

**NEW HAMPSHIRE NURSES' ASSOCIATION**  
**POSITION STATEMENT ON MANDATORY OVERTIME AND NURSE STAFFING**

**SUMMARY:**

**In order to eliminate the need for mandatory overtime, the New Hampshire Nurses' Association urges all employers of nurses in the state of New Hampshire to:**

- ✓ **Implement adequate staffing plans;**
- ✓ **Develop programs to actively recruit and retain all levels of direct care staff;**
- ✓ **Develop plans to address worker safety and injury protection;**
- ✓ **Provide incentives and education that ensures a flexible workforce;**
- ✓ **Invest in compensation programs that help attract workers;**
- ✓ **Devisе innovative flexible work schedules for direct care staff; and**
- ✓ **Work proactively with nurses to develop innovative staffing plans and compensation programs.**

**In the fulfillment of our mission, we offer our knowledge, resources and experience to assist organizations in New Hampshire in meeting this goal.**

Throughout the American workforce there exists certain professions, occupations and industries where the performance of individual workers has an undeniable and instantaneous impact on the safety and health of other members of society at large. It has been the tradition of our culture to assure that the individuals working in these industries have all possible resources and advantages at hand to maintain both the physical and mental acuity necessary for safe and efficient performance of their responsibilities. There exists concrete evidence throughout society that fatigue has an enormous negative impact on an individual worker's ability to perform job tasks. For this reason, many industries across the country such as airline pilots, truck drivers and other industrial workers have striven to eliminate mandatory overtime and extremely excessive work hours.

In addition to fatigue and the related danger to the public, mandatory overtime increases payroll expense, employee injuries, legal liability, and decreases professional satisfaction among employees. In the healthcare arena, all of these factors contribute to the spiraling cost of healthcare and the diminished access to healthcare brought on by higher costs. Finally, all of these factors exacerbate the current nationwide shortage of nurses by making the nursing profession unnecessarily unappealing to America's youth.

The New Hampshire Nurses' Association, in its mission to promote the practice of professional nursing, advance the development of professional nurses, and improve health standards and availability of healthcare services for all people of New Hampshire, supports the development of comprehensive staffing plans that take into account all of the various and sundry issues that collectively contribute to the continued use of mandatory overtime. It is our assertion that mandatory overtime is not only dangerous and expensive, it is absolutely unnecessary and only exists in situations where appropriate staffing plans are absent and planning has not occurred.

Adopted: March 12, 2001