

# Better Staffing for Nurses and Patients – Senate Bill 469

**Strengthening Oregon’s Nurse Staffing Law:** Senate Bill 469 (SB 469) builds on Oregon’s collaborative staffing committee structure by improving much-needed state enforcement, empowering staffing committees, enhancing transparency, and increasing accountability.

**Improves Enforcement:** *Changes the law’s requirements to increase the frequency of staffing audits and reduce the time staffing complaints go unresolved.*

- Requires hospitals to be audited every 3 years
- Requires state to initiate on-site investigation within 60 days of receiving staffing complaint
- Requires state to re-survey facilities with approved plans of correction within 60 days of implementation of plan
- Requires state to interview co-chairs of staffing committee as part of audit or investigation

**Increases Accountability:** *Creates a collaborative advisory board to ensure best practices.*

- Creates a 12 member advisory board to Health Care Regulation and Quality Improvement (HCRQI)
- Advisory Board will resemble collaborative staffing committee model and include equal representation from staff nurses and nurse managers
- Advisory Board will identify nurse staffing trends and make recommendations to the state based on audits, complaints, investigations and annual staffing plan reviews
- Advisory Board will report annually to the Legislature

**Empowers Staffing Committees:** *Clarifies that staffing committees have the final say in staffing plans. Modifies membership of staffing committees.*

- Staffing plans passed by Hospital Nurse Staffing Committee (HNSC) must be implemented by hospital, with limited emergency exceptions
- Committee meets quarterly or at the call of either co-chair
- Members of committee must be released from regular assignment to participate in committee work
- Includes a position on HNSC for a non-supervisory, non-RN, direct care staff member whose services are covered by staffing plan

## Appropriate RN Staffing

### For Patients: Saves Lives

Each additional patient added to the average RN workload increases the likelihood of a patient death by 7%. (*Aiken and colleagues, 2014*)

### For Nurses: Improves Work Environment

Nurses tend to have a more positive perception of their work environment when it employs nurse ratios or staffing plans. (*Cox, 2005*)

### For Hospitals: Saves Money

Increasing the number of RNs can reduce the length of patients’ hospital stays and adverse events, saving nearly \$3 billion nationally. (*Needleman, 2011*)

**Additional Staffing Plan Requirements, Regular Review:** *Creates more comprehensive staffing plans and a more thorough review process*

- Staffing plan must consider admissions, discharges, transfers, breaks and additional non-direct care required tasks
- Plans cannot rely *solely* on external benchmarking measures
- Regular review of staffing plan by HNSCs must be completed annually, or more frequently as determined by HNSC
  - Review must include: patient outcomes, reports of inadequate staffing, staffing complaints, staff overtime, hours per patient day, deviations from staffing plan, and other factors determined by HNSC

In 2013, ONA nurses reported  
**1143** incidents of  
inadequate or unsafe staffing,  
a **114%** increase from 2010.

**Helps Resolve Impasses:** *Creates mediation rules to promote agreements.*

- If HNSC cannot approve a staffing plan, it can invoke a 30 day pre-impasse period to work towards a resolution
- HNSC must notify OHA if there is not an approved plan following the 30 day pre-impasse period
- After the 30 day pre-impasse period, HNSC begins mediation (90 days maximum)
- OHA supplies the mediator
- Any agreement reached with a mediator must be based on the staffing plan requirements

**Enhances Transparency:** *Increases access to staffing information.*

- Staffing law and instructions on how to report a violation must be posted on each hospital unit in areas visible to the public

**Makes Changes to Mandatory Overtime:** *Establishes reasonable limits on use of mandatory overtime.*

- Specifies that nurses cannot be required to work beyond the agreed-upon, prearranged shift
- Specifies that a hospital must provide a 10 hour rest period after a nurse works 12 hours in a 24 hour period
- The HNSC will review patterns of overtime utilization

Go to [www.OregonNurseStaffingLaw.org](http://www.OregonNurseStaffingLaw.org) today and click on the link to ask your state legislators to support SB 469 and improve nurse staffing.

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