

NYSNA NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION: Clinical Staffing Committee



Why do we have a Clinical Staffing Committee?

Purpose and Legislative Intent

The law, enacted in June 2021, recognizes that appropriate staffing—especially of registered nurses—reduces errors, improves safety, and supports retention. It requires general hospitals to establish and maintain a Hospital Clinical Staffing Committee to promote transparency in staffing decisions and align them with evidencebased standards.

What does the Staffing Committee do?

Core Responsibilities

- Develop and oversee the hospital's annual clinical staffing plan for RNs and other frontline staff.
- Collaborate with management to design and implement staffing plans while preserving management's role in implementation.
- Review and adjust staffing plans semiannually to compare budgeted vs. actual performance.
- Ensure compliance with New York State staffing guidelines, state/local standards, and professional association recommendations.

Who can be on the Staffing Committee?

Membership Structure

- At least 50% of members must be RNs, LPNs, and ancillary frontline staff providing direct patient care.
- Up to 50% can be hospital administration (e.g., CFO, CNOC, unit directors).
- Selection follows collective bargaining agreements where applicable.
- Cochairs are typically one RN and one management representative, elected every two years.

What's included in the Staffing Plan

Key Considerations in Staffing Plans

The Clinical Staffing Committee must address:

- Current Staffing Ratios or Grids in our Collective Bargaining Agreement (plan must meet the CBA staffing minimums).
- Census (patient volume, admissions, discharges, transfers).
- Acuity and care intensity.
- Skill mix (experience, certifications, specialty needs).
- Unit layout and equipment needs.
- Special patient populations (age, cultural/linguistic diversity, functional ability).
- Safety measures (e.g., 1:1 observation on psychiatric units).
- Other relevant factors like overtime, staffing guidelines, and quality metrics.

How do Clinical Staffing Meetings run?

Operational Practices

- Open meetings where all staff may attend, but only committee members vote.
- Access to organizational data (census trends, LOS, nursesensitive outcomes, adverse event data, staff engagement, overtime, recruitment/retention).
- Use of staffing plans as the primary basis for staffing budgets.
- Review of all staffing complaints submitted by frontline staff.
- Vote on a resolution to each complaint; a physical copy of the complaint resolution will be given to the complainant.

How do you get involved with the Clinical Staffing Committee?

- Reach out to any of the NYSNA Executive Committee members with your interest.
- Reach out to your NYSNA Program Representative with your interest.
- Come observe a staffing committee meeting.

