
Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) is working hard to make sure that nurses and our patients are taken care of during this time. To that end ONA has set up a resource page for our nurses at oregonrn.org/coronavirus. It currently has information about the work we have been doing and a gathering of resources and information for reference.

We have also sent an information request to all of our represented facilities to verify that they have plans and supplies in place to deal with this outbreak.

As a reminder, while there has been both a national emergency and a state of emergency declared in Oregon, our contract remains in place.

Changes to your scheduling and hours must be negotiated.

Stay Tuned!
Your Providence ONA team is actively negotiating a COVID-19 related economic agreement with administration.
We initiated this conversation last week based on the concerns raised by Providence nurses like you.

Personal Protective Equipment

What should a nurse do when they feel their assignment is not safe due to not having appropriate or adequate personal protective equipment (PPE)?

Nurses who are immunocompromised should notify their employers now, or as soon as possible of the risks involved in caring for a patient with COVID-19, asking not to take care of these patients. If this request is refused, please document that refusal.

If a nurse is asked to care for a patient with COVID-19 and does not believe that they have the PPE necessary to do so safely, then it is important to raise those concerns.

First, make sure you are aware of what the current guidelines for the type of patient they are asking you to care for (rule-out/positive/monitoring).

If you have determined that you are being asked to take an assignment you don’t feel is safe, then raise that issue according to the following chain of escalation: supervisor, then your manager.

Clarify what your concerns are, what the evidence supporting that concern is, then ask for the PPE that you think is needed.

If you are still being directed to accept the assignment, refer to the new Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) ruling (see page 2) and contact your labor representative.

While we recognize that this current situation is fluid and rapidly evolving, the safety of our members is important and can’t just be sacrificed.
COVID-19 Survey

To report a violation of Coronavirus protocol in your facility, please email practice@oregonrn.org with as many details as possible while being mindful of HIPAA guidelines.

ONA is also asking all members to take an ONA COVID-19 Workplace Survey to help better understand the work being done by facilities across the state.

To stay up to date on the work being done and to take the COVID-19 Workplace survey, visit:

COVID-19 Workplace Survey Link

Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) has updated their position statement concerning refusal of assignment related to COVID-19:

The global spread of COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) is a rapidly evolving situation. This event has also resulted in confusing and conflicting information regarding transmission, healthcare worker precautions, high-risk categorizations, etc.

Each medical facility/organization decides for itself and its personnel whether to follow Oregon Health Authority (OHA) recommendations or recommendations issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) or the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The Board of Nursing has no jurisdiction over individual employers.

The Oregon State Board of Nursing has received reports that nurses are refusing to accept patient assignments unless their hospital/facility follows WHO or CDC guidelines rather than OHA guidelines regarding personal protective equipment (PPE).

In the Governor’s declared State of Emergency authorization, OHA was tasked to provide the state response to COVID-19. Nurses cannot refuse an assignment solely because the employer is utilizing OHA guidelines rather than WHO or CDC guidelines.

All nurses and nursing assistants are entitled to keep themselves safe through appropriate use of PPE. The Board of Nursing does not expect nurses to work without PPE. The Nurse Practice Act will always support the ability of a nurse to refuse an assignment when they do not have the knowledge, skills, competencies, and abilities to safely accept it. Having PPE, or not having PPE, comes under the “abilities” section of the practice act.
EIT Waiting Period

EIT Waiting Period Temporarily Waived
To help limit the spread of the COVID-19 disease, the waiting period for accessing Extended Illness Banks/Time (EIB/EIT) has been waived. **This will continue until the spread of COVID-19 has reduced in our community.**

To be eligible to use your EIB/EIT, you must obtain a certification from a health care provider.

Since getting to your regular provider might be challenging at this time, please use ExpressCare Virtual to reach a provider and obtain certification.

Increasing Labor-Management Communication

Your local ONA officers and labor staff have been in daily communication with management over the last week or so.

We held an emergency professional nurse care committee (PNCC) meeting on Monday, March 23, 2020 by phone.

Present for ONA was Maureen Cooper Gaine, Pamela Bacon, Carly Deweese, Amy Gonzales, Tiffany Eder, Lori Curtis, Kathy Leendertse and Jocelyn Pitman. Present for administration was Mary Howard (HR), Susan Murtha and Jane Brandes.

We will continue to be in regular contact with administration to discuss the COVID-19 outbreak and the impact on your workplace since the information is rapidly changing. Most if not all of the questions that you have brought to our officers and/or labor representative have been asked to administration.

Unfortunately, the answers aren’t always what we are looking for. We have asked that administration be action oriented and transparent with us. For example, if PPE can’t be obtained, we want to know exactly what was done to procure those items. We will continue to discuss supplies, sanitization, PPE, staffing, coronavirus testing and any other updates necessary.

Forthcoming newsletters and communications will provide updates on this ask and any ensuing developments. If you have questions that you would like us to raise, please reach out to one of your PNCC members.

Staffing Request & Documentation Form (SRDF)

Earlier this month, your PNCC, labor representative and administration negotiated a staffing request and documentation form (SRDF), which is a form that is used to document either a short staffing and/or unsafe situation. We are currently in the process of making this form available for online submission. The form will direct you to:

1. Notify someone in the chain of command;
2. Ask for additional staff;
3. Ask for a response in a reasonable period of time, (e.g., minutes, hours) and;
4. Complete the SRDF as detailed below.

The nurse should complete the SRDF at the end of the shift or within 48 hours. A PDF copy is automatically emailed to the nurse and to ONA, and it is the nurse’s responsibility to forward a copy of the completed form to the nurse manager and PNCC chair.

The SRDF should be completed even if the problem is corrected quickly.

Questions about the SRDF process?
Email: SRDF@OregonRN.org

A digital PHHH SRDF version is coming very soon!
As more cases of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) are reported and confirmed, ONA will continue working relentlessly to do the work needed to keep nurses and our communities safe.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

To help nurses and health care workers navigate the COVID-19 crisis, ONA has compiled a frequently asked questions document. Please check the FAQ to find the answers you need.

- [Click here to view the ONA COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions document](www.OregonRN.org/coronavirus) or visit www.OregonRN.org/coronavirus

**Declining an Unsafe Assignment**

ONA has issued guidance to our members on declining unsafe assignments for COVID-19 patients when lack of PPE, safe staffing levels, or breakdown of triage protocols put your health at risk.

Visit [www.oregonrn.org/declining-unsafe-assignments](www.oregonrn.org/declining-unsafe-assignments) to learn more.

**PPE Shortage**

It is critical to get PPE in the hands of the frontline health care workers who need them in their fight against COVID-19. First and foremost, we are communicating the need for PPE. This requires federal action and we are also asking the legislature to pass similar emergency funding legislation to California and Washington to support public health.

We are calling on the governor and the Oregon legislature to ensure every protection is taken to prioritize Oregon workers and to make sure health care workers are able to continue to work. This includes adequate personal protective equipment, accessible and affordable childcare, and incentivizing nurses who work in other sectors or departments to take on high-risk shifts.

Help raise awareness of the PPE shortage and how it impacts nurses and other health care workers on the frontline of care by adding a "PPE Now!" frame to your Facebook profile picture.

- [Add a frame to your Facebook profile picture to call for more PPE now!](www.OregonRN.org/coronavirus)
- [Click here to learn more about donating PPE](www.OregonRN.org/coronavirus)

**Report Violations**

To report a violation of Coronavirus protocol in your facility, please email practice@oregonrn.org with as many details as possible while being mindful of HIPAA guidelines.

ONA is also asking all members to take an ONA COVID-19 Workplace Survey to help better understand the work being done by facilities across the state.

To stay up to date on the work being done and to take the COVID-19 Workplace survey, visit: