Illinois Nurses Association represented state nurses ratify new contract

Chicago—June 5, 2013—A bargaining unit consisting of 1200 nurses who work at State of Illinois facilities represented by the Illinois Nurses Association has ratified a new three-year contract that protects hard-won benefits and includes salary increases of 2 percent in the second and third year of the contract.

The nurses collective bargaining unit is called RC-23 and its nurses provide health care in prisons, mental health hospitals and other state-run facilities.

The contract is retroactive to July 1, 2012 and protects current levels of holiday, vacation, sick and other benefit time for the nurses. Additionally, INA successfully negotiated to keep the length of the work week at its current length of 37.5 hours.

INA secured contract language that requires the State to conduct a cost comparison between third-party vendors and existing union staff before any nursing services are contracted to third-party subcontractors.

“The State has consistently used subcontractors, who are headquartered out of state, to provide nursing services when INA-union nurses could and should be providing those services,” said Alice J. Johnson, INA Executive Director. “This provision will force the State to prove external vendors are, as cost efficient at providing those services, as INA union nurses.”

The contract also calls for regular meetings and discussions about the growing problem of violence against nurses. INA recently supported legislation that would increase fines and penalties for acts of violence against nurses in the workplace. The legislation passed the Illinois House and Senate and awaits Governor Quinn’s signature.

“The State was seeking to take away many benefits that nurses have fought for and had been built into the contract for many years, but the RC23 team, during a year of negotiations, were able to save these and create a fair contract for both nurses and the State.” Johnson said.
About the Illinois Nurses Association

The Illinois Nurses Association is the nurses’ union, at the forefront, fighting for nurses’ rights and empowering them to be the best advocates for their patients and their community. INA is the nursing union in the State of Illinois, providing professional representation, improving wages and terms and conditions of employment for nurses in bargaining units represented by the INA, creating an environment where all RNs can participate and lead in protecting patient care by organizing unorganized RNs that do not have the professional standards that INA represented members have gained.

INA currently represents nurses working in the private and public sector in Illinois. For more information about the INA, visit http://www.illinoisnurses.com or www.facebook.com/IllinoisNurses.