BACKGROUND:
A new law requiring safe patient assignment limits for ICU nurses is now in effect, and all hospitals and nurses must comply with the law. In ALL ICUs in Massachusetts, the law requires that a staff nurse be assigned one patient at a time. ONLY if the staff nurse has assessed that it is safe for both patients, may a nurse accept the care of a second patient. If a DPH-certified acuity tool is available, the staff nurse must use the acuity tool to aid them in making their assessments. At no time may a staff nurse accept the care of three (3) or more patients at a time.

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. NOTIFY MANAGER AND REQUEST SOLUTION: First, if you think that a patient assignment is in violation of the law, contact a manager or supervisor to inform them of the violation, and request the staff and/or other resources necessary to comply with the law.

2. INFORM THEM VIOLATION WILL BE REPORTED: Second, if the manager or supervisor is unwilling/unable to provide adequate staffing and/or resources to prevent a violation or if they persist in overruling your patient assessment and force you to accept more patients, inform them you intend to report the violation to the State’s Health Policy Commission (HPC) and the Department of Public Health (DPH).

3. SUBMIT FORM: Third, fill out this form and the MNA will file a complaint detailing the violation with the HPC, DPH, and the Attorney General.

HOSPITAL DEMOGRAPHICS AND CONTACT INFORMATION
Name of hospital: __________________________________________ Name of unit: _________________________________________
Date and time violation began: _____________________________ Room/bed numbers involved in violation: __________________
Approximate duration (in hours) of the violation: ____________ Name and title of manager notified about the violation: _______________________
Name of nurse submitting this form: __________________________ Email or best phone number: _________________________

TYPE OF AND DESCRIPTION OF CIRCUMSTANCES
1. Type of Violation (please check one of the following):
   - 1:1 -- A patient assigned to a nurse is assessed as 1:1 but the nurse has responsibility for two (2) or more patients.
   - 2:1 -- Both patients assigned to a nurse have been assessed as stable enough to be 2:1 but the nurse has responsibility for three (3) or more patients

2. Description of circumstances (please check all that apply):
   - Inadequate provision of staff nurses forced nurse to accept care of additional patient(s) despite assessment
   - No staff coverage provided for nurse on break
   - No staff coverage provided for nurse on meal break
   - No staff coverage provided while nurse is transporting patient
   - No staff coverage while nurse involved in lengthy bedside procedure
   - No staff coverage provided while nurse is involved in code or emergency response
   - Patient acuity/stability worsens and becomes 1:1 but no staff coverage provided to split 2:1 assignment
   - Worsening critical environmental and patient condition factors on the unit forced reassessment of a 2:1 patient to 1:1 but no staff coverage provided to split assignment
   - Nurse leaves due to illness or injury during shift with no staff replacement provided
   - Other rationale (please describe in comments below)

3. Was a DPH certified acuity tool available and used to aid the nurse in assessing the patients’ stability?  □ Yes  □ No

4. What was above named manager/administrator’s response when they were notified? __________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5. If this is an instance of inadequate staffing to cover patient assignments for a break, did the nurse choose to skip the break to avoid violating the law?  □ Yes  □ No  □ N/A

6. Please provide additional description or comments about this violation: ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Distribution of copies: White: Chief Nursing Officer (fax, email or hand deliver)  Yellow: MNA (fax to 781-821-4445)  Pink: RN(s) completing the form
A copy will be submitted to the Health Policy Commission, Department of Public Health, and the Attorney General’s office.