The professional union you need
Ontario’s nurses’ union

ONA was founded more than four decades ago by 85 independent nurses’ associations from across Ontario to provide representation and services for nurses, by nurses.

Today, ONA is the largest nurses’ union in Canada.

Quite simply, there is no union that can better represent registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and registered practical nurses.
Why Join a Union?

A union is good for you, your colleagues, and your patients/clients/residents

A trade union is formed in a workplace when workers agree to speak to their employer with one strong, collective voice. When you are on your own, you have little choice but to accept the wages, benefits and working conditions arbitrarily determined by your employer.

Within a union, together you are part of a professional team your employer must listen to. The conditions of your employment are no longer determined arbitrarily; rather, you have a real say. Your wages and benefits are negotiated between relatively equal parties — the only negotiation that can ever be meaningful!

Campaigning to improve care

As a powerful union of nurses, we advocate for the government to hire more nurses and health-care workers to improve an understaffed system. We are a public voice for more than 65,000 working nurses and health-care professionals, and 18,000 nursing student affiliates, who provide care at hospitals, long-term care facilities, community health, public health, home care providers, clinics and industry across Ontario.

It’s a majority — and a private — decision

The Labour Relations Act protects the identity of the card signers. Your employer will not know whether or not you have signed an organizing card. The Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) vote is by secret ballot, and a Labour Board officer will conduct the vote.

How does the process work? When at least 40 per cent of employees sign union cards, the union can submit an application to the OLRB. A week later, a vote is held. With 50 per cent of the vote plus one in favour, the union becomes the legal representative of a group of employees.

Remember, you can’t be fired, disciplined or treated differently for participating in union activity. You are exercising a democratic right!
About the collective agreement

It’s a democratic process

Once you become an ONA member, you will elect your representatives who will serve on the Bargaining Committee to negotiate your collective agreement. You will also get to vote on any negotiated settlement for your collective agreement. Other committees to which you elect your representatives, such as Health and Safety, Professional Development and Labour-Management, will also bring your concerns forward.

A collective agreement protects you

The collective agreement is negotiated after the union has won the vote.

The collective agreement sets out your conditions of employment, including pay rates and entitlements to such benefits as statutory holidays, vacations, sick leave, short- and long-term disability and mileage. It will have clauses about seniority rights, job postings, job security and the grievance procedure (including arbitration), which is used to enforce collective agreement rights. ONA collective agreements include unique language about professional responsibility and workload—important tools to protect nurses and their patients.
The services ONA provides are funded by the dues members pay. Dues are paid once a month through payroll deductions. Most of your dues are tax deductible.

ONA members decide at our Biennial Conventions on the dues structure, the amount of dues and how they are spent.

As of January 2019, rates are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Straight Time Hourly Rate</th>
<th>Monthly Dues</th>
<th>Tax Deductible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal or greater than $27.50</td>
<td>$101.81</td>
<td>$98.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than $21.00 but less than $27.50</td>
<td>$74.30</td>
<td>$70.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal or less than $21.00</td>
<td>$60.05</td>
<td>$56.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-by Pay</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How dues are allocated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>TOP TIER</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th><strong>SECOND TIER</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th><strong>THIRD TIER</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal or greater than $27.50/hour</td>
<td>Greater than $21.00 but less than $27.50/hour</td>
<td>Equal or less than $21.00/hour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating fund</td>
<td>$81.18</td>
<td>$53.67</td>
<td>$39.42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental fund</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP fund</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td><strong>$101.81</strong></td>
<td><strong>$74.30</strong></td>
<td><strong>$60.05</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ONA dues

The services your dues provide:

• Collective agreement bargaining teams; bargaining support
• Assistance with professional practice concerns
• Grievance and arbitration handling
• Education workshops and training
• Assistance with Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) matters
• The Legal Expense Assistance Plan (LEAP)
• Excess malpractice insurance
• Critical Illness (CI) coverage
• ONA publications: ONA Front Lines is mailed to all members
• ONA’s website at www.ona.org
• Provincial Coordinators Meetings and Biennial Conventions
• Long-Term Disability (LTD) base coverage for members without employer LTD plans

For more information on LEAP and the insurance coverage ONA provides, please ask for our brochure.

What are Dual Dues?

An ONA member may be working at more than one facility. If these workplaces are unionized with ONA, a member is eligible for an automatic refund of the operating portion of ONA dues paid at each additional employer, if the total dues deducted exceed a full year’s dues. A year runs from January 1 to December 31.

All members who qualify for a dual dues refund will automatically receive a refund no later than May 31 of the following year.

Members who work at more than one facility unionized with ONA should ensure that ONA’s Dues and Membership Team has their current name and address on file.
Legal Expense Assistance Plan (LEAP)

LEAP has been available since 1980 to assist members faced with legal problems arising from their employment as a registered nurse or allied health professional. In that time, LEAP has assisted hundreds of members.

As one member put it, “You don’t ever want to be in a position where you need LEAP, but when you do, you’re so glad it’s there.”

Subject to the conditions and limitations of the plan, LEAP may provide help to members faced with employment-related legal issues stemming from:
- an issue before the regulatory colleges;
- a coroner’s inquest or investigation; and
- a criminal investigation or criminal charges.

LEAP – one more way that ONA cares for you!

Malpractice Insurance

ONA members have a professional excess liability insurance plan.

Malpractice insurance protects members who, as a result of practicing their profession, are found to have been negligent and have to pay damages.

Subject to the conditions and limitations of the plan, all members are automatically covered, provided they regularly pay dues or the equivalent to ONA.

The insurance provides up to $1.5 million in coverage per incident to a maximum of $6 million per member. Punitive and exemplary damages are excluded.

Malpractice insurance protects those who work for an employer where ONA is the union.