



Vote ONA

Frequently Asked Questions

The Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) represents 68,000 nurses and health-care professionals and 18,000 nursing students across the province in every health-care sector. By voting ONA, you and your coworkers will be stronger together, helping you to win on your issues and ensure a strong first collective agreement.

Here are some myth busters and answers to frequently asked questions to help you understand why ONA is the best union to join.

Q: Is ONA just a union for nurses?

A: No, ONA is a health-care union.

- ONA is a union that is sector specific, with a single focus on health care. Specializing gives ONA a huge edge in collective bargaining because we know our members' lived experiences best.
- Members, ONA Board of Directors and many staff all come from health care so as experts in the sector, we lead by setting the standard for wages and working conditions.
- Your union dues are spent on issues that matter to you and are not used to subsidize the needs of workers outside the health-care sector.
- Regardless of your classification, as a health-care professional, you will receive the same level of support.
- At ONA, your voice will not get lost. Your voice will inform our campaigns, lobbying and resource development. Your voice is more likely to get overshadowed in a union with many different non-health care sectors.

Q: What makes ONA unique from the other unions?

A: Besides being a sector-specific union, ONA is currently the largest union at OHaH with

4,200 members, across all job classifications.

That difference is a strength because we are stronger together.

- If both bargaining units choose the same union, you will have a bigger say in discussions on all the major issues affecting the workplace.
- We will find a balanced approach, build consensus on issues between union members and find a common solution that benefits everyone.

Q: How does ONA resolve workload issues?

A: ONA pioneered language and processes in the collective agreement (like the Professional Responsibility Clause) to address issues of unsafe patient care, workload and practice concerns.

- ONA's teams of health-care specialists have lived experience and knowledge of the health-care system, professional practice requirements, nursing and other care processes and patient safety.
- This expertise has supported members in attaining major wins including increased staffing, improved communication, safer workplaces, improved quality care, provision of necessary equipment and supplies,

improved documentation and input into decisions involving workload and patient care.

Q: What is ONA doing to address the employer's position and approach on the Return to Office (RTO)?

A: We understand this is a high priority issue and ONA is the first union to refer the RTO grievances to arbitration and secure a mediation date before Arbitrator John Martelli on April 27, 2026.

- ONA will argue that the inconsistencies in the RTO policy prove it's unreasonable.
- ONA is taking concrete legal action to fight for your rights and work-life balance, not just political posturing or soundbites to get the public's attention.

Q: Will ONA bargain concessions?

A: ONA negotiates to maintain and gain, not lose.

- Everything that you currently have, ONA works to get into a collective agreement and then make improvements.
- ONA examines all collective agreements and wages and working conditions for all professionals, clerical, technical staff and preserves any superior conditions/wage grids and bargains forward.

Q: Shouldn't I decide whether to proceed with my grievance(s) or not?

A: Owning carriage rights is not necessarily a good thing. Having a union that can win a grievance should be your primary concern.

- ONA files a grievance when the collective agreement has been violated.
- ONA is respected and known for its strength in representing members; many

times violations are addressed without even filing a grievance.

Q: How do union dues benefit me?

A: Union dues invest in a stronger union, giving you and your coworkers the resources, support, and collective power needed to protect your interests and improve your workplace including:

- Professional practice and workplace support.
- Health and safety and WSIB specialists.
- Legal assistance and malpractice insurance.
- With LEAP coverage, you don't need RNAO PLP. With LEAP, you have the same or better coverage. The RNAO PLP requires payment upfront and reimbursement for coverage beyond civil litigation.
- Disability and critical illness coverage.
- Education, training, and member events, and much more.

ONA dues are almost 100 per cent tax deductible, so you will see a large portion of your dues come back to you at the end of the year.

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