

PRESS RELEASE

MedStar Washington Hospital Center Security Department citing low morale and needed amendments in staffing at the management level, will be voting to unionize this Wednesday with the Law Enforcement Officers Security Unions (LEOSU-DC).

By Steve Maritas
LEOSU-DC Organizing Director
202-595-3510
www.LEOSUDC.Org

Washington DC – On Wednesday August 3, 2016, sixty special police officers, safety officers and dispatchers employed by the MedStar Washington Hospital Center will be voting to unionize with the Law Enforcement Officers Security Unions (LEOSU-DC) affiliated with the Law Enforcement Officers Security & Police Benevolent Association (LEOS-PBA).

The officer's effort to unionize the security department at MedStar Washington Hospital Center with the LEOSU-DC, began after two special police officers were indicted back in May in connection with the death of a 74-year-old patient at MedStar Washington Hospital Center.

In a letter the union received dated July 20, 2016, the Public Safety Officers express their concerns with MedStar Washington Hospital Center management at its highest level and call for administrative changes.

July 20, 2016

RE: Officer Concerns and Call for Administrative Changes

To all of whom it concerns:

The following excerpt from the Metropolitan Police Department Sworn Law Enforcement Officer Code of Ethics provides the policy and support for the drafting of this letter, which will express the concerns of the majority of officers within the Department of Protective Services at Medstar Washington Hospital Center. It should be clearly noted that we are supportive of many of the changes that have been proposed, however we feel additional changes must be made in order to promote an atmosphere conducive to safety and professionalism.

I. Background:

Ethics is defined as a code, system, or body of moral principles or good conduct, particularly a system for a group of people or a profession, such as law or medicine. Ethics deals primarily with values: what is good, what is bad, what is right and what is wrong. The responsibility to act ethically rests with every sworn law enforcement officer when he/she goes about his/her professional duties.

Special Police Officers (SPO) commissioned by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) derives its authority from the D.C. Official Code § 5-127.03 "Police to have powers of constables; authorization to execute certain Superior Court orders." Within this authority, sworn law enforcement officers conduct investigations, abridge normal liberties, and use force when necessary. Therefore, it is imperative that sworn law enforcement officers of the SPO/MPD epitomize the highest degree of ethical behavior when serving the communities and citizens who live, work, and visit Medstar Washington Hospital Center, Washington, D.C.

II. Policy

The policy of the SPO/Metropolitan Police Department is that sworn law enforcement officers shall maintain the highest standard of conduct and perform their duties in a nondiscriminatory, efficient, respectful, and ethical manner at all times. Further, these official powers shall not be used for personal profit or gain, nor violate the Constitution, local, and/ or federal laws in performance of their work. (CALEA 1.1.2).

Under Section II of the Code, we have sworn to "maintain the highest standard of conduct and perform their duties in a nondiscriminatory, efficient, courteous, respectful, and ethical manner at all times," which is what we all strive to do daily. In order to remain an asset to Medstar Washington Hospital Center and the community we serve, we; Public Safety officers, agree there must be amendments in staffing at the management level. These amendments in particular involve Director of Public Safety; Kathleen Timmons and Assistant Director of Public Safety; Rodney Parks. The performance we have seen in recent months has reduced the morale of the Department and consequently has resulted in a number of resignations. The effects of the morale change and resignations has caused an overload of work on a now, understaffed department as well as created a threat to the safety of the hospital as a whole.

There have been a number of complaints from fellow officers that have gone unresolved; shift assignments, support from Management, and retaliatory tactics when Officers articulate unfair treatment and other unprofessional/unethical practices. We will utilize this opportunity to proceed with making the necessary adjustments in order to continue in performing our sworn duties in a cohesive, supportive and safe environment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Public Safety Offices