



Missouri
Nurses
Association

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE TOOLKIT

Tools, Resources and
Strategies to Create
Safer Health Care
Workplaces



**SAFE STAFF,
SAFE PATIENTS,
STRONGER TOGETHER.**



MONA Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jill Kliethermes, MSN, RN, FNP-BC

OUTREACH MANAGER

Jack Seigel

Government Relations / Lobbyist

Kyna Iman

VTL Solutions Support Staff

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Sara Fry

MARKETING DIRECTOR

Travis Gallup

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

JoAnn Busby

FINANCE DIRECTOR

Kim Capps

MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING ASSISTANT

Kelli Kloeppel

EVENTS PLANNER ASSISTANT

Kathleen Hood

Missouri Nurses Association

217 Oscar Drive, Suite C
Jefferson City, MO 65101

573-636-4623

info@missourinurses.org

<https://missourinurses.org>



**Missouri
Nurses
Association**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is Workplace Violence 3

- Definitions

How Serious is Workplace Violence in Missouri 4

- 2025 Survey Data

How can workplace violence be prevented 6

- Healthcare Best Practices
- BERT Best Practices
- Education & Training Best Practices
- Employers Should
- Employees Should
- Law Enforcement Best Practices

What are my rights as a nurse 10

- ANA Nurses Bill of Rights
- Nurses Rights when Experiencing Workplace Violence
- Crime Victim Rights in Missouri

What should I do after an incident 15

- What to do as a Nurse

What changed in Missouri Law 16

- 2025/26 Legislative Update

Tools & Resources 18

TOOLKIT CREATED WITH ASSISTANCE FROM:

Alyson Shock

Victim Advocate Coordinator

Missouri Office of Prosecution Services

Office: 573-751-0619 Direct: 573-751-4804

Work Cell Phone: 660-460-6330

www.prosecutors.mo.gov

Email Alyson.Shock@prosecutors.mo.gov

What is Workplace Violence?

“ DEFINITION:

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE:

Workplace violence is an act or threat of physical force against a health care provider or employee that results in, or is likely to result in, physical injury or psychological trauma. It also includes any incident involving the use of a firearm or other dangerous weapon, regardless of whether a health care provider or employee is injured.¹

VIOLENCE IN THE HEALTH CARE SETTING CAN INCLUDE:



Physical Assault



Verbal Abuse



Threats



Sexual Harassment



Stalking



Domestic Violence

ANY ACT THAT CAUSES FEAR OR HARM to a staff member, provider, patient, or visitor within a health care facility.

ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS:

OSHA

Any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior that occurs in the workplace. It ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide and can affect employees, clients, customers, and visitors.

NIH

Acts or threats of violence directed against employees, either inside or outside the workplace. Workplace violence includes verbal abuse, bullying, harassment, physical assaults, and homicide.

CDC / NIOSH

Violent acts, including physical assaults and psychologically harmful behaviors, directed toward individuals while they are at work or on duty.

How serious is workplace violence in Missouri?

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

SURVEY DATA

2025 MONA Survey

To better understand the prevalence and impact of workplace violence in Missouri, MONA and its partner organizations conducted an electronic Workplace Violence Survey during the fall of 2025. The survey produced several significant findings:



90.3%

EXPERIENCED **VERBAL ABUSE**



88.3%

EXPERIENCED **PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE**



46.6%

CONSIDERED **LEAVING THEIR JOB** BECAUSE OF
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE.



88.4%

AGREED **ADDITIONAL PREVENTION MEASURES ARE
NEEDED.**



WORKPLACE VIOLENCE TOOLKIT

5

Following completion of the survey, MONA partnered with statisticians at Missouri State University to analyze the data. Their analysis found statistically significant evidence that workplace violence contributes to nurses considering leaving their current position or the nursing profession altogether.

- More frequent workplace violence significantly predicted a nurse's intention to leave.
- Experiences of workplace violence, particularly when they affect personal life, are significant predictors of a health care worker's intent to leave their job or profession.



63.1%

EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL ABUSE



36.9%

EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ABUSE



63.2%

SOMEWHAT OR STRONGLY AGREED WORKPLACE VIOLENCE NEGATIVELY AFFECTED THEIR MENTAL HEALTH.



92.2%

STRONGLY SUPPORTED STATE LEGISLATION TO PROTECT NURSES.

How can workplace violence be prevented?

HEALTH CARE BEST PRACTICES



Strong policies.
Trained teams.
Safer workplaces.

1

Establish an Interdisciplinary Workplace Violence Prevention Team

Create an interdisciplinary team responsible for overseeing hospital security and workplace violence prevention efforts. This team should guide policy development, coordinate prevention strategies, and evaluate the effectiveness of safety initiatives.

2

Prioritize Education and Training

Education and training are essential components of any workplace violence prevention program. All health care personnel should receive ongoing training to recognize risk factors, prevent escalation, respond appropriately to violent situations, and understand reporting procedures.

3

Seek Feedback from Patients and Families

Obtaining feedback from patients and families is a best practice that can help identify opportunities to improve communication, patient satisfaction, and overall safety within the health care environment.

4

Provide Immediate Support Following an Incident

Following an incident of workplace violence, staff should receive immediate physical, medical, and psychological support, as appropriate. Incidents should be documented in accordance with the organization's policies and procedures. Whenever possible, the affected staff member should be removed from the immediate work environment and taken to a safe location where they can decompress and receive initial emotional support from trained personnel or an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselor, if desired.

5

Emphasize Reporting and Data Collection

Consistent reporting and comprehensive data collection are essential best practices for identifying trends, evaluating prevention efforts, and improving workplace safety.

6 **Extend Prevention Efforts Across All Health Care Settings**

Safety and workplace violence prevention policies, programs, and practices should extend to all health care settings, including emergency departments, inpatient units, outpatient clinics, community-based settings, and mobile or in-home services.

7 **Implement Behavioral Emergency Response Teams (BERTs)**

Health care organizations are increasingly implementing Behavioral Emergency Response Teams (BERTs) to manage acute behavioral crises and enhance the safety and well-being of both patients and staff. BERTs are multidisciplinary teams trained to respond quickly and effectively to escalating behavioral situations, particularly those involving aggression, agitation, or the potential for violence. Evidence suggests that BERTs can significantly reduce incidents of workplace violence.

BERT BEST PRACTICES:

- Utilize a multidisciplinary team approach
- Provide ongoing training and regular practice exercises.
- Promote timely communication and information sharing among team members.



8 **Partner with Local Law Enforcement**

Health care facilities should establish and maintain collaborative relationships with local law enforcement agencies as part of their workplace violence prevention efforts. These partnerships can improve emergency response, strengthen communication, and support coordinated planning before incidents occur. Hospitals are encouraged to designate a facility liaison to serve as the primary point of contact for law enforcement and to facilitate ongoing collaboration.

Facilities may also consider inviting law enforcement or qualified security consultants to periodically assess potential security vulnerabilities using information from previous incidents within the facility and the surrounding community.



EDUCATION & TRAINING

BEST PRACTICES



Hospital leaders should foster and maintain a culture of safety and quality throughout the organization.



Appropriate staffing is a critical component of ensuring the safety of both patients and staff.



It is everyone's responsibility to recognize and prevent violence.

EMPLOYERS SHOULD:

- Establish a zero-tolerance policy for all incidents of workplace violence.
- Train employees to recognize, prevent, and respond to workplace violence.
- Investigate all reported incidents of workplace violence promptly and thoroughly.

EMPLOYEES SHOULD:

- Participate in workplace violence prevention training.
- Report all incidents of workplace violence to their employer, regardless of severity.

LAW ENFORCEMENT BEST PRACTICES



Build Relationships with State and Local Law Enforcement

Health care and law enforcement intersect in many ways, making strong working relationships especially important in the context of workplace violence. This is particularly critical for hospitals without in-house security or those that frequently care for patients who present an elevated risk of violence.



Incorporate Law Enforcement into Staff Training

Hospitals should develop a comprehensive workplace violence training plan that clearly outlines the type and frequency of training required for all staff, as well as additional training for employees in high-risk or specialized roles. When appropriate, local law enforcement partners can participate in planning, drills, or educational activities to strengthen preparedness and reinforce coordinated response procedures.



What are my rights as a nurse?

ANA NURSES BILL OF RIGHTS

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to visit the official ANA document



<https://bit.ly/4wEM6Gj>

More than 4 million registered nurses comprise the largest group of health care professionals in the United States. And the American public has consistently ranked nursing the most honest and ethical professional in an annual Gallup poll. Bringing vast knowledge and expertise to every health care setting across a wide range of specialties, nurses serve their patients and communities throughout the continuum of life and care. Nurses provide mental and physical health care and wellness services while maintaining respect for human dignity and delivering equitable, patient-centered care regardless of race, origin, or background. It is vitally important to acknowledge and respect the rigor of nursing practice as both an art and science. To that end, and for their indisputable contributions to society, education, public health, science, and the health of all communities, the following rights are non-negotiable for all nurses to meet the increasing complexities of care delivery:

- 1 **Full authority for nurses** to practice at the top of their license, credentials, and professional standards without barriers, and in a manner that fulfills their obligations to society, patients, and communities.
- 2 **Continuous access to training**, education, professional development, as well as pathways for nurses to be recognized as leaders and in roles to direct shared decision-making on nursing practice, resources, staffing concerns and patient safety issues.
- 3 **Work and practice in environments that ensure respect, inclusivity, diversity, and equity** with leaders who are committed to dismantling systemic racism and addressing racist behaviors that negatively impact nurses of color.
- 4 **Just care settings** that facilitate ethical nursing practice, standards, and care in accordance with the Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements.

5 Safe work environments that prioritize and protect nurses' well-being and provide support, resources, and tools to stay psychologically and physically whole.

6 Freedom for nurses to advocate for their patients and raise legitimate concerns about their own personal safety without the fear of retribution, retaliation, intimidation, termination, and ostracization.

7 Competitive compensation consistent with nurses' clinical

knowledge, experience, and professional responsibilities and that recognizes the value and rigor of nursing practice.

8 Collective and individual rights for nurses to negotiate terms, wages, and work conditions of their employment in all practice settings.



NURSES RIGHTS

WHEN EXPERIENCING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

1 RIGHT TO A SAFE WORKPLACE

Under Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA):

- Nurses have the right to work in an environment free from recognized hazards
- Employers are responsible for preventing and addressing workplace violence
- Facilities should have policies, training, and security measures in place

2 RIGHT TO REPORT INCIDENTS WITHOUT RETALIATION

Nurses have the right to:

- Report verbal threats, physical assaults, or unsafe conditions
- File internal incident reports
- Report to external agencies when applicable

Employers cannot retaliate (e.g., discipline, termination, intimidation) for reporting safety concerns under OSHA protections.

3 RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE PROTECTION

After an incident, nurses have the right to:

- Remove themselves from unsafe situations when possible and as soon as other hospital staff are present to continue patient care
- Request security assistance
- Receive support from supervisors

4 RIGHT TO MEDICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE

If injured or traumatized, nurses are entitled to:

- Medical evaluation and treatment
- Workers' compensation coverage (if applicable)
- Access to counseling or employee assistance programs

5 RIGHT TO PRESS CHARGES

Nurses who are victims of assault have the right to:

- File a police report
- Cooperate with law enforcement
- Cooperate as a Victim/Witness if law enforcement decides to file criminal charges

Many states have laws that provide enhanced protections or penalties for assaulting healthcare workers.

6 RIGHT TO EMPLOYER FOLLOW-UP AND INVESTIGATION

Employers should:

- Investigate incidents promptly
- Document findings
- Implement corrective actions
- Update safety protocols if needed

Nurses have the right to expect transparency and accountability.

7 RIGHT TO TRAINING AND PREVENTION MEASURES

Nurses should receive:

- De-escalation training
- Workplace violence prevention education
- Clear protocols for handling aggressive patients or visitors

8 RIGHT TO ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION

Nurses can seek support from:

- Professional associations (e.g., American Nurses Association)
- State nursing associations
- Victim Advocate (if a report is made with law enforcement and/ or if criminal charges are filed)

These organizations advocate stronger workplace protections and policies.

Even if violence is from patients or families, it is not “part of the job.”

CRIME VICTIM RIGHTS IN MISSOURI

WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS OF A CRIME VICTIM IN MISSOURI?

Article 1, Section 32 of the Missouri State Constitution guarantees that crime victims have the right to:



- Be present at all criminal justice proceedings at which the defendant has such right
- Be informed and heard at guilty pleas, bail hearings, sentencings, probation revocation hearings and parole hearings
- Be informed of trials and preliminary hearings
- Restitution
- The speedy disposition and appellate review of cases
- Reasonable protection from the defendant or any person acting on behalf of the defendant
- Information concerning the release, escape, recapture or death of the accused while in custody or confinement
- Information about how the criminal justice system works, the rights and availability of services and information about the crime

LEARN MORE

The rights of crime victims are further established and defined in the Missouri Revised Statutes, Section 595.209.





TOOLKIT QUESTION

**What should I do
after an incident?**

WHAT TO DO AS A NURSE

IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS:



**1. Ensure immediate
safety**



**2. Call for help/security
if needed**



**3. Report the incident
(internal + external if
needed)**



**4. Seek medical/mental
health support if
needed**



**5. Document everything
(what happened, when,
who was involved)**



**6. Follow up on employer
response to ensure the
issue is addressed**

What changed in Missouri Law?

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



The 2026 legislative session saw several workplace violence prevention bills advance through the legislative process. These proposals focused on four primary areas:

- Workplace Violence Signage
- Assault in the Fourth Degree (Assault IV)
- Hospital Security Grants
- Workplace Violence Prevention Committee/ Plan requirements

At the conclusion of the 2026 legislative session, the Workplace Violence Signage legislation achieved final passage. On 7/13/26 Governor Kehoe signed HB 2372 which includes the workplace violence signage language. Assault IV language was adopted as a House amendment but was removed during conference committee following objections from several senators. The Workplace Violence Prevention Committee/ Plan legislation was unanimously approved by committee but was never brought to the floor for debate. The Hospital Security Grants legislation did not receive a committee hearing.

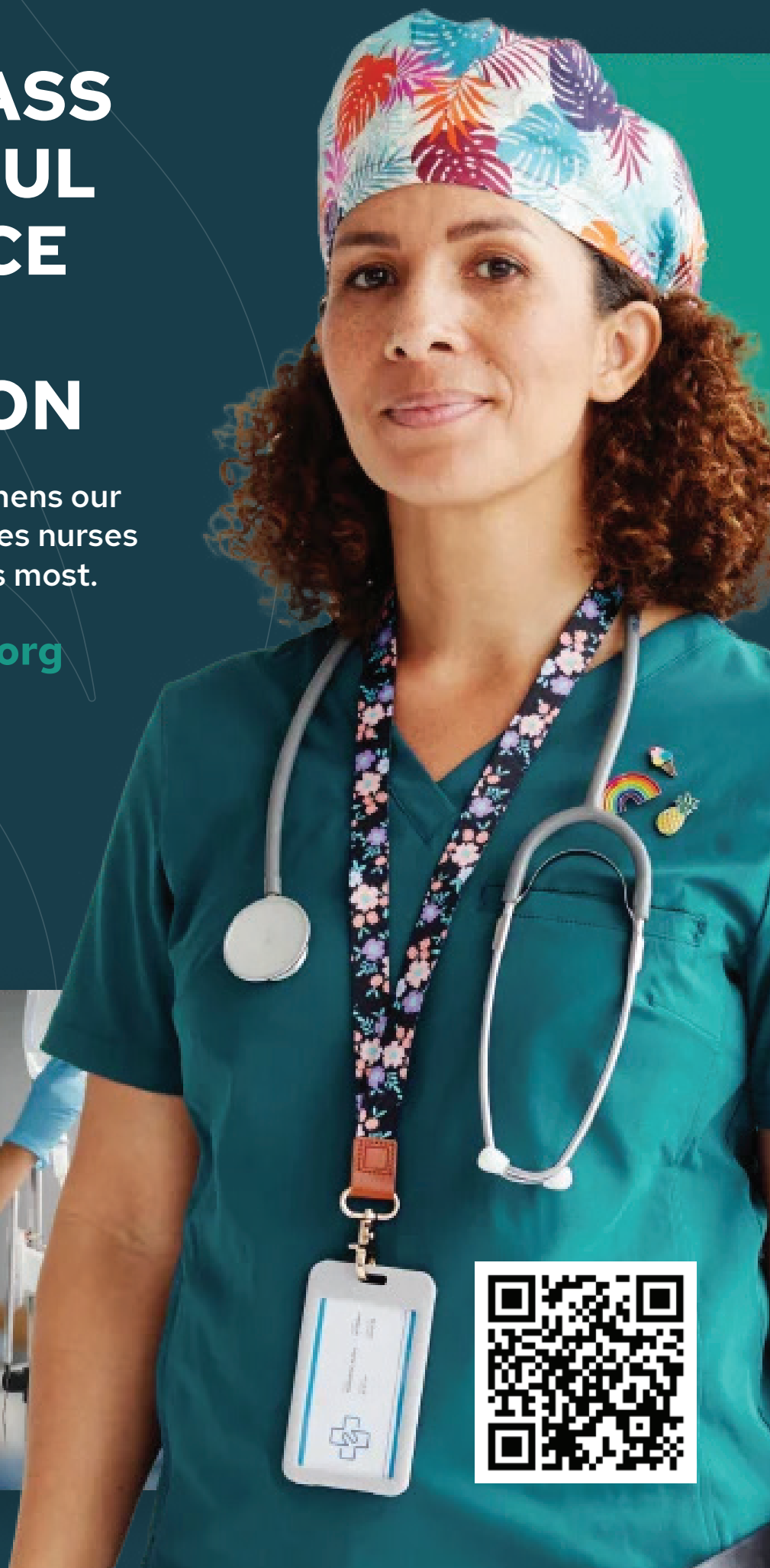
LOOKING AHEAD

While there is still work to be done, MONA is encouraged by the progress made during the 2026 legislative session and remains committed to advancing workplace violence prevention legislation in future sessions.

HELP US PASS MEANINGFUL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE LEGISLATION

Your contribution strengthens our collective voice and ensures nurses are heard where it matters most.

missourinursespac.org



TOOLS & RESOURCES

Continue Your Workplace Violence Prevention Journey

Preventing workplace violence requires ongoing education, advocacy, and organizational commitment. The following trusted resources provide additional guidance, training, research, and support for nurses, healthcare leaders, and employers.



FEDERAL GUIDANCE & BEST PRACTICES



1. OSHA Workplace Violence Prevention

Federal guidance, prevention strategies, and employer responsibilities.



<https://shorturl.at/vLUBa>



2. OSHA Hospital Resources

Healthcare-specific workplace violence tools and implementation guidance.



<https://shorturl.at/PbgK3>



3. OSHA Prevention Guidelines (Publication 3148)

Comprehensive framework for developing an effective prevention program.



<https://shorturl.at/fHwrq>



4. CDC/NIOSH Workplace Violence

Research, statistics, and evidence-based prevention resources.



<https://shorturl.at/ubtsT>



NURSING ORGANIZATIONS



5. American Nurses Association (ANA)

Workplace violence advocacy, policy statements, and educational resources.



<https://shorturl.at/KOuUO>



6. Emergency Nurses Association (ENA)

Emergency department-specific guidance, de-escalation techniques, and advocacy.



<https://www.ena.org>



7. American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)

Resources promoting healthy work environments and professional well-being.



<https://www.aacn.org>



8. Missouri Nurses Association (MONA)

Legislative updates, advocacy efforts, and member resources.



<https://missourinurses.org>



TRAINING & EDUCATION



9. CDC/NIOSH Online Course

Free continuing education course on workplace violence prevention for nurses.



<https://shorturl.at/ubtsT>



10. The Joint Commission

Accreditation requirements and workplace violence prevention standards.



<https://shorturl.at/IIeIG>



11. Joint Commission Resource Center

Practical implementation tools, checklists, and policy guidance.



<https://shorturl.at/beS2f>



SUPPORT & WELL-BEING



12. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Mental health resources and support for healthcare professionals.



<https://shorturl.at/ubtsT>



13. 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Immediate, confidential support available 24/7 for anyone experiencing emotional distress.



<https://shorturl.at/ubtsT>



MISSOURI NURSES ASSOCIATION

The Missouri Nurses Association is committed to advocating for safer workplaces for every nurse. Visit our website to learn about legislative initiatives, continuing education opportunities, and ways to become involved in workplace violence prevention.



missourinurses.org

ADDITIONAL READING



OSHA Workplace Violence Prevention Guidelines

<https://shorturl.at/TUvVw>



CDC Workplace Violence Prevention Resources

<https://shorturl.at/12HnS>



The Joint Commission Workplace Violence Standards

<https://jointcommission.org>



ANA Violence, Incivility & Bullying Resources

<https://shorturl.at/QPKy6>



DISCLAIMER: The resources listed in this toolkit are provided for educational purposes. Inclusion does not imply endorsement by the Missouri Nurses Association. Always consult your employer's policies and applicable federal and state laws when responding to workplace violence.





Stronger Together.

Membership provides benefits that support career growth and professional development, health and well-being, and much more! Over \$1,200 in value.

Standard membership as low as \$15.75 per month

Professional Development & Continuing Education

American Nurse Journal Subscription with 36 Free CNE courses

Community and Connections: Your Professional Home

ANA online member-only communities

ANA Mentoring Hub

Health and Well-Being

Free Craftsy subscription

Nurse Burnout Prevention Program

Advocacy and Influence

Opportunity to serve and lead on ANA Board and committees

**Discount
for members**



Members get an exclusive discount on the newly updated *Code of Ethics for Nurses*

joinana.org



**SAFE STAFF,
SAFE PATIENTS,
STRONGER TOGETHER.**

The Missouri Nurses Association is committed to advancing workplace violence prevention and supporting nurses across Missouri.

Together, we can create safer health care workplaces for everyone.



**Missouri
Nurses
Association**

217 Oscar Drive, Suite C
Jefferson City, MO 65101

573-636-4623
info@missourinurses.org

<https://missourinurses.org>