




Alaska Nurses
Association



2024 RESOLUTIONS

ALASKA NURSES
ASSOCIATION

Resolution 2024-1

Growing our Union through Organizing

WHEREAS, the corporatization of healthcare, especially hospitals, has been creating work environments that drive healthcare workers to less stressful workplaces; and

WHEREAS, we have seen the toll that profits before patients have caused on the hospital and healthcare industry; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Nurses Association (AaNA) labor program is a local of the AFT national union and AFT has recommitted to the Code Red Campaign; and

WHEREAS, the rate of union membership in the health care and social assistance industry in the United States from 2000 to 2023 are on the rise since 2016¹; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, burnout levels among registered nurses in the United States were alarming. A 2023 survey revealed that over two-thirds of surveyed registered nurses stated having feelings of burnout on most days. When asked about having feelings of burnout on most days, 37 percent of surveyed registered nurses stated that they strongly agreed, and 31 percent somewhat agreed. On the other hand, only eight percent of nurses said that they strongly disagreed that they felt burned out on most days during their job²; and

WHEREAS, the governor of Alaska introduced a bill in the first session of the 33rd Legislature that would allow non-hospitals providing healthcare to avoid overtime pay to nurses after 8 hours in a workday (HB 204); and

WHEREAS, Alaska law allows hospital employees providing medical care to not be paid overtime³;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that AaNA will educate nurses and other health professionals as to the importance of protecting their work rules and professions with a collective bargaining agreement (CBA); and

RESOLVED, that nurses and other health professionals who enjoy the benefits of a CBA will be educated regarding the importance of increasing the union density in their workplaces and the healthcare community in Alaska and nationally; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will seek a team of nurses who have an interest in organizing other new bargaining units of nurses and health professionals in Alaska and commit to growing our union and professional program density.

References

- 1 Published by [Statista Research Department](#), Jul 5, 2024
- 2 Statista Published by [Jenny Yang](#), May 2, 2024
- 3 <https://labor.alaska.gov/lss/whact.htm> (see #12 under Additional Overtime Exemptions)

Resolution 2024-2

Preventing Workplace Violence in Healthcare

WHEREAS, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) defines workplace violence as “the act or threat of violence, ranging from verbal abuse to physical assaults directed toward persons at work or on duty”; and

WHEREAS, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) convenings in 2023 note violence against healthcare professionals is six times that of employees in all other industries averaged; and

WHEREAS, the same 2023 OSHA report says violence against healthcare and social assistance professionals has continued to increase over time, noting studies from 2016 to now; and

WHEREAS, nurses face a particularly high risk of workplace violence by the very nature of their job, with 1 in 4 nurses reporting being assaulted at work, noting nurses provide emergency, behavioral, mental health, and memory care, services and work with agitated and in distress patients and their friends and family members; and

WHEREAS, nurses exposed to workplace violence are 2 to 4 times more likely to experience posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, and burnout; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive evidence-based prevention programs have been shown to reduce the risk of workplace violence against healthcare workers; and

WHEREAS, at least 8 states require employer-run workplace violence prevention programs and one state that requires employer-run workplace violence prevention program for public employers; and

WHEREAS, 38 states have established or increase penalties for assault of nurses; and

WHEREAS, Alaska signed into law House Bill 312 in 2018 allowing law enforcement officers more flexibility in making arrests on-site for those who commit assault in the fourth degree (a misdemeanor) against healthcare workers. It lists out aggravating factors for a felony charge at sentencing;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska Nurses Association continues to voice the serious nature of workplace violence in healthcare and support the development of effective laws and regulations to protect nurses and health care workers; and

RESOLVED, that the Alaska Nurses Association encourages members to be aware of programs, regulations, and laws to mitigate this violence through publication of articles in *The Alaska Nurse* and information disseminated during continuing education events.

Resolution 2024-3

Participating in AFT's Code Red Campaign

WHEREAS, the Alaska Nurses Association (AaNA) is the recognized leader and voice of nurses in Alaska and works to create a safe experience for nurses and their patients in all healthcare settings; and

WHEREAS, there is a staffing crisis due to nurses not wanting to work in unsafe workplaces; and

WHEREAS, nurses deserve to come to work and not feel they are not putting their license or patients in jeopardy when they accept an assignment; and

WHEREAS, patients deserve to know their nurses have enough time to safely care for them;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AaNA will actively participate and support the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)'s Campaign Code Red: Understaffing = Patient Care Crisis; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will work to educate Alaska's nurses and student nurses about the AFT Code Red campaign; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will advocate for safe staffing legislation.

Resolution 2024-4

Affirming Opposition to Nurse Licensure Compact Legislation in Alaska

WHEREAS, the Alaska Nurses Association (AaNA) is the recognized leader and voice of nurses in Alaska and works with the Alaska Board of Nursing and Alaska Legislature on issues that affect nurse licensure and practice in our state; and

WHEREAS, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), a private, non-regulatory, non-governmental trade association, has created a Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) for multistate nursing practice; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska is not a member of the NLC, and Alaska currently enjoys complete autonomy over the regulation of the profession of nursing, allowing local experts to make local decisions that are best for our state; and

WHEREAS, joining the NLC would erode Alaska's state sovereignty and pose significant new complications for regulating nursing practice in our state; and

WHEREAS, the NLC undermines the mission of the Alaska Board of Nursing by hindering the Board's ability to protect the health and safety of the Alaskan public; and

WHEREAS, the NLC allows nurses to circumvent Alaska's rigorous and necessary standards regarding nursing education, continued competency, and safe conduct and practice; this ultimately lowers nursing standards and diminishes the quality of patient care that Alaskans receive; and

WHEREAS, any member state discovering that the NLC overrules the state at excessive cost, will find it difficult, expensive, and perhaps impossible to extricate itself from the Compact; and

WHEREAS, there are other regulatory solutions to providing for telehealth and allowing expedited licensing processes, and these solutions do not require the State to cede its authority to an unaccountable and amorphous bureaucracy, nor do these solutions

undermine standards for nursing nor jeopardize the health and safety of Alaskan patients; and

WHEREAS, the NLC presents barriers to all nurses, including obstacles to advancing practice authority and advocacy through collective bargaining, and by potentially suppressing wages, undermining worker and safety protections, and deteriorating working conditions through generalized -instead of community standards;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AaNA affirms our position that licensure for nurses working in Alaska should be under the jurisdiction of the Alaska Board of Nursing; and

RESOLVED, AaNA affirms our unequivocal opposition to NLC legislation in the state of Alaska; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will intensify our efforts to educate Alaskan nurses, legislators, and the public on the dangers of joining the NLC and will mobilize our members in opposition to NLC legislation in Alaska.

Resolution 2024-5

In Support of Screenings & Training on Elder Abuse

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization expects the global population of older adults to approximate 22% by 2050, a percentage that continues to rise every year. Moreover, 1 in 10 older adults and many AaNA/AFT members report having experienced elder mistreatment. However, only 1 in 1,000 older adults in emergency departments are diagnosed with elder mistreatment; and

WHEREAS, the Administration on Aging within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that 5 million adults experience abuse, neglect and self-neglect every year. And the National Institute on Aging reports hundreds of thousands of adults over the age of 60 experience some form of abuse, whether physical, financial or emotional exploitation. Healthcare costs from violence and abuse to older adults are estimated to be over \$5.3 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, hospitals are not consistently screening for the detection of elder abuse. Medicare has required providers to perform certain routine screenings, but not yet mandated any screenings for elder abuse. Caregivers are not receiving consistent and adequate training on elder abuse; and when elder abuse is identified, there is not often the training on how to properly report it; and

WHEREAS, that AaNA/AFT, throughout our history, has committed to the defense of the most vulnerable members of our communities:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that AaNA will commit to being a voice for older adults and to speaking for this population on a state level. The AaNA will identify stakeholders to sit on the various councils and boards and charge our affiliates to improve elder care delivery through public policy advocacy and professional education, training, research in aging, and collaboration across all healthcare settings; and

RESOLVED, that AaNA will support all those who do the work for the elderly, including in-home caregivers, by organizing those not yet represented by a union and building model language for local unions to propose in contract bargaining that will improve the standards of care for the aging and senior population.

Resolution 2024-6

Protecting Seniors

WHEREAS, the health, well-being and economic security for seniors is critical and Social Security and Medicare are the core safety net; and

WHEREAS, that core safety net should never be diminished nor impaired as seniors built this country and have the right to the assurance that in their retirement years they will be protected; and

WHEREAS, a national healthcare crisis is affecting all workers and Americans' pay more than twice as much as other developed countries on total healthcare spending and prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, a lack of control over healthcare costs translates to an overwhelming economic burden for individuals and families; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Presidential Transition Project, a blueprint for the source of national debt and calls for the repeal of the Inflation Reduction Act, including the Medicare drug price negotiation, which would stop billions of taxpayer dollars being saved annually and would therefore increase the national debt; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision overruling Chevron, government agencies like the Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services, could lack discretion to regulate hospital participation in Medicare and reimbursements leading to diminished quality of care, wasteful spending, and higher costs for seniors; and

WHEREAS, Social Security for seniors translates into economic stability; and undermining it through privatization and raising the retirement age will cause a spike in elder poverty; and

WHEREAS, currently the Government Pension Offset (GPO), in various instances, reduces earned Social Security survivors' benefits for spouses, widows and widowers who also receive government pensions of their own; and

WHEREAS, currently, in some states, the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), reduces Social Security benefits for individuals who also receive a pension or disability benefit from an employer that did not withhold Social Security taxes:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that AaNA and our affiliates will call for improving-not diminishing our healthcare safety net, including protecting and improving Medicare; and

RESOLVED, that AaNA will monitor state legislation and lobby our legislators to minimize economic challenges to current and future retirees and foster simple solutions to necessary changes to ensure the continued success of these earned benefits; and

RESOLVED, that AaNA/AFT, a union of educators, healthcare workers and public employees, will seek federal legislation to maintain, Medicare and expand Social Security benefits for seniors as well as to ensure that these benefits will never be diminished and that any future contemplated changes should act only to enhance these benefits, which have been earned after decades of employee and employer participation into the Medicare and Social Security systems and need to be preserved into the foreseeable future.

Resolution 2024-7

Attending Alaska Board of Nursing Meetings

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Nursing is responsible for protecting the health and safety of the Alaskan public by regulating the practice of nursing in Alaska;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that a professional practice committee representative will continue to attend the Alaska State Board of Nursing quarterly Board meetings and will report back to the AaNA Board of Directors the activity of the state board that impacts the Alaska nursing profession; and

RESOLVED, AaNA will continue to provide support to our AaNA members who have questions about nursing practice issues; and

RESOLVED, AaNA is available to work with the Alaska Board of Nursing.

Resolution 2024-8

Continuing Education Priorities

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following are priorities for the Alaska Nurses Association's Continuing Education program for 2024-2025:

- Focusing on retention of Alaska's nurses through professional development opportunities that highlight the array of specialties in the nursing field, promote self-care, and address ways to decrease burnout and moral injury among nurses; and
- Implementing creative methods of delivering high-quality, relevant, and accessible education that meets the needs of AaNA members; and
- Continuing to joint provide continuing education activities with community partners; and
- Promoting increased opportunities for continuing education in rural Alaska; and
- Ensuring the sustainability and progress of the Alaska Nurses Association's Continuing Education program.