

Parkview Fired Me



Parkview Administration: “We are cleaning house.”

My message to Parkview RNs: “Choose courage over fear.”

My name is Deirdre Kirkwood and I was fired on January 4th after working seven years at Parkview, the hospital I love. I was one of the last two nurses to leave the NICU when it closed during the bankruptcy and one of first nurses to return to the unit after it re-opened. I loved working at Parkview from the minute I came here, and this is why I am so crushed to have been fired. I was called in by the head of Human Resources, Stacci Shellenback, and told that they were “**cleaning house**” and “Parkview is an *at will* employer and administration has made this decision at this time due to poor morale affecting the hospital.” With my last paycheck on the table and tears in my eyes, I told Stacci that I am an excellent nurse with an excellent employee record. I am a team player and a patient advocate, a nurse with integrity. This is what my co-workers tell me, and my reviews from managers back this up. For seven years I have been at Parkview, and I have no “write ups” in my file. Stacci said that the decision came from top administration, and that was the end of the story. Our meeting lasted 15 minutes, ending my seven years of care giving at Parkview. Stacci then asked me for my badge, security brought me my purse from the unit, and they told me to leave and not return.

I’m going to fight for my job back. I hope after you read this, you too will help me get my job back. **Please choose courage over fear.** Management is counting on you being too afraid to help me get my job back and too afraid to form a union. I encourage you to count on each other, to be brave, and to resolve to form a union, so that this type of unfair firing can’t happen anymore. Because I’ve received positive reviews from my supervisors, I can only assume that I was fired because I was one of many active participants working to build a union here. Administration fired me without going through any type of fair process and they will have that right to fire more of us until we form a union. If you review your employment handbook, you will see that you are an “at will employee.” This means that they can fire you at any time without cause, like they did to me. Administration will tell you that they have an open door policy and that if you don’t like it, then you should leave. That doesn’t have to be the only option. We can form a nurse’s union to create stability, an environment free of fear, and a workplace where we finally have a voice in how things get done. When we have a union, this type of arbitrary firing couldn’t happen without a fair process. In the coming days, if you feel moved to help me get my job back, you will learn ways to help in that effort. The most important thing you can do now is learn more about what it means to form a union, sign a union card, and vote yes once the election occurs.

Policy, procedure, pay, and benefits have never been stable here. In fact, we've seen "policies" change from week to week, department to department, and employee to employee. We deserve more respect than this. Only a contract can provide the continuity we deserve and give us a written policy regarding staffing issues, a pay scale which is public to the employees and pay that respects tenure, and policies that increase patient safety, improve patient care, and protect our licenses. I fully intend to be reinstated. Until then, I am highly employable, have a great deal of experience, and a great attitude when it comes to working with my fellow employees and providing excellent patient care. I am not abandoning my fellow nurses at Parkview. I will continue to work with the United Nurses Associations of California (UNAC) to form a Parkview nurse's union. I support every nurse's opinion. Please do not be divided by this issue. We need to respect each other's opinions if they differ from our own. We should continue to work as a team, providing the very best patient care. **Administration seems to feel that we work for them. In reality, we work for our community. We are here for each other, and this hospital, to serve the people in this community. Administrators come and go, but we are the heart of Parkview.**

Call me if you have any questions or wish to be part of the union effort: 951-640-4508

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deirdre Kirkwood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deirdre Kirkwood