

## ANA adds COVID-19 vaccines to immunization position

The American Nurses Association's (ANA's) longstanding position for all nurses and healthcare workers to be immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases now includes the three COVID-19 vaccines being administered under the Food and Drug Administration's Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) process. The ANA Board of Directors unanimously approved the position that all nurses should get vaccinated unless they have a medical issue that makes vaccination inadvisable. This position extends only to the three vaccines currently available under EUA and does not extend to any future COVID-19 vaccines that might become available under the EUA process.

ANA believes that the safety profiles of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines are stable and that the effec-



tiveness of these vaccines in preventing the spread of COVID-19, as well as in mitigating the risk of emerging variants, has been proven.

Nurses working in a variety of healthcare settings across the nation are getting vaccinated against COVID-19 and over the past few months, the number of nurses who have been vaccinated has increased. In a survey of over 4,500 nurses conducted by the COVID-19 Facts For Nurses Campaign from April 12 through May 4, 83% of nurses reported that they had received the recommended dose regimen of two COVID-19 vaccine shots. ANA applauds nurses who are getting vaccinated against COVID-19. Nurses have a professional and ethical obligation to model health maintenance, wellness behaviors, and prevention measures they prescribe to patients, families, and communities.

## OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard protects nurses from COVID-19

The American Nurses Association (ANA) advocated for and supports the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) requiring employers to better protect nurses from COVID-19 hazards in the work environment.

This standard recognizes that nurses must have the most stringent levels of safety protections to provide the highest quality care to their patients. Critically, the ETS requires employers to provide better protections for nurses by developing and implementing plans to identify and control COVID-19 hazards in the workplace. Nurses who care directly for patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 must be protected by approved respirators, which include single-use N95 respirators, elastomeric respirators, and powered air-purifying respirators. Employers also must provide gloves, gowns, and eye protection. This requirement applies regardless of a nurse's vaccination status. Employers are required to screen healthcare personnel daily for COVID-19, provide COVID-19 tests at no charge, and to support employees to receive COVID-19 vaccinations.

The ETS also empowers nurses to advocate for meaningful safety improvements during the duration of the emergency standard, as well as providing whistleblower protections for employees who raise safety concerns.

"ANA has been calling for specific safety protections from COVID-19 since the start of the coronavirus pandemic," said ANA President Ernest J. Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN. "While this ETS is beneficial, it is not a replacement for a permanent standard with strong respiratory protections, which remains a necessity."

ANA encourages nurses and healthcare personnel to learn about the new requirements, and to understand how to report violations, by visiting [osha.gov/coronavirus/ets](https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets).

### OJIN spotlights the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic is the topic for May's *OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*. The eight articles cover an array of practice and economic concerns related to the pandemic, including its impact on the nursing workforce and the need for nurse financial safety nets. Other articles cover

- what nurses need to know about vaccination
- disproportional effects of COVID-19 on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities
- nurse practitioners and reimbursement parity.

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