



♥ A Union of Nurses &
Health Professionals

May 2026



To view the full newsletter in its original digital format
[click here](#) or scan the QR code.

Having trouble with the code?
Visit <https://n.hnlmk.co/s/svrPrbVi>

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
New Resources	3
2026 Workforce Safety Report	3
Protecting Ohio's Public Services	3
Nursing Scholarships	6
Ohio Nurses Foundation Awards 2026 Scholarships	7
Support the Ohio Nurses Foundation	7
State Policy	8
From Patient Advocates to Policy Advocates	8
What Can I Do to Support Safe Staffing Legislation?	12
Nurses Week	12
Appreciation Means Safety, Respect and Humanity	13
Continuing Education	14
CE4Nurses FREE CE's	14
Nursing in the News	15
Resources	15
Caring For Your Mental Health	15
Stay Connected	16
Notices	17

2026 Workforce Safety Report

Ohio's healthcare system in crisis

On April 30, 2026, the Ohio Nurses Association released its [2026 Workforce Safety Report: Ohio's Healthcare System in Crisis](#). The report summarizes data and findings from a statewide survey sent to all nurses and healthcare workers licensed by the Ohio Board of Nursing and eight other state licensing agencies.

The survey reveals what Ohio's nurses and health professionals already know: hospitals and other healthcare facilities across Ohio are prioritizing financial goals over patient safety and deliberately choosing to understaff direct patient care settings.

Among the findings:

- More than 68% of nurses and health professionals experienced workplace violence in the past year.
- More than 91% of direct-care professionals report working in conditions where staffing is not consistently safe.
- Less than 10% of direct-care professionals report that the unit they work on is always appropriately staffed.
- More than half of direct-care RNs and LPNs are considering leaving direct-care roles because of concerns about patient safety, staffing, and/or workplace violence.
- More than 90% of nurses and health professionals support state legislation to establish safe staffing standards.

ONA has shared the report with legislators and media and will continue to use the data from the survey in efforts to advance safe staffing legislation and other reforms in Ohio.

All nurses and health professionals are encouraged to share the report with their employers and to use the findings to support efforts to improve safety in their workplaces.



You're used to changing patients' lives. Now, it's time to change yours.

Take the next step in your nursing journey at COTC! Our BSN program offers classes online and admits every term. Learn from experienced instructors in a competency-based format. No tests. No better choice.



[Click here](#) to learn more or scan the QR code.

Having trouble with the code? Visit <https://n.hnlnk.co/s/gy9ry8tH>

Protecting Ohio's Public Services

Virtual townhall provides opportunity to learn & ask questions

On May 4, 2026, in partnership with Ohio AFL-CIO and [Ohioans to Protect Public Services](#), the Ohio Nurses Association hosted a Virtual Townhall: Protecting Ohio's Public Services.

Property taxes are a serious issue, and many Ohioans are struggling to pay their property tax while making ends meet. There is an effort underway in Ohio to collect signatures in support of a constitutional amendment that would abolish all property taxes in Ohio, but eliminating property taxes would significantly undermine funding for essential public services—cutting EMS, fire, police, and public health resources—and ultimately jeopardize timely emergency response and access to care in our communities.

To learn more about the potential ballot issue and the impacts it could have on EMS and other local services, please visit the [Ohioans to Protect Public Services website](#). You can find an informational video and links to follow them on social media [here](#). ONA members can also view a recording of the webinar [here](#).

Townhall attendees asked numerous thoughtful questions about the proposal. Some of those questions and the answers provided by our guest panelists follow (edited for length and clarity).

As a nurse, I understand what this means for my job, but what kind of messages might resonate with my family, patients, and neighbors?

Typically when I'm having a conversation with someone, I try to connect with them first and think about some of the things that they are going to care about. I was having a conversation with someone earlier about some of the tough conversations we have with aging parents, like that they probably shouldn't be going up the steps every day. At some point their ankle or their knee is going to give out and the family lives a long way away, and what are they going to do?

When you think about something like that, senior services, the area agencies on aging, these are the people that can provide assistance and things to help people stay in their homes for longer: assistive devices, grab bars, doing safety audits to make sure there aren't rugs that would be a fall risk or a trip risk.

There may be people who are adamant that they don't have any services that they really care about, and they're more in the mindset of, well, we shouldn't replace the services. We should just have the government be cut. But, do they care about local control?

Typically, people who are on the side of smaller government are on the side of local control, and that's, for better or worse, one of the things about having local levies for school and other services, is that communities can vote on what they deem important and what they want to fund. They can say, well, we want to spend more on parks and recreation in this area. We want to spend more on addiction treatment and mental health services.

If you take away the ability for any local government to use property taxes, then you're really undermining local control and accountability. Not only is that almost certainly going to come back to bite you in a different way, but you've taken your say out of it because you're handing the decisions over to people who there's no mechanism for them to give you a chance to vote on it.

What kinds of reforms or adjustments could help ease the burden on homeowners while keeping the stability property taxes provide for local communities?

Well, we aren't in a position ourselves to make those reforms. We're only able to discuss the issue that's on the table, which is to completely eliminate all property taxes, and with no replacement.

That said, the legislature has passed a number of reforms. The reforms are in law now, but they haven't started to take effect. They won't start really taking effect until later this year and over time.

But the question that's asked here is, what can be done for homeowners? The reforms the legislature is working on relate only to homeowners. But the issue that's on the table eliminates all property taxes, not just homeowner property taxes, but business property taxes, vacation homes, casinos, businesses owned by people from out of state, people

from out of state that own property and all that kind of stuff. It wasn't really thought through to be a specific proposal that was aimed just at homeowner tax relief.

But the legislature is continuing to work on it. There are a number of other issues they're working on that are going to specifically address homeowner taxes.

If EMS is largely funded by property taxes, if it's abolished, how will patients be able to get to the ED? And how would we get those services back up and running after they abolish the property tax?

What the proponents of the amendment are saying is that the legislature should figure that out. One of the great unfortunate aspects of this amendment is that if it were to pass, a school district or a safety district can't go back to the voters with a reduced property tax proposal because no property taxes will be allowed. So you have to shift to other taxes, sales taxes, income taxes.

The reality is that what the tax system should be is a multi-legged stool, and taking this one leg out is a problem because this particular type of tax is the most reliable, stable tax in the system. The income tax has some pluses and minuses. The sales tax has some pluses and minuses. And the property tax has some pluses and minuses. And it works best when there's a mix of all three and done the right way.

Sales taxes in particular are tough on people with limited incomes because there are certain things that people on limited incomes must buy. A hamburger costs the same for a person on limited income as it does for somebody who's of high income. They're paying the same sales tax. And you can't stop buying certain things if you're an individual.

So sales taxes aren't good if they go up too high. And the same can be said about income tax and property tax. That's why it's best if they all work together in the right way, in the right mix.

There have been some things done in the last 20 years that have put too much of a burden on the property tax. But there are many things that we just take for granted in our society--one of which is if I fall down and hit my head, I can get an emergency squad pretty fast--and that emergency squad is paid for by a safety levy.

I think part of the concern, too, is the chaos that would ensue from something like this. Once these EMS departments and other public infrastructure would be dismantled, it would be near impossible to rebuild.

The best way to lower utility rates is not to shut off the power. We have to come up with a more thoughtful response to the problem.

What opportunities are there for nurses to help get the word out about what's at stake?

As nurses and health professionals, we see the downstream consequences when folks don't have access to primary care, when they don't have access to preventative services. We see what happens when patients wait longer and delay care. So talking about the impact that we anticipate seeing at the bedside is really important.

Talking about the violence that happens in our hospitals and the need to have public safety resources to be able to respond, talking about EMS. Nobody wants to have a stroke or a heart attack and call and get a busy signal because you can't get through.

So making sure that the public understands what's at stake when we have a medical emergency, when literally seconds and minutes count, that's going to impact everybody. And that's really what's at risk here with cutting funding to these public services.

Two-thirds of the tax money that supports local services comes from property taxes. Property tax all stays local and it all delivers stuff that people get directly. So the magnitude of losing it is almost hard to comprehend. And as much as we agree with the sentiment that's expressed by the petitioners, that something needs to be done about property taxes, this is an overreaction that goes way too far and it's not the right way to do it.

How can regular people help keep this off the ballot until there is a reasonable alternative?

One way they can do that is to choose not to sign the petition if they see it. When you're signing the petition, it's essentially a micro vote. You're saying, I want there to be an official vote on this, and you are advancing that agenda and moving the state one step closer to that precipice of funding. One of the things that we hear from the proponents is that state spending has gone up, but this is not aimed at state spending. It's aimed at local services. So it's aimed at the wrong place.

Another thing people can do is spread the word about the consequences of this amendment. And really educating people and starting this conversation and getting it moving, not only on this issue but what the right solution is, requires lots of conversations with people, with politicians, with everybody. You can only vote once on Election Day, but you can have lots of conversations leading up to it.

Wouldn't it be fair to say that not only will services go away, but that there are additional ramifications such as unemployment? If those services go away, so do jobs and people's livelihoods.

Absolutely. There will be 32,000 fewer first responders, and that's a minimum number. There will be 50,000 fewer teachers. And that's just the teachers, there are all the other personnel that work at schools that will be lost, too.

The construction trades that build schools and fire stations and those kind of things, they won't work. There's \$412 million of property taxes spent every year on local roads and bridges. All that stops and all the jobs that go with it stops.

So yes, there'll be a lot of people out of work, so it would have an absolute impact on the economy in that regard.

The state government and local governments are not like the federal government. There is no deficit spending. There is no debt spending. There are things like bonds that are borrowed funds, but the state is required to have a balanced budget. And if the money is not there, it can't be spent. I think anyone would be hard pressed to find stopgap solutions to recover a lot of these services, even in the short term, because there isn't a mechanism for it.

And thinking about property owners too, part of your home value is part of the community that you live in and the roads and the sidewalks and the streetlights and everything being maintained. And if our communities go to hell, so are your property values. You're not going to be safe in your communities without those public resources.

So we would definitely see economic impacts and then also see a lack of folks able to be out keeping our streets safe. And so it seems like a recipe for disaster.



Earn Your RN to BSN Online in 1 Year | Low Tuition & Monthly Starts

Advance your nursing career with WGU's accredited RN to BSN program. Designed for working nurses, our 100% online curriculum offers the flexibility to balance work, life, and school. Affordable tuition and monthly start dates. Apply free and graduate in as little as one year.



[Click here](#) to learn more or scan the QR code.

Having trouble with the code? Visit <https://n.hnlnk.co/s/8TxSyHPb>

Nursing Scholarships

Ohio Nurses Foundation Awards 2026 Scholarships

During Nurses Week, the Ohio Nurses Foundation was delighted to announce the recipients of our 2026 Nursing Scholarships.

Traditional Nursing Student Scholarship

Awarded to a student who is seeking their first degree in nursing and who has not had a break longer than two years between their formal education in high school and college.

Trent Owens

Trent is from Okeana and will be attending Otterbein University this fall to major in nursing.

Minority Scholarship

Awarded to a student who is seeking their first degree leading to licensure, who lives in the state of Ohio, and who is of a minority race, including Black, Indigenous, Asian American Pacific Islander, and other people of color.

Madison Watkins

Madison is from Perrysburg and will be attending Michigan State University in the fall to major in nursing.

Student Returning to School for Nursing Scholarship

Awarded to a student who has been out of school for more than two years.

Regina Miller

Regina is from Commercial Point and is pursuing her Masters of healthcare innovation at Ohio State University.

RN Pursuing BSN Scholarship

Awarded to a registered nurse advancing their education to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

Kate Klaffer

Kate is from Cincinnati and is working toward her BSN at Good Samaritan College of Nursing.

RN Pursuing Advanced Degree in Nursing Scholarship

Awarded to a student pursuing a Master's or Doctoral degree in nursing.

Brianna Apple

Brianna is from Wapakoneta and is attending Ohio University to become an adult gerontology acute care nurse practitioner.



Nursing Programs Built for Equity & Leadership

You became a nurse to make a difference. Expand your impact with Antioch's online and low residency master's, certificate, and doctoral nursing programs grounded in equity and the common good. Now accepting applications for fall.



[Click here](#) to learn more or scan the QR code.

Having trouble with the code? Visit <https://n.hnlnk.co/s/WCpV7TCw>

Support the Ohio Nurses Foundation



The Ohio Nurses Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide funding to advance nursing as a learned profession through education, research, and scholarship.

Founded in 2002, ONF has awarded more than \$125,000 in scholarships and grants to Ohio students, nurses, and researchers.

You can support the Ohio Nurses Foundation by [making a donation](#) or by purchasing SUPPORT NURSING Ohio license plates for your vehicles.

To purchase a specialized plate, go to [the Ohio BMV website](#), choose organizational plates, and click Ohio Nurses Association.

Thank you for helping us support current and future nurses across Ohio!

State Policy

From Patient Advocates to Policy Advocates

ONA Members at the Ohio Statehouse for Lobby Day 2026

On Thursday, April 30, 2026, dozens of Ohio Nurses Association members from across the state filled the Atrium at the Ohio Statehouse for ONA Lobby Day 2026, a day full of learning, connecting, and advocating for policies that ensure safe staffing and support better patient care.

ONA President and Executive Director Rick Lucas and ONA Health Policy Chair Catharyne Henderson opened the day, and ONA members were welcomed to the Statehouse by Ohio House Minority Leader Dani Isaacsohn (D-Cincinnati), Speaker Pro Tempore Gayle Manning (R-Avon), and Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio (D-Lakewood).



ONA members were briefed on ONA's priority legislation: [House Bill 521](#), which would establish enforceable, unit-based nurse staffing standards; and companion bills [House Bill 535](#) and [Senate Bill 373](#), which would mandate that at least 51% of the members of hospital staffing committees be direct-care registered nurses and that the staffing committees develop, adopt, and implement unit-specific, evidence-based staffing plans every two years.

ONA Health Policy Chair Catharyne Henderson moderated a panel discussion with three of the primary sponsors of ONA's priority legislation, State Representative Brian Lorenz (R-Powell), State Representative Christine Cockley (D-Columbus), and State Representative Crystal Lett (D-Hilliard), discussing why they chose to introduce the legislation, Statehouse committee dynamics and anticipated timing, and what the bill sponsors need from advocates.

AFT's Michelle Mohan hosted a moderated discussion with two physician members of the Ohio legislature, State Senator Beth Liston (D-Dublin) and State Representative Anita Somani (D-Dublin), members of the Senate and House Health Committees, respectively.



The family of Tristin Smith read her *Letter to My Abuser* and talked to ONA attendees about the critical importance of using personal stories to help turn policy into something human.

And [Dr. Wendy Dean](#) talked about the both the stories and the data behind [moral injury in healthcare professions](#).



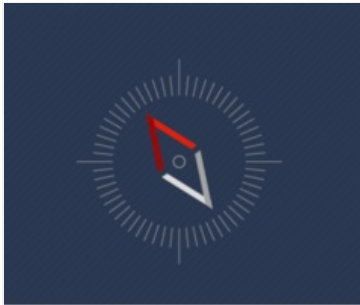


ONA members broke into small groups and fanned out across the Statehouse and the neighboring Riffe Center, meeting with dozens of State Senate and House members' offices, telling their personal stories of unsafe staffing, and educating legislators and staff about ONA's priority legislation.

Members then returned to the Statehouse Atrium to debrief their legislative meetings and bring to a close another successful ONA Lobby Day.

Thank you to each and every ONA member who took time away from work and home to travel to Columbus and make sure nurses' voices are heard at the Statehouse!





Graff & McGovern, LPA - Representing Licensed Professionals

If you are a nurse who has been contacted by the Ohio Board of Nursing about a possible investigation or action against your license, it will benefit you to seek the help of a skilled lawyer to protect your rights and your license. Contact us today at 614-228-5800.



[Click here](#) to learn more or scan the QR code.

Having trouble with the code? Visit <https://n.hnlnk.co/s/jkxV4omn>

What Can I Do to Support Safe Staffing Legislation?

Please contact your legislators & submit your stories!

State legislators need to hear from Ohio nurses about the critical importance of enforceable safe staffing standards. You can quickly and easily reach out to your state legislators [here](#) to tell them that statewide reform is urgently needed.

Also, please take a few moments to [share your stories with ONA](#). The more real-life stories ONA has about what unsafe staffing means every day to nurses, health professionals, and patients, the better equipped they are when they talk to state legislators and testify in committees.

Together, we can make safe staffing a reality in Ohio.

Nurses Week

Appreciation Means Safety, Respect and Humanity



Rick Lucas, BSN, RN, CCRN - ONF President

I became a nurse because I saw what nursing could mean to a person and a family.

When my grandmother broke her hip, she stayed with us while she recovered. I watched the home health nurse help her get back on her feet. I saw the skill, patience and humanity it took. It was meaningful work that mattered. So right out of high school, I became a patient care assistant in the ICU while I went to nursing school. I've been in critical care ever since.

Today, I work as a rapid response nurse. That means I go wherever I'm needed in the hospital — when a patient may be developing sepsis, when someone shows signs of a stroke, when a blood pressure drops, or when anyone suddenly needs critical care. If someone collapses in the parking lot, my team responds. We also comb through medical records to flag patients at risk of complications and help move people through a complex system so they get the care they need before it's too late.

That work takes training. It takes judgment. It takes teamwork. And it takes people at the bedside.

That is why I am so concerned about where healthcare is headed. Nurses are already working short-staffed. Rural hospitals and healthcare resources are being gutted to less than the bare minimum. Healing is both a science and an art — people need the right medical care, and they need someone to help them navigate big, scary moments.

Healthcare systems must provide enough nurses to deliver safe, competent and therapeutic care. They must ensure staffing levels that are safe for patients and sustainable for nurses. It is not a complicated equation. We need real investment in recruitment, retention, wages, safe working conditions, and the tools necessary to provide the care our patients deserve.

But that's not what we're getting.

Instead, we're watching hospitals pour money into technology intended to surveil, deskill, and ultimately replace nursing care. Cameras enabled with artificial intelligence, tracking devices, and remote monitoring systems are being used to reduce the number of nurses providing patient care. Let's be clear: These tools are often driven by efforts to reduce costs — not improve care.

There is a place for technology in healthcare. Nursing is already a highly technical field. Technology can improve documentation, communication and coordination. It can support our work. But it cannot replace it.

Patients who are sick, scared, recovering from surgery, or facing a devastating diagnosis need a highly skilled, compassionate nurse at the bedside — providing vigilant monitoring, clinical judgment and real-time intervention that saves lives. Our patients are not data points in an algorithm. They are people, and they deserve human care.

Nurses know what it means to show up. We showed up through the pandemic, sitting with patients who were isolated from their families — and I know that experience from both sides. I've been the nurse at the bedside, and I've also been the one saying goodbye to a loved one remotely.

We were handed used masks with lipstick stains and told to keep going. We didn't have the supplies or the support we needed, but we had each other. And we endured risks and trauma we never should have had to take.

That is what I appreciate most about my colleagues. In a system that too often fails to support patients or the people who care for them, nurses show up every day and do extraordinary work. We bring skill, courage and humanity into

moments when people are at their most vulnerable.

As a nurse and a union leader, I stay because I know we can fight for something better. We are not here to preserve a broken status quo. We are here to stand together and build a healthcare system that works — for patients, for nurses, and for every community that depends on us.

This Nurses Appreciation Week, appreciation cannot just be a thank you. It has to be action: safe staffing, real investment, respect for our profession, and a commitment to keeping human care at the center of healthcare. That is what nurses need. That is what patients deserve. And that is what we will keep fighting for.

This article was first published by [Medium](#) on May 11, 2026.



Earn nursing degrees that open doors — fully online.

Ohio State's accredited nursing programs help working nurses elevate practice, expand opportunities, and make lasting contributions to patients and communities.



[Click here](#) to learn more or scan the QR code.

Having trouble with the code? Visit <https://n.hnlnk.co/s/AbbJs67A>

Continuing Education

New on CE4Nurses, the following courses are available *FREE* to all nurses:

2026 ONA Workforce Safety Report: Ohio's Healthcare System in Crisis

0.75 Contact Hour Written Study presenting the data from ONA's 2026 statewide survey, including workplace policy and legislative advocacy recommendations.

Their Lifetime of Learning Begins at Birth

A 0.5 Contact Hour Webinar Activity about the impact of early literacy on healthy development, Ohio's partnership with various community programs including Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, and how to help families receive resources.

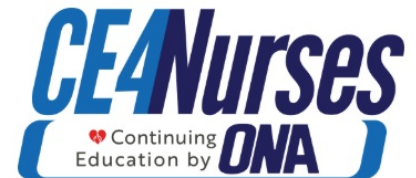
The following new course is available free for ONA members and to non-members for a modest registration fee:

Continuing Education and Licensure Considerations for Ohio Nurses 2nd Edition

1.0 Category A Contact Hour Webinar regarding OAC 4723-14 rules related to renewing Ohio license and CE requirements, including 2026 changes.

Go to ce.ohnurses.org to register!

The Ohio Nurses Association is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. (OBN-001-91)





RN to BSN at Stark State: Online coursework. Hands-on practicum. Lowest tuition in NEO.

Advance your career – at little to no debt – with Stark State’s RN to BSN program. Whether you’re a recent grad or a working RN, our fully online coursework with in-person practicums helps you balance school, work and life while earning your BSN.



[Click here](#) to learn more or scan the QR code.

Having trouble with the code? Visit <https://n.hnlnk.co/s/hBm74mBj>

Nursing in the News

- [How Ohio laws would improve working conditions for nurses](#)
- [Majority of Ohio nurses experienced violence at work in the last year](#)

Resources

Caring For Your Mental Health

In healthcare, you give so much of yourself: long hours, emotional moments, and the weight that isn’t always visible. Stress, exhaustion, and burnout are real, but you don’t have to face them alone.

A small act can make a big difference. A quick message, a genuine check-in, or a simple “I’m here for you” can lift someone’s day more than you know.

Need someone to talk to?

Call or text 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, available 24/7, free, and confidential.

ONA members can also access AFT's [counseling](#) and [trauma](#) services.

Remember, caring for yourself is just as important as caring for others.

Your wellbeing matters.



Family Nurse Practitioner Programs for Impact

Step into primary care with a focus on equity and access. Antioch’s online and low residency FNP programs include MSN, post master’s FNP credential, and DNP pathways to help you build advanced clinical skills and expand care in your community. Now accepting applications for fall.



[Click here](#) to learn more or scan the QR code.

Having trouble with the code? Visit <https://n.hnlnk.co/s/kEdcAAAA>

Stay Connected



[ONF Facebook](#)

[ONA Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Bluesky](#)

[X](#)



YOU CARE FOR EVERYONE ELSE. WE CARE FOR YOU.
IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE. LET'S SHAPE THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE TOGETHER!

<https://ohnurses.org/members/>

Join us.

Notices

OHIO NURSE NEWS & UPDATES

A publication of the Ohio Nurses Foundation

3510 Snouffer Rd, Columbus, Ohio 43235 | (614) 969-3800

www.ohionursesfoundation.org

Articles appearing in Ohio Nurse News & Updates are presented for informational purposes only and are not intended as legal or medical advice and should not be used in lieu of such advice. For specific legal advice, readers should contact their legal counsel.

ONF and Nursing Network reserve the right to reject any advertisement.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement or approval by the Ohio Nurses Foundation of products advertised, the advertisers, or the claims made. Rejection of an advertisement does not imply a product offered for advertising is without merit, or that the manufacturer lacks integrity, or that this Foundation disapproves of the product or its use. ONF and Health eCareers shall not be held liable for any consequences resulting from purchase or use of an advertiser's product. Articles appearing in this publication express the opinions of the authors; they do not necessarily reflect views of the staff, board, or membership of ONF.

Medical Disclaimer:

This publication's content is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice, or as a substitute for the medical advice of a physician, advanced practice registered nurse or other qualified healthcare professional.