

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Commission on WorkForce Issues

What Nurses Should Expect in the Workplace: The ANA Bill of Rights for Registered Nurses

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In 2000, the American Nurses Association put a survey on the ANA-Nursing World website asking about nurses' perceptions about the quality of care at their facilities. Of the 7299 nurses who responded, more than 5,000 cited inadequate staffing at their facility and nearly 4,500 pointed to decreased nurse satisfaction as the main reason for the declining quality of care.



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In the wake of that survey, the ANA developed a bill of rights for nurses which originated in the May 2000 Summit on Nurse Staffing held in Washington, DC. ANA President Mary E. Foley, MS, RN stated, "The ANA Bill of Rights is a powerful statement of the rights that every registered nurse must have to provide high-quality patient care in a safe work environment." It clearly states that nurses have the right to work in a safe environment, to practice in a manner that ensures the provision of safe care and to advocate freely for both their patients and themselves.

The Bill of Rights can inform the questions a nurse might ask of a new employer but might be useful to a group of nurses already employed in a health care setting. They will also be helpful for students to understand what they should expect in the workplace. Mary Foley stated, "This Bill of Rights is intended to empower nurses by making it clear what is absolutely non-negotiable in the workplace."

The VNA Commission on Workforce Issues is printing the ANA Bill of Rights for Registered Nurses as a clip out so each nurse can save it—refer to it when seeking a new position or post it in the workplace and see if you can meet these in your current workplace. ♦

Bill of Rights for Registered Nurses

1. Nurses have the right to practice in a manner that fulfills their obligations to society and to those who receive nursing care.
2. Nurses have the right to practice in environments that allow them to act in accordance with professional standards and legally authorized scopes of practice.
3. Nurses have the right to a work environment that supports and facilitates ethical practice, in accordance with the Code of Ethics for Nurses and its interpretive statements.
4. Nurses have the right to freely and openly advocate for themselves and their patients, without fear of retribution.
5. Nurses have the right to fair compensation for their work, consistent with their knowledge, experience, and professional responsibilities.
6. Nurses have the right to a work environment that is safe for themselves and their patients.
7. Nurses have the right to negotiate the conditions of their employment, either as individuals or collectively, in all practice settings.

As a member of the Center for the American Nurse, the Virginia Nurses Association endorses the Bill of Rights for Registered Nurses in its entirety.