

Process

1. Why is Freeman Health System acquiring Northwest Health?

Freeman Health System is committed to strengthening access to care, supporting our caregivers, and investing in the talent, services, and technologies that will shape the future of healthcare in our region. Welcoming Northwest Health reflects our *Freeman Forward* vision, shared commitment to compassionate care, and long-term well-being of the communities we serve.

2. Will Northwest Health become not-for-profit?

Yes. Freeman Health System is a not-for-profit organization. Northwest Health will begin transitioning to not-for-profit status following the close of the transaction.

3. What does that change mean or what impact will it have on the community?

As a not-for-profit health system, Freeman Health System and its affiliated hospitals are eligible for tax-exempt status. While this may result in changes to the taxes paid by Northwest facilities, not-for-profit hospitals typically reinvest those resources directly into their communities through local payroll, charity care, community health programs, and other essential services that support access to care and economic stability. Freeman Health System is committed to investing in Northwest communities by strengthening access to care, supporting local healthcare teams, and ensuring services reflect the needs of the people they serve. As this transaction moves forward, Freeman will take a thoughtful, collaborative approach, listening to caregivers and community leaders to identify priorities, preserve essential services, and expand care where gaps exist. Working alongside local teams, Freeman will align financial and operational strategies to support sustainable, community driven healthcare for the long term.

4. Will Freeman Health System rename Northwest Health?

Yes. Northwest Health will become part of Freeman Health System upon the closing of the transaction. Northwest Health locations will be rebranded to reflect our unified health system, with exact timing and naming to be shared after close.

5. When will the transaction be finalized?

The transaction is expected to close in the second quarter of this year, subject to customary regulatory approvals and closing conditions.

Operations

6. How does this transaction impact patient care?

There will be no disruption to patient care at any point during the transaction process. Northwest Health patients will continue to receive care in the locations they are used to visiting from the providers they know and trust.

7. Will any services change?

There are no plans to change services currently provided by Northwest Health. In the future, there may be changes to expand offerings and support further community demands for services.

8. Does Freeman Health System plan to make capital improvement investments and, if so, what is the timeline?

Yes. Freeman Health System looks forward to sharing more information about its plans in the future.

9. Does Freeman Health System plan to discontinue any services or close any Northwest Health locations?

Freeman Health System recognizes the important role Northwest Health plays in providing care for the community and has no plans to discontinue services or close locations. The system will conduct a thorough review of existing services compared with community demand to understand how to best serve residents, including potentially expanding offerings.

10. Will the transition impact Northwest Health's current in-network status with major payers?

There are no anticipated changes at this time.

11. Why is Freeman Health acquiring a new system instead of investing in its existing footprint?

Patient care is our top priority and these plans have no impact on our commitment to ongoing investment across the Freeman footprint. The opportunity to expand to Northwest Arkansas supports our strategic plan and lets us help more families across the Four-States region. It does not interfere with our commitment to our patients or existing communities, and it will not disrupt care at any Freeman or Northwest Health location.

12. Will this impact the availability of staff at existing Freeman locations?

Staffing is a challenge at every hospital in the country, regardless of growth or expansion. Our recruitment efforts across our system are ongoing and central to our strategic vision. Northwest Health employees will be transitioning to become Freeman employees at the close of the transaction.

Employees

13. Will Freeman Health System retain Northwest Health employees?

Yes. We look forward to welcoming Northwest Health employees to the Freeman Health System team and are working closely with the Northwest Health team to ensure a smooth transition for our new colleagues. Freeman Health System is committed to employee retention and intends to retain employees in good standing at the time of the transition, subject to the system's standard hiring and onboarding practices.

14. Will we receive new name badges?

Yes, eventually you will receive a new Freeman Health badge, but this will not happen immediately. You will continue to use your existing name badge after close until otherwise instructed.

15. Will there be any leadership changes?



Frequently Asked Questions

The current leadership structure is unchanged. At the close of the transaction, Northwest Health leaders will report to Freeman Health System. Reporting structures are being carefully reviewed as part of the integration process and we expect to be able to provide more details in the coming weeks.

16. Will there be changes to EHR systems?

In the near term, there will be no changes to current EHR systems. Freeman Health is currently in the process of transitioning to Epic. As part of the integration process, leaders from both Northwest Health and Freeman Health System are working together to ensure a seamless transition of patient records. Northwest Health teams should continue to use their EHR system and maintain the operational processes they are used to.

17. What does this announcement mean for Freeman Health employees?

There will be no immediate changes to our day-to-day operations. Between now and when the transaction closes, there will be a lot of activity as leaders from Freeman Health and Northwest Health work together to plan the best way to integrate our systems smoothly, with minimal disruption for all parties. At close, Northwest Health employees will become part of the Freeman Health team.

18. What should I expect in the next 30 / 60 / 90 days?

Freeman Health and Northwest Health leaders will be working together closely over the next few months to ensure a smooth transition. You can expect to be kept informed as decisions are made and more details become available.

19. Who will be impacted, how, and when?

We don't expect any major changes to our existing Freeman Health staff. We intend to retain Northwest Health employees in good standing and they will transition to Freeman Health employees at close. We are currently working with leadership to better understand timelines for system integrations and there may be some Freeman Health employees who will be asked to help work with the Northwest Health team to ensure a smooth transition. You can expect to hear more directly from your supervisor as details are finalized.

20. Can Freeman Health employees apply or transfer to a position in Arkansas?

We do expect to grow the services currently provided by Northwest Health and there may be opportunities for current Freeman Health employees to be considered for those opportunities. We will share these details when they are available.

HR/Benefits

21. Will benefits carry over?

Northwest Health employees will be offered enrollment in Freeman Health benefits prior to transitioning at close. Benefits enrollment will take place April 27 – May 8. More information about the benefits package will be shared in the coming weeks and there will be a benefits fairs held at each hospital location where employees can ask questions. There will also be a support line for employees to call for added assistance. Details will be shared directly with employees ahead of enrollment.



Frequently Asked Questions

22. Who is eligible for benefits at Freeman Health?

Full-time employees working 30 hours per week or more and part-time employees working 20-29 hours per week are eligible to enroll in benefits. Eligible dependents include spouses and children.

23. Will seniority be transferred over to Freeman Health?

Yes, Northwest Health years of service will be honored. A hire date, aligned with the close of the transaction, will be added to transitioning employee profiles.

24. What are Freeman Health's scrub requirements?

There is no universal scrub policy. Team members can plan to maintain the current scrub policy. If any changes are made in the future, they will be clearly communicated with an appropriate transition period.

25. Will Northwest Health employees need to complete any paperwork prior to the transition?

Yes. Additional information regarding the onboarding process, including I-9 verification through E-Verify and required identification, will be shared soon.

26. Will pay periods change?

All Freeman Health employees are paid on a biweekly pay cycle, with pay periods running Sunday through Saturday. This aligns with Northwest Health's existing pay periods for most positions. For positions currently paid on a different schedule, you can expect to hear directly from Northwest Health HR to discuss the transition soon.