

## San Diego: Dialysis Workers Protest Statewide Over Unsafe Conditions

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Hundreds of dialysis caregivers across California are protesting what they describe as unsafe working conditions and prolonged contract negotiations. On Wednesday, more than 700 unionized workers began picketing at 31 dialysis clinics throughout the state, including locations in San Diego County.

The protests are being led by the SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West union. Participants include registered nurses, technicians, social workers, and other frontline caregivers. According to the union, the demonstrations aim to pressure dialysis corporations into addressing staffing shortages and finalizing a fair contract.

In El Cajon, San Diego County, workers gathered outside Fresenius Kidney Care Fletcher Parkway between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m., carrying signs and voicing concerns over patient safety.

“These companies are dragging their feet and refusing to bargain in good faith,” said Christine Delara, a registered nurse at U.S. Renal Care, in a statement. “Dialysis continues to suffer because of short staffing. Every time a patient’s treatment is cut short for this reason, we put their life at risk.”

The union alleges that both Fresenius Medical Care and DaVita, two of the nation’s largest dialysis providers, are delaying negotiations and ignoring critical issues. Workers claim that short staffing and high turnover are putting patients in jeopardy, especially those who depend on regular and complete dialysis sessions to survive.

While the SEIU-UHW has been negotiating contracts with dialysis companies for several years, Wednesday’s coordinated action represents a statewide escalation. The workers are calling for stronger staffing protections, better wages, and improved safety protocols.

Dialysis is a life-saving treatment for individuals with kidney failure. Patients typically require dialysis multiple times per week, making consistent care essential. Workers involved in the strike say that ongoing staffing shortages are resulting in rushed treatments or cancellations, increasing health risks for vulnerable patients.

Though union representatives accuse employers of negotiating in bad faith, the dialysis providers have not yet released public statements in response to the picket. It remains unclear whether any clinics will face operational disruptions during the protest period.

This week’s action follows a broader national trend of increased labor activity among healthcare workers, who say the industry’s growing reliance on profits has come at the expense of patient care and staff well-being.

In California, the union insists it will continue pressing for what it sees as necessary reforms in the dialysis industry. “We’re standing up not just for ourselves, but for the safety of every

patient who relies on these life-saving treatments,” Delara said.

As of Wednesday afternoon, demonstrations remained peaceful, with no incidents reported.