

# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE, WORKLOAD & STAFFING CONCERNS FAQ

Revised: May 2026

## HOW DO I DECIDE BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE, LABOUR RELATIONS, AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCESSES?

The graphic below outlines the three core processes in the SUN/SAHO collective agreement, which you can use to address your concerns based on the circumstances and root causes.

Overlap can and does exist between Professional Practice, Labour Relations, and Occupational Health and Safety processes, but they can work in parallel, with each group focused on its respective articles.

### Member Concerns: Identifying the Issues

Process			Articles (SUN/SAHO)	Responsibility	Consultant
Professional Practice	Formerly addressed through the Nursing Advisory Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered nursing practice concerns</li> <li>Patient/Resident/Client Safety</li> <li>Workload, staffing or professional practice obligations</li> <li>Other factors negatively affecting registered nursing care</li> </ul>	56 - 58 Appendices A - F	NAC Chairperson	NPO
Labour Relations	Formerly addressed through the Grievance Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breach of collective agreement</li> <li>Violation of member's rights</li> <li>Employer policy/procedure</li> </ul>	1 - 55 59 - 60 62 - 64 LOUs	Local President	LRO
Occupational Health & Safety	Formerly addressed through the OH&S Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions or incidents which impact the health, safety, and welfare of a member or group of members</li> <li>Hazards include but are not limited to chemicals, physical hazards, biological agents, psychological fallout, ergonomic issues and/or concerns</li> </ul>	61	Local President OH&S Representative	LRO

It is important to remember that our professional practice and collective agreements apply only to the professional practice of RNs, GNs, RN(AAPs), GNPs, NPs, RPNs, and GPNs. The Employer is obligated to provide a working environment that is consistent with nursing standards, practices, and procedures, including applicable legislation.

## **WHAT DOES PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE MEAN?**

Professional practice incorporates regulatory, professional, organizational, best-practice, and evidence-informed practices that inform your ability to practice as a registered nurse or Nurse Practitioner and to provide care to your patients.

Regulatory requirements are the minimum expectations of a practicing registered nurse or Nurse Practitioner set by either the CRNS or CRPNS. These minimum expectations are defined in professional legislation, bylaws, entry-level competencies, standards of practice, code of ethics/conduct, scope of practice, and related interpretive regulatory documents.

## **WHAT DOES WORKLOAD MEAN?**

Workload can be difficult to define and is determined by registered nurses and Nurse Practitioners under our collective agreements. Simply put, it is when SUN members are expected to do more work than is consistent with proper client care. This can include excess work, additional tasks or responsibilities, assignments, non-nursing duties, or being unable to reasonably complete your responsibilities and accountabilities set out by your regulatory body or organization within your shift.

## **WHAT DOES STAFFING MEAN?**

Staffing is about ensuring the 'right provider, is providing care to the right patient, in the right place, at the right time'. Staffing concerns can and do create workload for registered nurses and Nurse Practitioners, and place patients, staff, and professional practice at risk.

SUN collective agreements do not include articles on minimum staffing requirements. Guidelines, best practices, and benchmarks (e.g., RN to Patient Ratios or Nurse to Patient Ratios) do exist that can inform resolution to professional practice and work environment concerns.

## **WHEN SHOULD I COMPLETE A WORK SITUATION REPORT?**

A Work Situation Report should be completed any time a professional practice, workload, and/or staffing issue is not resolved using low-level resolution and relates to registered nursing and/or Nurse Practitioner professional practice.

A Work Situation Report is a SUN form created to document professional practice, workload, and/or staffing concerns impacting registered nurses' and Nurse Practitioners' ability to fulfill their legislative, regulatory, professional, and organizational obligations.

## WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

SUN Provincial has developed [WSR/NAC Learning Modules & Resources](#), including videos, FAQs, and other resources, for your review.

Your first line of contact for any questions or concerns should be your Local President, Local NAC Chairperson, or Representative for immediate assistance. After speaking with them, your Nurse Practice Officer assigned to your Local can be involved.

## WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS OR NEED ADVICE?

You can contact various experts, including your SUN Local Executive and/or NAC Chairperson, SUN Labour Relations Officers and/or Nurse Practice Officers, regulatory bodies, and the Canadian Nurses Protective Society, which provides professional liability protection to members.

- [SUN Labour Relations Officer/Nurse Practice Officer Servicing Assignments](#)
- [College of Registered Nurses of Saskatchewan \(CRNS\) – Nursing Practice Consultation](#)
- [College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Saskatchewan \(CRPNS\) – Practice Program](#)
- [Canadian Nurses Protective Society \(CNPS\) – Legal Advice](#)