

# MI **NURSES** Association

Affiliate of National Nurses United and AFL-CIO

Why do managers always say *the same things* when nurses start organizing their union?

## HINT:

Expensive anti-union consultants work from a predictable playbook.

When hospital administrators find out that healthcare professionals are considering forming a union, they often hire union-busting consultants (often at a cost of thousands of dollars per day).

These unionbusters sometimes pose as independent “experts,” but **their entire job is to stop healthcare professionals from organizing.**

Through mandatory group meetings, emails, letters, videos and one-on-one meetings with your manager, **unionbusters try to scare, intimidate and discourage healthcare professionals from coming together to have a strong voice as a union.**



# WHAT ANTI-UNION CONSULTANTS WILL SAY:



**We didn't know that there was a problem.  
Give us a chance and we'll fix it.**

At the advice of high-priced consultants, hospital administrators may talk to nurses individually and ask for a second chance. Managers will make promises that things will improve. They may even give raises, restore cuts, and improve benefits.

**THE REALITY:** Any solutions that are implemented can be rolled back as soon as the threat of organizing goes away. The only way to ensure lasting improvements is through a legally binding union contract.



**You will lose flexibility.**

Anti-union consultants will claim that having a union will mean losing self-scheduling, weekend programs or other policies that make your job easier.

**THE REALITY:** Once you have a union, management can't make changes without negotiating with you.



**You will start with less than what you have now in negotiations.**

Management will claim that negotiations start from zero, and that you could lose benefits that you have now.

**THE REALITY:** Negotiations start from current wages benefits and working conditions. If managers really thought nurses would lose through collective bargaining, why are they fighting the organizing drive?



**Unions aren't for professionals.**

Hospital administrators and anti-union consultants will try to tell you that unions are for unskilled workers, not educated professionals.

**THE REALITY:** The Michigan Nurses Association represents more than 13,000 RNs and healthcare professionals across the state. Being part of a union gives nurses a say in their practice and helps ensure that members are treated with professional respect. As the professional voice of registered nurses in Michigan, MNA advocates for nurses and their patients at the state Capitol, in the community, and at the bargaining table. MNA also provides professional support such as high-quality Continuing Education opportunities at no cost to members.



## The union is an outside third party that will come between us.

Union-busting consultants will say that “the union” will make decisions for nurses and get in the way when RNs want to communicate with managers. Managers may try to divide nurses by unit, shift, race, seniority or other differences to prevent RNs from organizing together.

**THE REALITY:** Nurses ARE the union. Nurses elect their coworkers to be their representatives, and all union decisions are made by nurses. If you have a good relationship with your supervisor, having a union doesn't change that. The first step in a contract grievance procedure is to try to resolve the problem by talking directly with your manager. But if a manager treats RNs unfairly, having a union will provide additional steps to address concerns.



## Union dues aren't worth it.

Managers who never cared how you spent your money before may suddenly express concerns when it comes to dues that support your union and your voice on the job.

**THE REALITY:** No one pays union dues until nurses negotiate and vote to ratify a contract. Would you and your coworkers vote for a contract that didn't have significant improvements? MNA dues are \$67.72 per month, an amount set and voted on by members.



## The union will make you go on strike, abandoning your patients.

Anti-union consultants exploit fears and misconceptions about strikes.

**THE REALITY:** Only the affected nurses can vote to call for a strike. 98% of contracts are settled without a strike, and RNs decide if all other options have been exhausted. In the rare event that nurses vote to strike, federal law requires 10 days' notice so that the hospital can take responsibility for making alternate arrangements for patients.



## It is pointless to organize, because the hospital doesn't have any money.

Hospital administrators talk about how little money the hospital is making. But how often do they take money-saving suggestions from bedside nurses who see waste every day?

**THE REALITY:** As a union, nurses have access to information about the hospital's finances, and MNA staff can help figure out where the hospital's money is really going. When they organize, nurses can advocate for funds to be spent on staff retention and patient care.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the Michigan **NURSES** Association?

The Michigan Nurses Association (MNA) is the largest, most effective union for registered nurses and healthcare professionals in Michigan. Through collective bargaining, nurses are involved at every table where decisions are made that concern their practice. MNA advocates for nurses and their patients at the state Capitol, in the community, and at the bargaining table. You can find more information about our union and the organizing process online at: [minurses.org/organize](https://minurses.org/organize)

## How does the **UNION** organizing process work?

Nurses decide democratically whether or not to form a professional union in an election process run by the National Labor Relations Board. If RNs decide to hold an election and the vote is successful, members immediately elect fellow nurses to the bargaining team and other leadership positions. Nurses set the priorities for contract negotiations.

Organizing a union in your workplace is the first step to gaining a seat at every table where decisions are made that affect you, your patients, and your practice. MNA's extensive knowledge of healthcare and collective bargaining assists Michigan RNs in building strong unions and securing outstanding contracts in their workplaces. As health care becomes more and more about corporations making money, being part of a strong union is the best way to protect yourself, your patients and your profession.

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