Can Hospitals Deviate From Approved Staffing Plans?

During COVID-19 and other emergencies, hospital management may claim they can ignore or change the staffing plans approved by the hospital's nurse staffing committee (NSC). Use this tool to determine if your hospital is allowed to deviate from approved staffing plans.

### Is there a national or state declaration of emergency?
- **YES**
  - Has hospital instituted its facility disaster plan AND crisis standards of care?
    - **YES**
      - Hospital may deviate from approved staffing plans.
    - **NO**
      - Hospital must follow approved staffing plans.
- **NO**
  - Has there been a sudden and unforeseen adverse weather event?
    - **YES**
      - Hospital may deviate from approved staffing plans.
    - **NO**
      - Hospital must follow approved staffing plans.

### ACTION STEPS IF DEVIATING

**ONA Nurse Staffing Committee Members**
- **NSC Co-Chair:** Hospital incident command must provide a written report to NSC co-chairs no later than 30 days after deviation(s) from staffing plan.
- **NSC Co-Chair:** Upon receipt of written report call staffing committee together to develop contingency nurse staffing plans.
- **NSC Members:** Draft contingency plan based on needs of nurses.

**ONA Labor Reps. and Field Staff**
- Record the date the first deviation occurred.
- Make an information request. Get facility’s crisis standards and disaster plan or data on the number of staff out w/infectious disease compared to the normal vacancy rate.
- Assist with OHA complaints and grievances.

**NOTE:** Hospitals may not deviate for more than 90 cumulative days without approval from the nurse staffing committee. *If staffing committee does not approve, the hospital must return to approved staffing plans.*