



CPMC UNION FAQ

Who is CIR?

- ✦ The Committee of Interns and Residents is the largest resident union in the country, representing over 24,000 interns, residents and fellows. **Founded by residents in 1957**, CIR has been on the forefront of raising standards for residents ever since.
- ✦ At CPMC, **WE are CIR**—it is our organization and we will make decisions about how our union is run. This effort is led by residents and fellows from many departments and is a reflection of our hard work and dedication.

How much are dues and when will I start paying?

- ✦ **1.6% – this was decided by a vote of CIR resident and fellow members.** Dues cover contract negotiation expenses, union representatives, office + support services, & legal services, to name a few.
- ✦ **We don't pay a penny until we vote to ratify a contract we're satisfied with**, and first contracts generally take up to a year or more to bargain.
- ✦ **CIR members** have never ratified a contract with benefits that do not outweigh the cost of dues. Would you vote to ratify a contract that you're not satisfied with?

I'm afraid of creating an adversarial relationship with the GME or program leadership. Will voting "yes" impact my career?

- ✦ **A union should not get in the way of pre-existing relationships with specific faculty.** Instead, 1.) it protects our interests and rights in case the attitudes or personnel of leadership changes and 2.) allows us to seek changes that program leadership are unable to achieve on our own.
- ✦ **When residents have a unified voice, it can actually empower GME and the Chiefs** to better advocate for changes otherwise unseen by hospital administrators. How our union interacts with the administration is up to us. dedication.

Will this hurt my chance of a fellowship match?

- ✦ **No.** Thousands of residents have organized before us through CIR and countless CIR leaders and members have moved on to fellowships.

What have other CIR residents won? What will we bargain for?

- ✦ **This is our union and what we bargain for in our contract will be up to us!** All CIR contracts are available for viewing at cirseiu.org/benefits.
- ✦ **Examples!** UCSF bargained a housing stipend of \$13,000/year; NYC Health + Hospitals bargained a \$3,500/year childcare reimbursement; the institute for Family Health bargained a 70 hour work week.
- ✦ **Boston Medical Center bargained \$88,000/year towards a Diversity Committee** focused on recruitment and retention of minority housestaff. The list goes on and on!

We got a raise, what more is there to gain?

- ✦ It's great that we got a raise, but unless salaries and benefits are enshrined in a union contract, CPMC can change or take them away at any time. **But with a union, we'll have the power to raise standards** for everyone.
- ✦ Given the *timing* of the raise, it's hard not to think that we got it because the administration found out about and was attempting to thwart our organizing efforts. They did this because they know the power we have when we come together.

I'm worried the new contract won't be tailored to our department-specific needs. Will the new contract be one-size-fits-all?

- ✦ **No. This is not a "one-size-fits-all" agreement, but rather a "no department left behind" agreement.** CIR contracts will ensure that all housestaff receive the same base level of benefits, but do not prevent departments from giving benefits on top of that.
- ✦ **Many other CIR chapters have bargained for specific benefits** for their departments like full time reading room assistants in Radiology at UCSF and \$1200 reimbursement for Ortho loupes at Valley Consortium, the list goes on!

If we don't unionize, are our current salaries/benefits guaranteed?

- ✦ **No, benefits can be modified or taken away without the protection of a union contract.**



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Will I be forced to go on strike? How will we get things done without striking?

- ✦ **You'll never be forced to go on strike.** No CIR chapter can go on strike without the approval of the chapter's members. Striking among residents is rare.
- ✦ **We have other tactics** in our toolkit that we would use before deciding to escalate to a strike vote: button ups, petitions, unity breaks, political pressure etc.

Do I have to join our union?

- ✦ **Our union is only as strong as our members** – while you do not have to join CIR, a strong, united membership will give us the leverage to stand up to an employer like CPMC and win the contract we deserve. For individuals, joining means that you will have a say in what we fight for.
- ✦ Non-members from private sector hospitals in California like CPMC pay a "fair share" fee of 1.34% of their base pay (compared to union dues of 1.6% for members), but would not be able to vote in any union negotiations or actions.

Is my vote going to be anonymous? Can I face retaliation for supporting our union efforts?

- ✦ **Your union card and vote are completely confidential.** Additionally, it is illegal (per the National Labor Relations Board) for an employer to retaliate against an employee for union activities.
- ✦ **Employers CAN'T:** Ask if you support our union or threaten any punitive action, such as not writing a recommendation letter because you support our union. In fact, it is easier to retaliate against an individual pushing for change rather than a resident union standing together

How does this impact patient care?

- ✦ Housestaff who are financially secure, have more autonomy and respect in their jobs and who are protected from exploitation will have the emotional reserve to provide the best patient care possible.
- ✦ **CIR residents across the country have successfully secured improvements in patient care**, such as patient care funds and more access to interpreters. There's no doubt that we care deeply about our patients, and that will be reflected in our union.

I'm graduating this year. I don't want to pay union dues if I won't benefit from it. Why should I vote?

- ✦ **You will likely not have to pay dues before you leave** – dues only start *after* the membership has voted to ratify our first contract, which usually takes up to a year up to a year or more to negotiate.
- ✦ **By voting YES, you will be paying it forward and building the infrastructure for the future.** Let's leave CPMC a better place than we found it!