the MNA SM

ADVOCATE

for Nurses and Healthcare Professionals

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Moving Forward Together: New Leadership, United Action

December 2025

MNA SM Massachusetts Nurses Association

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MNA Board Selects Longtime Labor Leader Joe-Ann Fergus, RN, PhD, as Next Executive Director

The Massachusetts Nurses Association Board of Directors has appointed Joe-Ann Fergus, RN, PhD, as the next Executive Director of the Commonwealth's largest union of nurses and healthcare professionals. Fergus has served in multiple leadership roles within the MNA for more than 20 years.

"Joe-Ann has dedicated her career to lifting nurses and healthcare professionals, and we are thrilled to welcome her as Executive Director," said MNA President Katie Murphy, an ICU nurse. "Her experience, passion, and vision will strengthen our union and amplify the voices of our members."

A respected labor leader and advocate, Fergus has helped drive key MNA initiatives for two decades, advancing workers' rights, patient care, and equitable treatment for caregivers and communities.

"I am deeply honored to take on this role," Fergus said. "The MNA is well positioned to organize new members, empower our existing members, cultivate emerging leaders, and build strong partnerships that advance better working and living conditions for all."

Fergus began her MNA involvement as a staff nurse and elected bargaining unit leader at the Visiting Nurses Association of Boston. She later joined the MNA staff as an Associate Director in Labor Relations. She went on to serve as Director of Member Services and Acting Director of the Division of Nursing, Health & Safety, and Labor Education. She has overseen major organizational transitions, led staff teams, built collaborative partnerships, and helped shape the union's guiding mission statements.

She holds a PhD in Nursing/Public Policy from UMass Boston, an MA in Dispute Resolution, and a BSN from Simmons. She has taught nursing, developed continuing education programs, and represented the MNA at state and national levels.

"Joe-Ann's leadership comes at a pivotal moment for our union and for healthcare in Massachusetts," Murphy said. "Her deep experience, collaborative leadership style, and commitment to caregivers and patients will guide the MNA through the challenges ahead and strengthen our ability to protect the care our communities deserve."

Fergus succeeds Interim Executive Director Roland Goff, who stepped in following the May 2025 retirement of longtime Executive Director Julie Pinkham, RN. Pinkham's more than 20-year tenure included major milestones such as MNA's disaffiliation from the American Nurses Association, passage of mandatory overtime and ICU patient limit laws, creation of the Taft-Hartley pension fund, and the founding of the NENA organizing collective. She also led the union through the COVID-19 pandemic and Steward Health Care's bankruptcy. ■

See Joe-Ann's first letter to members as executive director on page 4.

"Joe-Ann's leadership comes at a pivotal moment for our union and for healthcare in Massachusetts," Murphy said. "Her deep experience, collaborative leadership style, and commitment to caregivers and patients will guide the MNA through the challenges ahead and strengthen our ability to protect the care our communities deserve."

President's Column

Katie Murphy

Greetings, Sisters and Brothers,

It has been invigorating to stand with so many of you on picket lines and to see the strong contracts you've won as we continue to hold the line on safe working conditions. These are turbulent times, but our solidarity remains our greatest strength. As the current administration in Washington chips away at patient safety, workers' rights, and our hard-won public health infrastructure, it is imperative that our voices are heard in every venue.

Before addressing the issue weighing heavily on many of our minds, I want to once again recognize the new Executive Director of the MNA, Dr. Joe-Ann Fergus. Following Julie Pinkham's retirement, the Board of Directors conducted a rigorous nationwide search—interviewing candidates, defining criteria, and reviewing countless résumés. Joe-Ann brings deep experience in labor and healthcare research, as well as years of dedication to the MNA. We welcome her leadership and look forward to our continued partnership.

Many of our members rely on federal loans and grants to advance their education. We are not a profession built on wealth; nurses, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, physical therapists, and all MNA healthcare professionals work their way through school with determination and support. That is why the federal government's recent decision to remove our healthcare degrees from recognition as "professional degrees" is so alarming.

The [big beautiful] bill signed by Trump this summer changes how our members can borrow federal dollars, thereby eliminating certain loans for new students and altering repayment options for students and parent borrowers alike. These changes will make it harder for healthcare professionals to further their education at a time when our workplaces are only becoming more challenging. Reimbursement cuts, withdrawn hospital funding, and reduced access to care are making our patients sicker and more fragile when they enter the system. This is a moment when investment in healthcare professionals should be expanding—not shrinking. These attacks on our professions and on organized labor demand that we stand together and push back.

The public outcry and significant media attention surrounding this issue show that our communities understand the essential nature of your work — and that this will affect them directly. We will continue to monitor the situation closely.

On a positive note, our Workplace Violence Prevention bill passed the House last month. You know the statistics — for example, every 38 minutes, a healthcare professional is assaulted — and many of you experience that reality daily. Our patients are more stressed than ever, and healthcare professionals too often bear the brunt of that fear and frustration. After filing this bill for two decades, we made meaningful progress this year by partnering with the Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association and SEIU 1199 to move forward with a version we believe can finally pass. The bill now heads to the Senate in the New Year.

As we close out the year and look toward 2026, we know the challenges ahead will be significant. This makes it all the more important to prioritize self-care, so we can meet what's coming with strength and resolve.

I am deeply grateful to each of you, and to the work you do every day. Wishing you a happy, healthy, and activist New Year!

In solidarity,

Katie Murphy RN

the MNA ADVOCATE
for Nurses and Healthcare Professionals

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MNA Massachusetts Nurses Association

Letter to Members From the MNA's New Executive Director

Pivotal life events often pass so quickly that their significance is missed as attention shifts to what comes next. Before turning to the next, it is worth pausing to fully inhabit this moment, one shaped by many others that led here.

My path to this role began as a Boston VNA member — an outspoken, often dissatisfied one — who was persuaded by my labor AD (Patty) to attend "just one meeting a month" where, additionally, I was promised there would always be food.

That initial meeting, where dissent was welcomed rather than dismissed, set in motion a series of MNA nexts.

From there, I ran for and became co-chair of my bargaining unit. At the VNA, I met Barry Adams and learned of his BORN complaint and MNA's support for his cause, which deepened my engagement with the association. That involvement led to participation in the whistleblower campaign, testimony on whistleblower protections and safe staffing, and work to reform the BORN.

Further nexts followed. I joined MNA's labor cabinet, participated in the disaffiliation campaign, and later applied for and was hired as MNA staff, serving as a labor AD/Rep. I went on to step into the role of director of membership, along with the many opportunities and responsibilities that came with it, leading to this position.

Throughout that journey, I was supported by countless individuals — far too many to name — who offered guidance, encouragement, and trust. I am deeply grateful to all who saw my potential and invested in my growth. I am especially thankful to Julie Pinkham for her support and belief throughout many MNA nexts, which culminated in my appointment as MNA's executive director.

Several years ago, I learned the Zulu greeting Sawubona, commonly translated as "I see you," but more accurately understood as, "We see you." The greeting recognizes the whole person, including pain, hope, potential, and joy, and underscores the importance of intentional presence in how we acknowledge one another.

As MNA enters this next chapter, I extend my sincere thanks to the MNA Board, staff, and all who contributed their time, insight, and care to the leadership search process. The responsibility you carried was significant, and the seriousness with which it was undertaken reflects the importance of this moment. Change is never simple, particularly when the stakes are high.

The Board was tasked with honoring the legacy built by those who came before us while charting a course that safeguards the MNA's future. This process was necessarily rigorous.

The work we do as nurses and healthcare professionals matters. MNA's reputation matters. The patients, communities, staff, and colleagues we serve matter. The space we hold for today's nurses and those who will follow matters. For these reasons, leadership transitions matter.

This next unfolds amid profound challenges: social upheaval, economic uncertainty, declining union literacy, sustained attacks on workers' rights, and efforts to undermine science, education, and trusted public institutions. These pressures are often accompanied by attempts to divide communities and determine who is worthy of being seen or heard.

Such challenges are not new. Progress has never been handed to this association or its members. The work has always required persistence, resolve, and collective strength. That history positions MNA not only to endure this moment, but to grow through it.

This period also presents a meaningful opportunity: to organize new members, deepen engagement among existing ones, mentor emerging leaders, and strengthen coalitions with allies committed to advancing worker, patient, and community protections.

"As MNA enters this next chapter, I extend my sincere thanks to the MNA Board, staff, and all who contributed their time, insight, and care to the leadership search process. The responsibility you carried was significant, and the seriousness with which it was undertaken reflects the importance of this moment."

At its core, this work reflects who we are as an organization. We hold the ground for patients and communities. We advocate for those whose voices have been marginalized. We work to ensure that all are heard and recognized.

That is MNA's mission.

That is its mandate.

The traditional response to Sawubona is Yebo, Sawubona — a mutual acknowledgment of being seen. It is in that spirit that I look forward to working alongside MNA members, staff, and leadership as we move together into the association's next chapter. ■

Joe-Ann Fergus

Dana-Farber Foxborough RNs Picket Ahead of Patriots–Jets Game, Demand Pay Equity

Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI) nurses in Foxborough held an informational picket on November 13 outside Patriot Place, just before the Patriots–Jets game, to protest the unacceptable pay gap between Foxborough nurses and Mass General Brigham (MGB) nurses working in the same building.

The action followed a letter sent in October to Board Chair Josh Bekenstein, signed by 100% of Foxborough nurses, urging DFCI to close the wage disparity that leaves them earning significantly less than their MGB/Brigham and Women's Hospital counterparts.

"We deliver the same exceptional, lifesaving care as any Dana-Farber nurse in Massachusetts," said Catherine Hulme, RN and MNA Committee Co-Chair. "We follow the same policies and provide the same oncology care—yet we are paid far less. The gap hurts recruitment, retention, and morale."

Foxborough nurses provide highly complex oncology care, including administering intricate chemotherapy regimens, conducting mandatory drug education, rotating into the lab (a duty Boston nurses do not perform), and managing higher patient ratios—all while meeting the same standards and certifications as Longwood nurses.

"Dana-Farber advertises consistent care across its campuses, yet it refuses to equally value Foxborough nurses," said Nicole Maguire, RN and MNA Committee Secretary. "Our patients deserve nurses who are respected and supported."

Why Foxborough Nurses Are Demanding Pay Equity

Foxborough nurses deliver advanced oncology and hematology care, including:

- Largest treatment trial enrollment of any DFCI satellite
- Lab rotations not required in Boston
- Cross-training for Oncology Nurse Navigator and charge roles
- Managing multiple intensive chemo regimens in a single shift
- Treating a broader range of solid and liquid tumors than specialty Boston units
- Providing detailed chemotherapy education for every drug administered

As DFCI prepares to recruit hundreds of oncology nurses for its planned cancer hospital with Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Foxborough nurses say accurate pay equity is essential to sustaining the workforce patients need. ■

Massachusetts Nurses Association Condemns Federal Move to Strip Healthcare Degrees of 'Professional' Status

In November, the MNA's Board of Directors sounded the alarm over the Trump Administration's decision to remove advanced practice nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and other healthcare degrees from federal recognition as "professional degrees." Under new student loan rules, this change would sharply limit access to federal loans, cap reimbursement for APRNs, and undermine the already-fragile pipeline of new nurses and healthcare professionals.

MNA Board Statement

The MNA Board condemns this policy as a direct attack on the healthcare workforce—not a simple administrative change. By capping federal loan access and eliminating programs such as Grad PLUS, the administration is telling current and aspiring healthcare professionals that their education is valued less than that of other fields. These restrictions will make it more complicated, if not impossible, for many students to pursue the advanced training required to care for our communities.

The consequences are far-reaching: reduced enrollment in graduate programs, fewer future nurse educators, and a worsening shortage of advanced practice clinicians across Massachusetts. Current nurses seeking to expand their skills will face greater financial burdens, while communities — especially rural and underserved areas — will see reduced access to high-quality care.

Nurses Already Working Under Dangerous Conditions

This federal rollback comes as nurses continue to warn of a deepening crisis inside Massachusetts hospitals. The *2025 State of Massachusetts Nursing Survey* found:

- 78% say patient care has worsened in the last two years.
- 67% don't have enough time to properly care for patients.
- 49% fear unsafe staffing could jeopardize their license.
- 37% wouldn't feel safe admitting a family member to their own unit.

Workplace violence is also escalating, with 69% calling it a serious issue and 70% reporting experiencing violence or abuse in the past two years. In response, the Massachusetts House recently passed historic workplace violence prevention legislation backed by the MNA, MHA, and 1199SEIU; the bill now moves to the Senate.

The workforce is deteriorating fast:

- **36%** of RNs plan to leave nursing earlier than expected.
- **50%** of nurses with less than five years' experience intend to exit early.
- Among those leaving hospital care, the top reasons include unsafe staffing (24%), poor working conditions (26%), and burnout (27%).

A Call for Collective Action

At a time when solutions are desperately needed, the federal government is instead erecting new barriers to entering and advancing in the healthcare profession. Stripping these degrees of their "professional" status is an insult to the caregivers who deliver lifesaving care every day and a threat to the stability of our healthcare system.

The MNA calls on labor, community, healthcare, and legislative allies—across Massachusetts and nationwide—to stand with nurses and healthcare professionals in opposing this dangerous policy. Protecting educational access is essential to ensuring that future caregivers can join and grow within this vital profession.

The health of our patients and the future of our workforce depend on collective action. ■

Do you know...

... that SPHM challenges in the home-healthcare setting include working with patients and families with their own habits and mindsets? **Injuries in the home healthcare setting are 6.4 per 100 full-time staff, which is twice the rate of hospital staff.**[1]

1 Vyas, S. (2023, September). SPHM Considerations in the Home Healthcare Setting PowerPoint presented at the MNA SPHM Conference, Norwood, MA

The MNA's Congress on Health & Safety and Safe Patient Handling & Mobility Task Force are here to help with your workplace health and safety concerns. Reach them at 781-821-4625 and by asking for the Division of Nursing.

Healthcare Workplace Violence Prevention Bill Clears Massachusetts House

Nurses, healthcare workers, and hospital leaders across Massachusetts are celebrating a significant step forward in addressing the growing crisis of violence in healthcare. An Act Requiring Health Care Employers to Develop and Implement Programs to Prevent Workplace Violence (H.4767/S.1718) passed the Massachusetts House in mid-November with strong bipartisan support. It now heads to the Senate.

The legislation is the result of a historic collaboration among the Massachusetts Nurses Association (MNA), the Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association (MHA), and 1199SEIU Massachusetts—the first time the three groups have advanced a single, consensus bill on workplace violence prevention. The bill had 68 legislative sponsors, led by Rep. John Lawn (D-Watertown) and Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem).

The need for action is urgent: Every 36 minutes, a Massachusetts hospital worker experiences violence or a threat. Nurses and healthcare workers face violent incidents five times more often than the average private-sector employee.

"This House vote is a powerful acknowledgment of the crisis and an important step toward ensuring every healthcare worker has the protection we need," said Katie Murphy, ICU nurse and MNA President. "We thank the MNA nurses and healthcare professionals who have long fought for these safeguards, our partners at MHA and 1199SEIU, and the lawmakers who stood with us."

"This legislation is about a basic promise: a safe environment to treat patients," said Steve Walsh, President & CEO of MHA.

"This bill will directly engage caregivers in developing meaningful, facility-specific violence prevention programs," said Cari Medina, Executive Vice President of 1199SEIU.

Left to right: Karen Coughlin, RN and chair of the MNA Workplace Violence and Abuse Prevention Task Force, Rep. Lisa Field, Katie Murphy, RN and MNA President, Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan, and Rep. John Lawn, the lead sponsor of the bill in the House of Representatives.

Key provisions of the bill include:

- Requiring hospitals to conduct facility-specific risk assessments and adopt tailored violence-prevention plans
- Ensuring frontline worker involvement in assessments, planning, and training
- Strengthening enforcement through DPH licensing requirements, regular reporting, and enhanced job protections, including additional paid leave for assaulted workers

Nurses and healthcare workers continue to report high rates of physical and verbal assaults, many of which go unreported. Advocates say this legislation marks a critical step toward safer workplaces and better patient care across the Commonwealth. ■

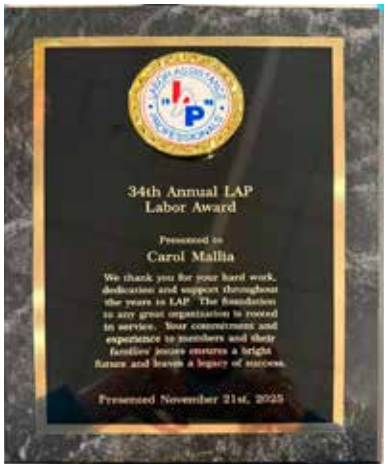
NEXT STEPS: The bill now moves to the Massachusetts Senate for consideration.

— Stay tuned for action alerts! —

Cheers to the MNA's Carol Mallia!

Carol Mallia, longtime associate director in the MNA's division of nursing and leader of the MNA's Peer Assistance Program, received the Labor Assistance Professionals (LAP) Award at this year's LAP awards luncheon in November. The recognition highlights her contributions to the community and to helping labor members receive substance abuse and mental health services.

The Labor Assistance Professionals organization is dedicated to advancing workplace wellness and safety by serving as the voice of EAP with a specialized sensitivity to organized labor within the Behavioral Health Care industry.



One-Day Strike Averted as Cooley Dickinson Nurses Reach Tentative Agreement with MGB

Registered nurses at Cooley Dickinson Hospital reached a tentative agreement (TA) with Mass General Brigham, avoiding a one-day strike that had been authorized by 99% of participating nurses. The agreementincludes significant investments in nursing and patient care, with no contract takeaways.

"This agreement reflects the strength and unity of Cooley nurses," said Rosie Tottser, RN and MNA Committee Co-Chair. "We secured a contract with no takeaways and real improvements that will help us recruit and retain the nurses our patients deserve."

"We're extremely proud of what we achieved for our nurses, patients, and community," said Aaron Winston, RN and MNA Committee Co-Chair. "This contract protects essential benefits, significantly improves wages, and supports safe staffing."

Highlights of the Tentative Agreement

No Takeaways

- Cooley nurses successfully defeated every management proposal that would have cut or reduced benefits. Key protections include:
- Preserving the current health insurance program and 30+ hour eligibility
- Keeping the Extended Illness Bank, daily overtime, and free life insurance
- Retaining Veterans Day as a holiday
- Maintaining the Childbirth Center as a closed unit
- Preserving Earned Time Off for eight–to–20–hour nurses, with accrual based on hours worked
- Defeating a misguided clinical ladder proposal

Wage Improvements

- 8.5%+ ATB increase in Year 1, retroactive to April 1, 2025
- 2.5% ATB in Year 2
- 3% ATB in Year 3
- 2% lump sum for nurses at the top step in Years 2 and 3
- ATBs are in addition to normal step increases
- Differential & Premium Pay Increases
- Higher evening, night, charge, on-call, and FA differentials (FA now $10)
- Added preceptor pay for students

Enhanced Benefits

- Expanded bereavement leave (grandparents and grandchildren)
- Increased certification bonus and tuition reimbursement

The agreement marks a significant step toward improving recruitment, retention, and safe patient care at Cooley Dickinson Hospital. ■

MNA℠ Massachusetts Nurses Association

MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT$

As an MNA member, you are entitled to receive substantial group discounts on valuable programs and services. Follow the QR code to explore a listing of our discount programs that can help aid in improving the quality of your personal and professional life, as well as provide you with great cost savings. Combined, these savings directly offset the cost of your union membership.

For more information, call 781-821-4625 and ask for Member Benefits.

Boston MedFlight Nurses and Paramedics Ratify New Contract Supporting High-Quality Critical Care Transport

MNA nurses and paramedics at Boston MedFlight, the region's leading critical care transport service, overwhelmingly ratified a new three-year contract in November. The agreement includes substantial economic gains that will help recruit and retain the highly trained professionals who deliver life-saving care to the region's sickest and most injured patients.

"This contract reflects the critical, highly specialized work our teams perform every day," said James Boomhower, Critical Care Transport Specialist–Paramedic and MNA Bargaining Committee member. "These improvements will help ensure we can continue attracting and retaining the skilled clinicians needed for this life-saving care."

Contract Highlights

Competitive Pay Increases

- Nurses: 15.5% in raises, plus existing step increases
- Paramedics: 20% in new money
- Over three years, including step increases: up to 27.5% for nurses and 32% for paramedics
- Wage scale steps increased from 4% to 4.5%

Additional Time Off

- Three additional days of "leave time" to support rest and recovery, given the intensity of critical care transport work

"Boston MedFlight crews deliver ICU-level care wherever patients are," said Joe McGrath, RN and MNA Bargaining Committee member. "These improvements strengthen our workforce and help ensure patients continue receiving exceptional care during their most vulnerable moments."

About Boston MedFlight

Boston MedFlight is the region's primary nonprofit air and ground critical care transport provider. Each mission is staffed by a critical care nurse and paramedic trained to manage the most complex emergencies, including trauma, stroke, cardiac events, neonatal and pediatric crises, respiratory failure, and sepsis. ■

Nurses at Henry Heywood Win TA Worth Celebrating

This happy group of MNAers at Henry Haywood Hospital in Gardner, Mass., recently settled their new contract — and with only one day remaining on their existing contract! — with wins worth smiling about:

- Increased call, charge, and per diem differentials
- Certification reimbursement
- Attendance incentive bonus
- New staffing language requiring the hospital to post staffing grids on all units
- Increased health insurance protections, including a decrease in their locked-in contribution rate for plan year 2027

Cape Cod VNA Nurses STRIKE!

Registered nurses with the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) of Cape Cod Healthcare held a three-day strike from October 22–24 in Falmouth and Hyannis. Leading to the strike was CCHC management months-long refusal to address key issues — including uncompetitive wages, recruitment challenges, and chronic turnover — that threaten the quality and continuity of home care for patients across Cape Cod and the Islands.

VNA nurses provide essential home health and hospice care to thousands of Cape and Islands residents each year — caring for patients who are discharged from hospitals earlier and sicker than ever. They manage complex treatments, all of which are delivered independently in patients' homes.

At the heart of the dispute is CCHC's refusal to offer wage increases on par with those recently negotiated for hospital nurses at Cape Cod and Falmouth Hospitals, who received a 19% raise over three years. VNA nurses, who already earn about 20% less, were offered only 10% over three years, which would widen the pay gap to nearly 29%.

Nearly one-third of the VNA's nursing staff are temporary travel nurses. This costly, unstable practice disrupts continuity of care. CCHC spends hundreds of thousands of dollars each month on short-term staff, yet fails to invest in permanent caregivers.

"This strike is about protecting patient care for our community," said Mike Barry, RN and union co-chair. "VNA patients deserve a stable, local nursing workforce — not a revolving door of temporary staff."

The VNA nurses, with support from the MNA staff, are now working with a federal mediator to set dates for the next negotiations. ■

St. Luke's Hospital Nurses Ratify New MNA Contract with Strong Wage Increases to Improve Staffing and Patient Care

St. Luke's Hospital RNs, voted overwhelmingly on Oct. 16 to ratify a new three-year contract with Southcoast Health, concluding months of negotiation aimed at improving staffing, retention, and patient care.

The agreement includes significant wage increases that make St. Luke's more competitive with other regional hospitals — including Cape Cod Healthcare, Brockton Hospital, and BI Plymouth. In turn, the region's largest hospital, and only Level II Trauma Center, can more readily recruit and retain the nurses patients rely on.

"This contract is a meaningful victory for our nurses, our patients, and our community," said Kim Beaulieu, RN and MNA bargaining committee co-chair. "These improvements support nurses and strengthen recruitment and retention."

"We are proud this agreement reflects our commitment to providing excellent care for New Bedford and the Southcoast," added Terri DeMedeiros, RN and co-chair.

The ratification follows months of organizing, including open bargaining sessions, a petition signed by more than 600 nurses, and a well-attended informational picket in September.

Key Contract Improvements

RN Staffing

- Continued and strengthened enforceable staffing language based on unit needs and patient volume
- New joint committee to address issues on the Family-Centered Unit, including training, continuity of care, and reducing mandatory on-call
- New joint committee to improve staffing on the Knowles stepdown unit, with the goal of creating a dedicated staffing plan for this high-acuity area

Wages

- New 20-step wage scale (3.25% between steps), retroactive to January 2025; staff nurse scale now $40.74–$74.81/hr. — an immediate $7+/hr. increase at the top step
- 4% across-the-board raise in January 2026 (scale: $42.37–$77.81/hr.)
- 4% across-the-board raise in January 2027 (scale: $44.06–$80.92/hr.)

Example: A nurse on step 8 will move from $44.58 to $58.76/hr. by 2027 with ATBs and step increases

Additional enhancements across the contract will further support nurse satisfaction and safer patient care.

"This contract demonstrates respect for St. Luke's nurses and the vital role we play every day," Beaulieu added. "We look forward to ensuring Southcoast follows through on these commitments." ■

Scenes from the nurses' prior informational picket

Why You Need Liability Insurance Now More Than Ever

In today's evolving healthcare landscape, the need for nursing professionals to carry comprehensive liability insurance has never been more critical. The latest *Nurse Professional Liability Claim Report: 5th Edition* reveals sobering trends that underscore the growing legal and financial risks nurses face across all settings.

- ***Claims are becoming more severe:*** The average total incurred per claim has surged by 12.5% to $236,749, with nearly 8% of claims now exceeding $750,000. This dramatic rise in claim severity not only highlights the increasing complexity of patient care but also the potentially devastating financial impact on uninsured or underinsured nurses.
- ***Home healthcare presents mounting risks:*** As more care shifts to outpatient and home settings, home healthcare nurses now represent 21.7% of all malpractice claims, the highest share of any nursing specialty. Alarmingly, the average cost of a claim in this category has risen by 39.3% to $301,031, driven by the unique challenges and vulnerabilities of practicing in unstructured environments.
- ***Treatment and care remain at the heart of litigation:*** Over 56% of all claims involve allegations of treatment or care. This figure continues to rise alongside the 15.1% increase in associated costs since 2020. Even routine clinical decisions can become the subject of costly legal scrutiny.
- ***License protection costs are climbing:*** Defending a professional license is also becoming more expensive. The average payment for license defense has increased by 18.3% to $6,304, with professional conduct complaints comprising 38% of all closed defense matters, an often-overlooked risk that can jeopardize a nurse's livelihood.

The bottom line: Nurses are facing heightened exposure to both malpractice claims and professional discipline.

Carrying individual nursing liability insurance is no longer just a wise precaution; it is an essential safeguard for every nursing professional. With claim costs and legal pressures mounting, now is the time to ensure you have robust, personal coverage. For under $200 per year, nurses may obtain malpractice insurance through companies such as NSO, which is the liability provider the MNA recommends to members.

Please do not delay taking this step to protect your license, career, finances, and your future. ■

nso®

Important Cybersecurity Reminder for All MNA Members

We want to remind all MNA members to remain vigilant about cybersecurity threats, including scam texts, phishing emails, and fraudulent phone calls. These types of attacks are becoming increasingly sophisticated and can target both individuals and healthcare facilities.

Recently, we received reports of members getting a text message from 530-249-4212 claiming to help "activate benefits" and directing them to a fake link. This is a scam. If you encounter this message — or anything similar — do not click any links, respond, or provide personal information. Please delete the message and block the sender immediately.

If you have questions or suspect a phishing attempt related to the MNA, contact our IT Helpdesk at helpdesk@mnarn.org. If you suspect a cybersecurity issue at your workplace, alert your employer and your local MNA representatives. ■

MNA News from Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association

Contract negotiations for the first successor agreement for the MNA members at Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association commenced in November, with the entire six-member negotiations team attending on paid release time.

The committee had a positive first session and laid the ground rules for future negotiations, including paid release time for five members. The members presented 50 proposals and reached agreement on eight during their first session.

All BVNA members are invited to attend negotiations. ■

Mass General Brigham Occupational Health Nurses Urge Board to Recognize Union Vote

The nurses and nurse practitioners of Mass General Brigham (MGB) Occupational Health Services—who voted 91% in favor of joining the MNA—have sent a letter to MGB Board Chair Scott Sperling urging the system to honor their vote and begin contract negotiations.

Despite the decisive result, MGB has refused to recognize the union, instead exploiting delays at the National Labor Relations Board to stall bargaining.

"Our decision to unionize was driven by our commitment to the health and safety of the entire MGB workforce," the clinicians wrote. "By refusing to engage with us, MGB leadership is undermining the very foundation of occupational health services that protect all caregivers."

Maria Dolores, RN (Ginger Medina), Chair of the MGB Occupational Health MNA Bargaining Unit, said clinicians want partnership—not conflict. "We are proud of the work we do to keep caregivers safe. Our vote was a clear message that we want to strengthen that mission. Every day MGB delays recognition is a lost opportunity to improve the system's own health infrastructure."

MGB Occupational Health nurses play a critical role in managing workplace injuries, exposures, and public health compliance across the system. They are calling on the Board to end management's delay tactics and direct immediate, good-faith negotiations.

"Recognizing and negotiating with our union is not just fair," their letter concludes. "It is a responsibility MGB owes to every patient who enters this system." ■

Outstanding Results for Region 3 Council's October Food and Diaper Drive

By Karen Duffy, Region 3 Council Vice Chair

Region 3 once again demonstrated its commitment to community service with a highly successful Fall Food and Diaper Drive benefiting Independence House. This vital Cape Cod organization supports survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Independence House provides free, confidential services and often supports individuals and families who arrive with nothing. Each year, the shelter shares a list of its most-needed items, and Region Three responds with spring and fall donation drives.

For each drive, the Council partners with a local grocery store, sets up donation tables, and provides shoppers with a list of needed items as they enter. Customers return with donated goods — sometimes a single item, sometimes a full cart — and often contribute cash as well. This October, the community's generosity reached new heights, with over $1,000 in cash alone collected.

Donations filled multiple carts throughout the day, requiring frequent drop-offs at the Region 3 office, where volunteers sorted items for pickup by Independence House. By the end, tables were covered with food, and stacks of diapers reached impressive heights — totaling more than $1,000 in essential supplies.

Our dedicated volunteer team powered the drive's success: Deb Caruso (Region 3 Chair), Karen Duffy (Vice Chair), Pat Conway (Office Manager), Stephanie Stevens, Felcia Daly and daughter Lily, Chantel Foley, Mike Barry, and Connie Cummings.

The generosity of shoppers — who now look forward to seeing MNA volunteers each year — continues to inspire.

Region 3's Food and Diaper Drives strengthen our connection to the community and ensure that Independence House can continue providing critical support to survivors.

Dates for our 2026 drives will be announced soon. All are welcome to join! ■

Scenes From Election Day 2025

MNA Massachusetts Nurses Association

CNE
continuing nursing education

For Spring 2026 CNE registration, please contact:
Liz Chmielinski at 781-830-5719, echmielinski@mnarn.org

IN-PERSON OFFERINGS

REGION 2

Forty-Four Years and Counting to the Half-Century Mark: The Evolution of HIV Care from 1981–2025

Date: Thursday, June 11; 5:30–7:45 p.m. (registration/dinner: 5–5:30 p.m.)
Location: Teamsters Local 170, Health and Welfare Fund; 330 Southwest Cutoff, Worcester
Description: HIV has evolved in our lifetime from a frightening and misunderstood illness to its status as a manageable chronic health condition. This program will address HIV from the beginning of the epidemic through the development of effective treatment strategies and address modalities to stem the spread of HIV.

REGION 3

Clinical Management of Type 2 Diabetes

Date: Monday, April 6; 6–8 p.m. (registration/dinner: 5:30–6 p.m.)
Location: Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Conference Room TBD; 11 Buttermilk Way, Buzzards Bay
Description: This program will explore best-practice standards for Type 2 diabetes and prediabetes. Clinical management strategies will be reviewed, and key information for patient education will be provided.

REGION 4

Polypharmacy: Implications for Patients and the Healthcare System and Strategies for Risk Mitigation

Date: Tuesday, April 28; 6–8:15 p.m. (registration/dinner: 5–6 p.m.)
Location: Danversport Yacht Club; 161 Elliot Street, Danvers
Description: This program will define polypharmacy, discuss its implications for both patients and healthcare systems, and outline the deprescribing process.

REGION 5

Mental Health Update: Bipolar Disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder

Date: Thursday, May 21; 6–8 p.m. (registration/dinner: 5:30–6 p.m.)
Location: MNA Headquarters; 340 Turnpike Street, Canton
Description: This program will enhance nurses' ability to care for patients with a spectrum of mood and personality disorders by reviewing diagnostic focus, treatment approaches, and impacts on other areas of health.

MNA HEADQUARTERS

Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)

Certification: Tuesday, March 31, 2026; 9 a.m.– 4 p.m.
Recertification: Tuesday, April 7; two sessions — 9 a.m.– noon or 12:30–3:30 p.m.
Location: 340 Turnpike Street, Canton
Description: This AHA course provides information on the clinical management of medical emergencies through a case-study approach. Certification is a two-day course; recertification is one day.
Fee: $50 (member/associate member); $250 (non-member)

Breath by Breath: Enhancing Patient Outcomes in Mechanical Ventilation

Thursday, April 9; 5:30–8 p.m. (registration/dinner: 5–5:30 p.m.)
Location: 340 Turnpike Street, Canton
Description: This comprehensive program is designed for healthcare professionals seeking to acquire or strengthen their knowledge and skills related to mechanical ventilation.

VIRTUAL OFFERINGS

REGION 1

From Burnout to Balance: Self-Care Practices for Providers

Date: Wednesday, April 15; 6–7:15 p.m. (log in: 5:30–6 p.m.)
Description: Nurses are highly skilled at caring for others, but they often neglect their own self-care — especially during busy shifts. Yet high-quality patient care depends on nurses taking care of themselves first.

Multi-Generational Nursing Workforce: Challenges and Opportunities

Date: Thursday, April 30, 2026; 6–8:15 p.m. (log in: 5:30–6 p.m.)
Description: Today's nursing workforce includes five generations. Differences in work attitudes, beliefs, and values can create new challenges — and opportunities — in building a harmonious workplace.

REGION 2

From Burnout to Balance: Self-Care Practices for Providers

Date: Wednesday, March 18; 5:30–6:45 p.m. (log in: 5–5:30 p.m.)
Description: Nurses are highly skilled at caring for others, but they often neglect their own self-care — especially during busy shifts. Yet high-quality patient care depends on nurses taking care of themselves first.

REGION 3

Beyond the Scales: Cardiometabolic Benefits of Today's Anti-Obesity Agents

Date: Tuesday, March 3; 6–8 p.m. (log in: 5:30–6 p.m.)
Description: Participants will examine the evolving landscape of obesity pharmacotherapy with a spotlight on the cardiovascular implications of modern anti-obesity medications. The session will review current and emerging agents, summarize key clinical trials, and highlight evidence showing improvements in cardiovascular outcomes — including reductions in major adverse cardiovascular events, benefits in heart failure (especially HFpEF), and favorable effects on cardiometabolic risk factors such as blood pressure, lipids, inflammation, and glycemic control.

REGION 5

Sleep Support with Herbs: Practical Insights for Nurses and Their Patients

Date: Tuesday, May 5; 6–8:15 p.m. (log in: 5:30–6 p.m.)
Description: This program explores how herbs can support sleep for nurses managing stress, irregular schedules, and shift work, while also equipping them to assist patients experiencing sleep challenges.

MNA HEADQUARTERS (VIRTUAL)

Nursing Knowledge Meets Legal Expertise: Navigating Legal Waters with Attorneys

Date: Tuesday, June 16; 5:30–8:30 p.m. (log in: 5–5:30 p.m.)
Description: Designed for nurses considering a move into legal nursing, this course builds on clinical knowledge to develop foundational skills for working as a legal nurse consultant. Led by an experienced legal nurse, the program covers the role of the legal nurse consultant and how to apply clinical expertise to launch a new — and potentially lucrative — second career.

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

MNA Labor Summit

Date: March 11, 2026; 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Boston–Westborough; 5400 Computer Drive, Westborough

MNA Clinical Nursing Conference

Date: Wednesday, May 13; 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Boston–Westborough; 5400 Computer Drive, Westborough

MNA Massachusetts Nurses Association

LABOR SCHOOL

WINTER/SPRING 2026 LABOR EDUCATION SCHEDULE

Grievance Handling Basics Workshop 101
Description: Learn how to identify the various types of grievances. Become familiar with the basic steps of filing and processing grievances with members.
Date: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 • Time: 6-8 pm Live Virtual via Teams

Bargaining Basics Workshop
Description: Recognize basic strategies commonly utilized during the negotiation process. Review behaviors that are or are not acceptable at the bargaining table.
Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 • Time: 6-8 pm Live Virtual via Teams

Role(s) of Union Officers, Representatives and Committee Members Workshop
Description: Back to basics-what qualities are necessary to be an effective Union Officer, Floor Rep (Steward), and/or Committee Member. Recognize the role, responsibilities, and duties of each of these positions.
Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 • Time: 6-8 pm Live Virtual via Teams

Role(s) of Union Officers, Representatives and Committee Members Workshop
Description: Back to basics-what qualities are necessary to be an effective Union Officer, Floor Rep (Steward), and/or Committee Member. Recognize the role, responsibilities, and duties of each of these positions.
Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 • Time: 9-11 am Live Virtual via Teams

Grievance Handling Basics Workshop 101
Description: Learn how to identify the various types of grievances. Become familiar with the basic steps of filing and processing grievances with members.
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 • Time: 6-8 pm Live Virtual via Teams

Grievance Handling Basics Workshop 101
Description: Learn how to identify the various types of grievances. Become familiar with the basic steps of filing and processing grievances with members.
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 • Time: 9-11 am Live Virtual via Teams

For more information and to register: Members register by signing into the MNA App/events section or sign into the website **https://mna.yourassociation.org,** and click the CE Programs/Events button.

For questions or Non-Members register by contacting: Liz Chmielinski at echmielinski@mnarn.org or call 781-830-5719

An Invitation for all MNA Home Care Members!

Registration is now open for the

Massachusetts Nurses Association

Home Care Summit

Building the Power of Visiting Nurses and Healthcare Professionals

Saturday, January 24, 2026

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

MNA Headquarters

340 Turnpike St., Canton MA

The MNA Board of Directors has scheduled a home care summit to bring together MNA members to discuss ideas, tactics and strategies to better support our members working in the home care setting.

Topics to be Covered:

- The Current State of Home Care in Massachusetts – how federal (and resulting state) budget cuts impact our practice and workplace and what we need to do about it as a Union.
- Using our Power to Address Issues in the Workplace – with a focus on best practices to address "productivity standards."
- Building an Escalating Contract Campaign: internal organizing to win!
- Organizing in the Home Care Sector.
- Preventing Workplace Violence.

Other Details:

Breakfast and lunch to be provided, with Happy Hour following the summit from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. at Trillium Brewing in Canton.

Registration:

Register online by signing in to the MNA App/events section, signing in to the MNA Website using this QR Code, and click the CE Programs/Events button or by contacting: Liz Chmielinski at EChmielinski@mnarn.org; 781-830-5719.

MNA℠ Massachusetts Nurses Association

Massachusetts Nurses Association
Full member (75 percent) of applicable dues rate

Subject to verification, members who qualify for one of the following categories may elect to pay 75 percent of the annual dues:

1. Health professional labor program member—any healthcare professional, other than a registered nurse, who is represented for purposes of collective bargaining by MNA;
2. Limited hours labor program member—any labor program member who is represented for purposes of collective bargaining by MNA and who has 988 or fewer hours paid in the preceding calendar year.

It is the responsibility of any registered nurse and/or other healthcare professional to verify to the satisfaction of MNA on an annual basis his/her eligibility for the 75 percent dues category within any of the foregoing categories by April 1 of each year. Upon receipt of such verification of eligibility in the prior calendar year, the member shall receive the reduced dues rate effective the following July 1 through June 30.

Application for Minimum Hours Reduced Dues Category

Please print clearly and application needs to be received by April 1 to the Membership Division of MNA

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

at the following MNA facility(s) of employment for the year of application (*list each MNA facility separately*):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Personal Email Address: _____

Eligibility for the reduction is verified by MNA with each employer.

Confirmation of receipt of this application will be emailed to your personal email account within 72 hours of receipt.

MNA Massachusetts Nurses Association Safe Limits Save Lives

Massachusetts Nurses Association • 340 Turnpike Street • Canton, MA 02021
Fax: 781-821-4445 • Email: membership@mnarn.org

The MNA℠ Traveler

in collaboration with collette

The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page.

Prioritize your well-being and escape on an MNA Tour of Europe in 2026!

Discover Tuscany and the Italian Riviera - May 22 – 30, 2026. 9 Day Tour, Priced at $4,649* pp Double Occupancy

Experience the romance of travel to these amazing Italian destinations. Enjoy the elegant palazzos of the regal city of Turin, Italy. Explore the colorful coastline of Cinque Terre in the Italian Riviera and stay in the quaint town of La Spezia. Relax and discover the rolling hills of Tuscany. Our tour includes a 3-night stay at the Villa Casa Grande in Tuscany, a luxurious Tuscan experience. We will visit wineries in the Chianti region of Italy. During a day excursion to Florence, you can take-in the historic sites of the famous city. This tour packs so many amazing sites and experiences into one trip. Don't miss it! Book before November 23, 2025 to save $100 with the price listed above.

Countryside of the Emerald Isle – September 6 – 16, 2026, 11 Day Tour, Priced at $5,949*pp Double Occupancy *(Optional 4-Night Belfast, Pre-Tour Extension is available)*

Enjoy this small group tour experience with only 12-24 passengers. We begin the tour with a 2-night stay in historic city of Dublin and discover all this amazing sites this city has to offer. Then off to East Cork via the scenic country roads. We will visit the Jameson Distillery for a taste of world-famous Irish Whiskey. A ferry boat ride will take us to the Garnish Islands for the day The countryside tours will include the mountains of Cork, Kerry and the colorful Dingle Peninsula. We will discover the untouched beauty of the Aran Islands with an overnight on this charming island. We will ferry back to the mainland in view the famous Clifts of Moher and end our tour with a two-night stay in the quaint town of Ennis. The $200 price reduction, listed above, is only available until February 7, 2026

London and Paris Holiday – December 2 – 10, 2026, 9 Day Tour, Priced at $4,649* pp Double Occupancy *(Optional 3-Night Amsterdam Post Tour Extension is available)*

From the cosmopolitan city of London to the romantic charm of Paris! Explore the best of these two world famous and historic cities, elegantly decorated for the holiday season. While in London we will enjoy a walking tour of the famous sites of Big Ben, Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey and the charming holiday markets of Covent Garden. The Eurostar high-speed train will whisk us to the heart of Paris, known as the City of Lights. There is no shortage of museums and sites to enjoy in Paris. Book soon, the $300 discounted price, listed above is only available until June 3, 2026.

Preview of the 1st MNA trip in 2027! Spotlight on the French Riviera – Featuring Nice's Carnival and Menton Lemon Festival, February 18 – 26, 2027, 9 Day Tour, Priced at $3,949*pp Double Occupancy *(Optional 3-Night Paris Post Tour Extension is available)*

With Nice as our "home away from home," you will unpack once and explore the fabulous French Riviera. Nice is a seaside paradise with an average of 300 sunny days per year which makes it the perfect setting for the French Carnival and Flower Parade with over 100,000 flowers. We will visit the charming town of Menton for the famous Lemon Festival. An excursion to Eze, France will take us to a historic perfume factory. We will excursion to the historic principality of Monaco and visit the Monte Carlo Casino. There is ample time to relax and absorb the charms of the Riviera. We will end our tour with an optional excursion to Dolceacqua, Italy. This tour is sure to sell out, so take advantage of the $300 discounted price, listed above, by booking before August 19, 2026.

***Prices listed above are the early booking rates. Tours above include:** air from Boston, departure taxes & fees, transfers, hotel, all tours and most meals. A fabulous value! Space fills fast on MNA tours. Click on the specific tour QR code for trip details and to book the tour. Life is uncertain, so we highly recommend you take out travel insurance. Collette Travel offers "cancel for any reason" tour protection up until the day of travel and protection while you travel. For questions, contact Carol Mallia at cmallia@mnarn.org.

Sign up to receive periodic email updates regarding the MNA travel program:

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(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies	0	0
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e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	0	0
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g. Copies not Distributed	100	100
h. Total	26550	26781
i. Percent Paid	100	100

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d. Percent Paid	100	100

☒ I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

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18.Signature: *Erin M. Servaes* 12/8/2025