Unfair Labor Practices

St. Alphonsus-Ontario management refuses to recognize ONA as our union nor honor our ONA collective bargaining agreements which was set to expire in late June. Because of this, we filed and submitted several unfair labor practices to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The NLRB is the governmental agency which oversees union elections and ensures our right to organize, which is enshrined in federal and state law, is protected.

Moving Forward, a Union Election

On Wednesday, May 18, we filed a petition for a representation election (RC). The NLRB may decide to schedule a pre-election hearing. At this hearing, ONA and Trinity administration will come to agreement on the time and place for our union election and will determine who is eligible to participate. The union election will be by secret ballot, and the results are decided by a simple majority of those who choose to participate. Our hope is that every eligible nurse will cast a ballot.

When is the Election?

Details about our election will be shared as soon as we have them!

Upcoming Meetings:

Thursday, May 26
5-7 p.m. Meet & greet with ONA President-elect Tamie Cline at Bert’s Growler Garage (1635 SW 4th Ave, Ontario)
7:30-8:30 p.m. Zoom with Tamie
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81876457956
Meeting ID: 818 7645 7956

Friday, May 27
7:30-8:30 a.m. Zoom with Tamie
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81876457956
Meeting ID: 818 7645 7956
8:30-9:30 a.m. Coffee with Tamie at Jack Henry Coffee House (298 S. Oregon St., Ontario)

Friday, June 3
6:30-8:30 p.m. Meet & greet with Sandi Kellogg at Bert’s Growler Garage

Saturday, June 4
8-10 a.m. Coffee with Sandi at Jack Henry Coffee House
2-4 p.m. Tacos with Sandi at Tacos Mi Ranchitos (252 S. Oregon St., Ontario)

These meetings are where we talk about next steps, answer questions, and build a shared vision for improving our workplace.

NOTE: all meetings in MST
This week, we interviewed Rhonda Kenny a sedation nurse on the Endo Unit, who has been with St. Alphonsus-Ontario since 2017. We asked Rhonda about her experience as a nurse, her motivation behind doing this work, and her reasons for supporting ONA at St. Alphonsus. Rhonda has been a nurse for 33 years, and says she felt called to this work when she was 6 years old and asked for “nursing shoes” for Christmas. Before working on the Endo Unit, Rhonda worked in OPS and PACU. When Rhonda is not working on the floor, she is in Idaho with her grandkids. She also loves to garden, read, and walk her dogs.

What’s your favorite part of being a nurse?
“I love that I have been able to learn specialized areas in the hospital and to use my experiences to grow into new roles and responsibilities within nursing.”

What is the most challenging part about being a nurse?
“Management and managed care because sometimes we’re not doing what is best for our patients. It is frustrating that patient care is driven by the insurance companies and how much profit can be made.”

Why are you a proud ONA nurse?
“When I came back to hospital nursing from long-term care, I was shocked to find that the nurse to patient ratio on a surgical floor was 10 to 1 on the night shift. I went to Holy Rosary in 2000 because they were the closest union hospital to my home. When I moved to Eugene it was a no-brainer to choose another union hospital to work for. Not only are wages and working conditions always much better when you are union, you are protecting the patients because staffing is so much better.”

Why are you voting yes to keep ONA?
“I know that the only way nurses can protect each other and their patients is through the power of a union contract.”

Why should other nurses join you in voting for ONA?
“I know that without our ONA contract, nurses will be floated to other units and forced to take unsafe assignments. We will have no opportunity for a fair and just grievance process.”

If a nurse colleague asked you if they should vote yes, what would say to them?
“I would talk to them about the current staffing crisis in our country and remind them that they are responsible under the board of nursing to provide safe patient care. It’s very hard to speak up when you don’t have the protection of a contract. Nurses just want to give their patients good care, but if their voices are silenced and ignored, they will be put into unsafe situations for their patients and risk losing their license.”
Meet Tamie Cline, ONA President-Elect

Tamie Cline is a 21-year nurse and ONA leader from Eastern Oregon. She is an IV-therapy nurse at Good Shephard Medical Center in Hermiston. Tamie currently serves as treasurer of the ONA Board of Directors and will become President this July. Prior to being an ONA BOD member, she was a member of the ONA Labor Cabinet, which is a member-run committee that is responsible for all labor relations and policies and activities of ONA.

Tamie pursued nursing because she always had a passion for taking care of people. Her most rewarding part of being a nurse is when one of her patients sees her in public and goes up to her to thank her. When Tamie isn't at work, she's spending time with her five amazing grandchildren that call her Nan. She also loves horseback riding on her cattle ranch, camping and traveling.

Tamie attended a meeting with St.Alphonsus Ontario nurses a few weeks ago. She came to show her full support for Ontario nurses and to listen to their concerns. Tamie returns to Ontario for our membership meetings on May 25 and 26.

When asked what she wanted to share with her Ontario colleagues, here’s what she had to say:

“As an ONA member since 2001, I’ve felt and seen firsthand the many benefits of being an ONA member. It is a protection for all the nurses- It protects you from being bullied, from wrongful dismissal or being fired without just cause. It also protects your health insurance and your retirement. And most importantly, through the power of your union, you wield a collective voice- -that includes Ontario nurses and the 14,000 nurses in the state of Oregon. This is what makes us powerful. When you’re non-union, you’re a single voice.”

Tamie serves on her ONA bargaining team and when asked what was her most proud ONA win, here’s what she she shared:

“We’ve really had so many. Our biggest win was the improvement of our wage scale. Our scale now goes up to 35 years of experience whereas before it only went up to 20 years of experience, which didn’t increase the salary of our experienced nurses. We also now have annual steps from new grad to 35 years and each of the steps is tied to a guaranteed wage increase. Most recently, we won a $20,000 retention bonus at the hospital.”

If a nurse asked you if they should vote yes for ONA what would you say to them?

“Absolutely. It is impossible to navigate through this healthcare system on your own. The union is the collective of all Ontario nurses standing together. Together, you all remain protected.”
Rules for Talking About ONA at Work

Rules for Employers

Employers have a lot of latitude when it comes to sharing their "personal opinions" about unionization.

That said, the National Labor Relations Act forbids employers from interfering with, restraining, or coercing employees in the exercise of rights relating to organizing, forming, joining or assisting a labor organization for collective bargaining purposes, from working together to improve terms and conditions of employment, or refraining from any such activity.

As a general rule, there are four types of interference by employers that cross the line and are illegal:

- **Unlawful threats** are statements made by the employer that imply unionizing will result in a negative outcome for the staff. Both direct and subtle threats are in violation of the law.  
  *Ex: “Who knows what will happen to your job if you unionize?” or, “If you vote for the union, I won’t be very happy with you.”*

- **Illegal interrogation** includes any question by a supervisor about your interest, participation and knowledge of the union.  
  *Ex: “Have you heard anything about the union?” or “Why do you want a union?”*

- **Prohibited promises** are offers to improve some benefit made by managers in exchange for the employee’s no vote or other anti-union activity.  
  *Ex: “You don’t need a union. Tell us what you want. We will make it happen.” or “If you vote no, we will increase everyone’s wages.”*

- **Illicit surveillance** of employees includes trying to identify union supporters, observe meetings, or direct employees to report union activities of coworkers.  
  *Ex: Creating and keeping a list of union supporters or asking employees if they know who is interested in the union.*

Rules for Employees

Under federal and state labor law, employees have every right to talk about unionization at work, so long as they are allowed to talk about other subjects at work. If you’re permitted to chat with colleagues at work about your favorite football team or your vacation plans, an employer cannot prohibit you from discussing union-related issues.

That said, we recommend you use good judgment when discussing union-related issues while on the clock. Don’t disrupt patient care, be mindful of who’s around, and don’t let it interfere with your ability to complete your work.

Breaks and lunches are your own time, so you can talk about whatever you want!

If you feel management is stopping you from discussing ONA, is watching your conversations or is in engaging in any other illegal behavior, please email your labor rep Renee Ruiz at ruiz@oregonrn.org as soon as possible.

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Join nurses from St. Alphonsus - Ontario on social media!

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/235861262006232/?ref=share](https://www.facebook.com/groups/235861262006232/?ref=share)

Instagram: @staontairoona