the agreed provisions covering salaries, hours of work and other working conditions, in order to promote and maintain mutually satisfactory relations between both parties and to achieve the highest level of worker performance and morale consistent with the good and optimum productivity of the Nursing Service.

In furtherance of this purpose, the Employer and the Association both acknowledged and agree to honour and recognise the respective rights and obligations herein and discharge faithfully the duties and functions attributed to each other.

### **ARTICLE 1 - PERIOD OF AGREEMENT**

- 1.1 This agreement shall take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2022 unless revised by mutual consent, and shall continue in force until renegotiated.
- 1.2 In the event of either party desiring to revise this agreement three (3) months' notice shall be given in writing. When such notice relates to revision of the terms of this agreement, the proposed amendments shall not in any circumstance become effective until the expiry of the aforementioned three (3) months' notice or until the day after this agreement is terminated if a revised agreement is negotiated before the expiry date of the agreement.
- 1.3 Upon receipt of notice for revision there shall be a joint meeting between representatives of both parties within thirty (30) days of the receipt of such notices for the purpose of discussion of the proposed amendments.

## **ARTICLE 2 - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

- 2.1 The parties agree that all the necessary procedures and actions shall be taken to implement the provisions of the Collective Agreement within a reasonable time after the signing of the agreement and approval by Cabinet.
- 2.2 This shall apply to all clauses of the Agreement except those for which there are prescribed times.

## **ARTICLE 3 - ASSOCIATION'S MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1 **Bargaining Unit**  
CNO – Chief Nursing Officer  
ND – Nursing Director  
PNO – Principal Nursing Officers  
DS – Departmental Sisters  
NA – Nurse Anesthetist  
PHNS – Public Health Nursing Supervisors  
NP – Nurse Practitioners  
WS – Ward Sisters  
CN – Charge Nurse  
CHN – Community Health Nurses  
PHN – Public Health Nurse  
SN – Staff Nurses  
RNA –Nursing Assistants
- 3.2 All Employees are eligible to become and remain members in good standing of the Association.
- 3.3 The Employer agrees to acquaint new Employees with the terms and conditions of the Collective Agreement.
- 3.4 The Employer shall deduct from the salary of every Employee who is a member of the Association on his written authorisation, any dues stipulated by the Association.
- 3.5 Deductions shall cease to be made when the authorisation is cancelled in writing by the individual Employee concerned and copied to the Secretary of the Association. Such cancellation shall not take effect until the expiration of fifteen (15) days thereafter.

## **ARTICLE 4 - ASSOCIATION'S RIGHTS, SECURITY AND FUNCTIONS**

- 4.1 Within the limits of this Agreement and of the relevant provisions of the Saint Lucia Constitution Order, Cap. 1.01 and/or local laws, the Association shall have the right to exercise the functions of a Trade Union.

- 4.2 The Association shall keep the Employer informed of the names of the Officials and Shop Stewards representing the Employees. Not more than two Shop stewards shall be elected by any Ministry/Department or Branch to represent the Employee. The Employer agrees to recognise the Shop Stewards or any other authorised representatives of the Association.
- 4.3 The Employer agrees that special time off duty may be granted by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health for the Shop Stewards or Officials to attend to matters directly affecting the Association's members but providing that reasonable notice is given and that the Employer's business is not adversely affected. Official admittance to any work place is to be allowed during working hours, to investigate specific complaints from employees provided that a mutually accepted time is arranged with the Permanent Secretary.
- 4.4 The Employer agrees to award the President and Secretary each one (1) day off weekly to attend to the business of the Association in the interest of the profession and ultimately the client.

#### **ARTICLE 5 - EMPLOYER'S RIGHTS AND FUNCTIONS**

- 5.1 The Association recognises that it is the right of the Employer to exercise the regular and customary functions of management to direct the work force to ensure that the purpose(s) of their employment are fulfilled expeditiously, effectively and efficiently. The Employer further agrees to copy to the Union all circulars to the Ministry and Departments affecting the professional conduct of Employees.
- 5.2 These rights are to be construed within the limits of the Constitution, the Laws of the State and the Collective Agreement.

#### **ARTICLE 6 - CONTINUING EDUCATION**

- 6.1 The Employer recognises that the knowledge base of the Profession continues to expand and that continuous education and training are required for updating and upgrading the knowledge and skill of the nursing personnel.

Therefore, programmes shall be made available to prepare nursing personnel for specific areas of nursing service, in particular, specialised areas of nursing care.

Thus, the Association can make specialized training recommendations to the Ministry of Health for inclusion in the National Training Priority List.

- 6.2 In pursuance of the above, the Association and the Employer will co-operate in organising professional and related educational activities such as seminars, workshops and conferences.
- 6.3 The Employer agrees to use its best endeavour to provide refresher courses for nurses in

conjunction with the Nurses Association.

- 6.4 The Employer and the Association agree to make attendance to in-service education programmes compulsory as the nature of nursing is such that the health of clients takes priority.
- 6.5 The Employer further agrees that all correspondence relating to continuing education shall be copied to the SLNA.
- 6.6 All nurses shall be granted thirty (30) hours per annum to facilitate continuing education courses for the purpose of re-licensure as stipulated by the General Nursing Council of Saint Lucia. Such hours are to be managed by the Health Facility to which the nurse is assigned.

#### **ARTICLE 7 - APPOINTMENTS**

- 7.1 The Employer shall submit recommendations to the relevant authority for confirmation in post, when employees have acted in a vacant post for more than a period of six (6) months to one (1) year; and have satisfied the qualification and performance criteria for the post.
- 7.2 The Employer further agrees that all efforts shall be made to fill vacancies from within the Nursing Service.

#### **ARTICLE 8 - HOURS OF WORK**

- 8.1 It is recognized that the Nursing Service demands a twenty-four (24) hour a day coverage (service). In order to facilitate this efficiently, hours of work shall be rostered to include day and night shifts.
- 8.2 The hours of work for the Employees within the nursing service shall be thirty-seven and one half (37 ½) hours per week as follows:
  - (i) Employees working over a five-day week period: Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
  - (ii) Employees working a rostered (shift system) five (5) day week period established per institution. (6:45 am – 2 pm and 1 pm – 9 pm)
- 8.3 Employees on the night shift shall work a four-day week (9 pm – 7 am: 40 hours per week)
- 8.4 Employees working in operating theatre shall work 30 hours in the operating room but their normal duty would be 37½ hours per week.



- 8.5 The Employer may require the Employee to work for longer hours than that prescribed whenever the public interest necessitates.
- 8.6 Time off shall be given in lieu of overtime.
- 8.7 Meal breaks for reasonable durations are as follows:
- 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – 1 hour for lunch break - VH + Comm. + SLNMWC + TP  
6:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – 30 mins tea break  
1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. – 1 hour for dinner break.  
9:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m. – 2 hours meals/rest break
- VH – Victoria Hospital*  
*Comm. – Community Service/Health Centres*  
*SLNMWC – Saint Lucia National Mental Wellness Centre*  
*TP – Turning Point*
- 8.8 Employees working in a Psychiatric Institution shall work 35 ½ hours over a five-day week period.

#### **ARTICLE 9 - TIME OFF FOR URGENT AND PRIVATE AFFAIRS**

In normal circumstances time off to attend to urgent private matters should be taken from accumulated vacation leave, but in extra ordinary circumstances, the employer may agree to give time off not exceeding five (5) days in any one year.

#### **ARTICLE 10 - SHIFT, PUBLIC HOLIDAYS AND ALLOWANCES**

- 10.1 Shift workers shall be given equivalent time off in lieu of overtime for working on public holidays or designated holidays.
- 10.2 An "On Call" Allowance of \$100.00 per month shall be paid to Employees who are posted in the Out districts/Communities and whose movements are restricted outside their normal working hours as a result of being on call, for emergencies related to nursing. Employees are on call from 4:30 pm – 8:00 am.
- 10.3 An Employee required to work between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 7.00 a.m. will receive a night differential allowance of \$5.00 per hour.
- 10.4 Any Employee required to carry out supervisory duties on night shifts shall receive a monthly allowance equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of their basic salary.

10.5 The Employer agrees to pay to specialist nurses in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Operating Theatre (OT), Renal Unit, and Nurse Anaesthetist whose expertise may be required to better manage patients in emergencies, an on-call allowance of \$45.00 and call-out allowance of \$125.00.

10.6 **Sessions for nurses**

All nurses (Staff Nurses, Community Health Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Ward Sisters/Charge Nurses, Departmental Sisters and Retired Nurses) who are in good professional standing can work sessions at a rate of twenty dollars (\$20.00) per hour on a day shift performing normal nursing duties and twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per hour on holidays, weekends or at nights.

All Nursing Assistants (RNAs) who are in good professional standing can work sessions at a rate of fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per hour on a day shift performing their normal duties and twenty dollars \$20.00 per hour on holidays, weekends or at nights.

10.7 Supervisors (Ward Sisters/Charge Nurses, Departmental Sisters and Nurse Practitioners) who are in good professional standing can work sessions at a rate of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per hour on a normal day shift, and thirty dollars (\$30.00) per hour on a night shift, weekends and public holidays. This rate will only be paid when they function within the aforementioned capacities.

10.8 The Employer agrees to pay a sum of seventy-five (\$75.00) monthly to all Registered Nurses/Midwives, who are in good standing and practicing Midwifery.

**Article 11 - UNIFORM AND LAUNDRY ALLOWANCE**

11.1 The Employer agrees to provide uniforms to employees who by the nature of their job necessitates them to wear special uniforms. A Uniform Allowance of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) monthly shall be granted to all Nurses eligible for full uniforms.

11.2 The Employer agrees that a shoe allowance of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00) per annum shall be granted to all Nurses eligible for full uniforms.

11.3 The Employer agrees to pay a sum of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) monthly to the employee as a Laundry Allowance.

**ARTICLE 12 - TRAVELLING & SUBSISTENCE**

12.1 Travelling and subsistence allowances shall be paid in accordance with the approved rates by Cabinet.

### **ARTICLE 13 - TRANSPORTATION**

- 13.1 The Employer agrees to provide transportation from established locations to and from work for the Employees.

### **ARTICLE 14 - RELOCATION ALLOWANCE**

- 14.1 This allowance shall be in accordance with Government's policy on Relocation Allowance.
- 14.2 The Employee shall have a right to appeal in accordance with current Public Service Rules and Regulations.

### **ARTICLE 15 - OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 15.1 The Association and the Employer shall comply with the provisions of the Labour Act, **Cap. 16.04.**
- 15.2 A Safety and Health Committee shall be established and composed of one (1) Representative appointed by the Association and two (2) Representatives appointed by the Employer. One of which shall be the Chairman.
- 15.3 The Safety and Health Committee shall hold meetings as requested by the Association or by the Employer to deal with all unsafe, hazardous or dangerous working conditions. Representatives of the Association shall suffer no loss of pay for attending such meetings. Copies of minutes of all Committee Meetings shall be sent to the Employer and the Association.
- 15.4 Employees working in any unsanitary or dangerous condition shall be supplied with the necessary tools, safety equipment and protective clothing. Free medical attention or examination shall be provided for such Employees by the Employer at least twice a year.
- 15.5 The Employer shall provide compulsory physical examinations for all employees annually because the nature of nursing puts the Employees and their families at risk.

The Employer will identify a Consultant/Physician for the first three (3) months of each year for that purpose.

- 15.6 The Safety and Health Committee shall be notified of each accident or injury sustained in the course of employment and shall investigate and report to the Employer and the Association as soon as possible on the nature and cause of the accident or injury.
- 15.7 The Employer provides protective gear to safely accommodate nurses in the unlikely event of an airborne epidemic.

## **ARTICLE 16 - VACATION LEAVE**

- 16.1 All leave shall be calculated in working days.
- 16.2 An Employee shall qualify for leave after he/she has worked for three (3) months consecutive months, if employment is terminated.
- 16.3 An employee shall qualify for leave after he/she has completed two hundred (200) days of service from the date that his/her was appointed.
- 16.4 Total accumulation of vacation leave shall be as provided for in the staff orders.
- 16.5 All vacation leave should be taken in the year in which it is earned, except with the special permission of the Permanent Secretary responsible for the Public Service.
- 16.6 Vacation leave entitlement will be in accordance with the schedule set out in Appendix 1 attached.

## **ARTICLE 17 - SICK LEAVE**

- 17.1 An employee shall be entitled to sick leave in accordance with the Staff Orders for the Public Service of Saint Lucia and the National Insurance Corporation Act, Cap. 16.01.

## **ARTICLE 18 - MATERNITY LEAVE**

- 18.1 The Employer agrees that thirteen (13) weeks maternity leave shall be allowed with full pay and shall be six (6) weeks before confinement week, the week of confinement, and six (6) weeks after the week of confinement.
- 18.2 Extra leave with pay may be granted at the discretion of the Employer, in which case the Employer shall obtain a report from a Medical Practitioner before taking a decision.
- 18.3 An Employee shall not lose seniority on return to work.
- 18.4 Maternity leave shall be additional to vacation leave.

## **Article 19 - PATERNITY LEAVE**

- 19.1 Paternity leave grants eligible employees up to five (5) working days of paid leave following the birth of his child.
- 19.2 Paternity Leave shall be granted to male employees who are married or in Common Law relationships for over one year providing that the parties share a common

household.

- 19.3 Male employees requesting Paternity Leave should seek approval from the appropriate Head of Department/Permanent Secretary
- 19.4 Paternity Leave will only be granted on application, using the prescribed form, for each birth provided that a medical certificate stating the expected delivery date is furnished not less than six (6) weeks before the date of confinement.
- 19.5 Paternity Leave following the birth of a child must be taken in full immediately after the birth or immediately following the child's release from a health care facility to the home.

#### **ARTICLE 20 - ADOPTION LEAVE**

- 20.1 Employees applying for adoption leave must notify their Employer of their intention to adopt a child no less than 14 days after the employee has applied for an intent to adopt or a court order from the Department of Human Services or an authorised agency.
- 20.2 Employees are entitled to five (5) working days' adoption leave which may start on the date the child is placed in the care of the employee in accordance with Section 4 (6) of the Adoption Act Chapter 4.07 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia 2005.
- 20.3 Adoption leave shall be in addition to vacation leave.

#### **ARTICLE 21 - STUDY LEAVE**

- 21.1 Study Leave shall be in accordance with Public Service policy.

#### **ARTICLE 22 - SPECIAL LEAVE**

- 22.1 Special leave will be granted in accordance with Staff Orders.

#### **ARTICLE 23 - FUNERAL/COMPASSIONATE LEAVE**

- 23.1 Funeral/Compassionate Leave grants employees paid time off to attend the funeral and for travel and bereavement time, upon the death of an employee's immediate family member or close relatives.
- 23.2 For the purpose of this article close relative includes mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, parents of spouse, children, grandparents, grandchildren, adopted, foster or

legal wards and members of the employee's household.

- 23.3 Employees requesting Funeral/Compassionate Leave should seek approval from the appropriate Head of Department/Permanent Secretary:
- (i) Three (3) working days leave of absence with pay shall be granted to an Employee on the death of a close relative to attend or to make arrangements for the funeral locally.
  - (ii) Where an employee has to attend a funeral of a close relative overseas he/she may be granted up to seven (7) working days of paid leave.
- 23.4 Employees may be granted time off to attend the funeral of a relative/friend other than a close relative.

#### **ARTICLE 24 - PERSONAL FILES**

- 24.1 No adverse entry shall be made in any Employee's personal file without his/her knowledge. An Employee shall have the right to defend himself/herself before any such entry is made.
- 24.2 Appraisals shall be discussed with the Employee concerned and he/she shall have an opportunity to comment before it is submitted to the Permanent Secretary.

#### **ARTICLE 25 - JOB DESCRIPTIONS/CLASSIFICATION**

- 25.1 The Employer agrees to provide job descriptions to all categories of Employees of the Nursing Service, which the Association represents upon first appointment.

#### **ARTICLE 26 - GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

- 26.1 The agreed procedure for settling of disputes arising out of conditions of service covered by this Agreement will be as follows:
- (i) Where there is a grievance the employee will seek clarification from his/her Shop Steward.
  - (ii) In the event that the Shop Steward is unable to handle the matter, he/she may request an Official from the Association to take up the matter on behalf of the member with the appropriate Ministry Official.

- (iii) If the Association Official is not satisfied with the result of (ii) above, the Association Official will take up the matter on behalf of the member with the Permanent Secretary.
- 26.2 If no agreement is reached, the matter shall be referred to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service. If no agreement is reached at that stage, the matter shall be referred to the Committee of Industrial Relation in the Public Service, which shall meet within seven (7) days after being notified, in an endeavour to conciliate the dispute.
- 26.3 If no agreement is reached within two (2) weeks either party may refer the matter to the Labour Commissioner.
- 26.4 If no settlement of the dispute is reached at the meeting presided over by the Labour Commissioner, or at any adjournment thereof, either of the parties may require that the matter be referred to the Minister of Labour in accordance with Section 3 of the Essential Services Act Chapter 16.12 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia (No.3 of 1975).

#### **ARTICLE 27 – SALARY RATES**

The salary rates for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, are as follows:

Year 1 & 2:	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2016 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018	-	\$1,500.00 lump sum (tax free)
Year 3:	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	-	1%
Year 4:	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020	-	1%
Year 5:	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	-	1%
Year 6:	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	-	2%

#### **ARTICLE 28 – LABOUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

- 28.1 A Labour Management Committee to be known as the Committee on Industrial Relations in the Public Service (C.I.R.P.S.) shall be established consisting of three (3) representatives of the Association and three (3) representatives of the Employer.

The Committee shall enjoy the full support of both parties in the interest of improved service to the public and job security for employees. Decisions of this Committee shall be arrived at by consensus and shall bind both parties after ratification by Cabinet.

- 28.2 For a specific Association/Union matter, the Committee shall comprise of:
- (a) Three representatives of the Ministry of Health

- (b) Three representatives nominated by the Executive of the SLNA

28.3 The Committee shall concern itself with the following matters:

- (a) Proposals and suggestions related to the work of the Employer so that better relations shall exist between the Employer and the employees so that the work of the Employer including the improvement and extension of services to the public may be effectively discharged.
- (b) Reviewing suggestions from Employees, in relation to questions of working conditions and services, excluding matters, which are the responsibility of the Public Service Commission and Public Service Board of Appeal.
- (c) Required improvement of working conditions causing grievances and misunderstanding.

28.4 Meetings of C.I.R.P.S. shall be held at least once every quarter.

Emergency meetings may be summoned by either party, providing that two (2) weeks' notice is given.

## **ARTICLE 29 – CHECK OFF SYSTEM**

- 29.1 The Employer shall deduct from the wages of every employee who is a member of the Association, on his written authorization, any dues or levies stipulated by the association.
- 29.2 Deductions shall cease to be made when the authorization is cancelled in writing by the individual employee concerned and copied to the Secretary of the Association. The cancellation form should reach the Ministry of Department concerned no later than the first working day of the month when the deduction should cease to facilitate the processing and forwarding to the Treasury by the stipulated deadline.
- 29.3 The total amount deducted as stipulated in 31.2 shall be remitted monthly to the Association by the Employer.



**APPENDIX I**

**LEAVE ENTITLEMENT FOR NURSES BASED ON YEARS OF SERVICE**

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>1 – 3 YEARS</b>	<b>4 - 7 YEARS</b>	<b>8 - 10 YEARS</b>	<b>OVER 10 YEARS</b>
13 – 18	29 days	31 days	33 days	36 days
12	27 days	29 days	32 days	34 days
9 – 11	26 days	28 days	30 days	32 days
8	24 days	26 days	28 days	30 days
6 & 7	22 days	24 days	26 days	28 days

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ST. LUCIA

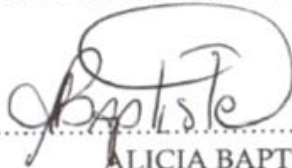


VERN GILL  
CHAIRMAN (GNT)



SHELIA IMBERT  
SECRETARY (GNT)

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE ST. LUCIA NURSES ASSOCIATION



ALICIA BAPTISTE  
PRESIDENT



YOLANDA ALCINDOR  
LEAD NEGOTIATOR

WITNESSED BY: .....



DATED THIS: 04 DAY OF JUNE 2019