



2024

**Washington State Board of Nursing  
Annual Report**



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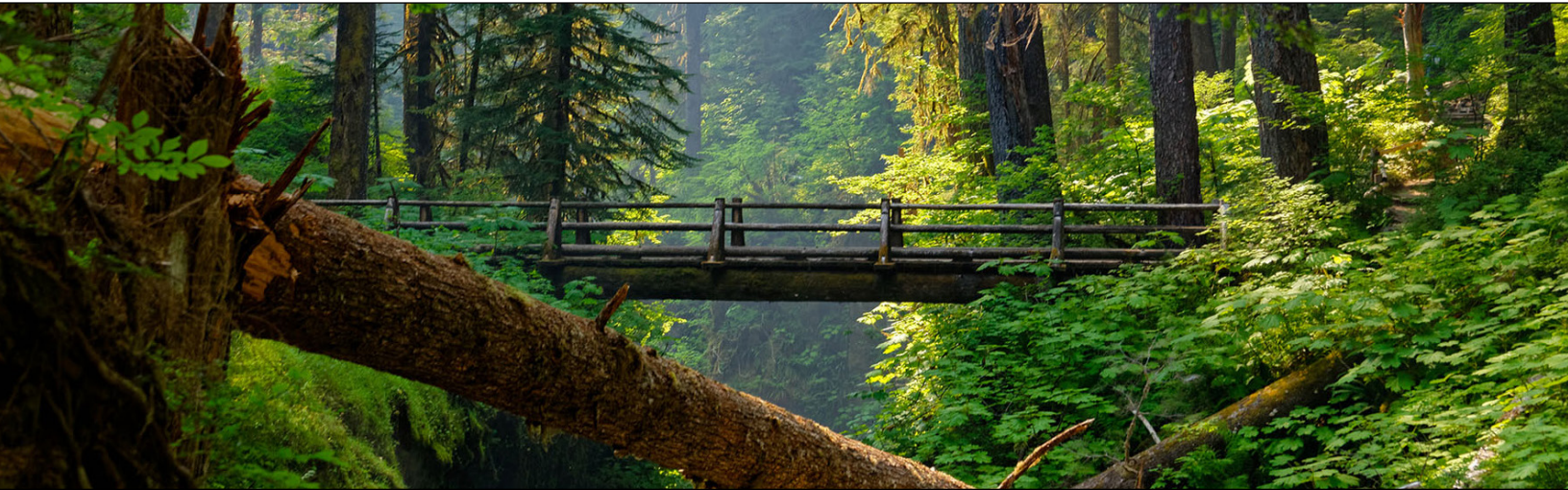


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## Introduction

This annual report covers the period from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024. The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the activities and achievements of the Washington State Board of Nursing (WABON) throughout the report period. It provides a summary of recent accomplishments and a preview of what we have yet to achieve as a board as we look forward to the 2025-2027 biennium.



## About WABON

The Washington State Board of Nursing (WABON) protects the public's health and safety by regulating the competency and quality of licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, advanced registered nurse practitioners and nursing technicians. WABON has eight units: licensing, discipline (including case management, investigations, legal services, and Washington Health Professional Services), operations (including legislative affairs, communications, and finance), practice, advanced practice, nursing education, nursing assistant education, and research. The Board's purpose is to establish, monitor, and enforce licensing, consistent standards of practice, continuing competency mechanisms, and discipline. Additional research services provide a data-driven approach to nursing workforce challenges, program, and policy

initiatives to ensure safe patient care through optimization of nursing within the healthcare environment.

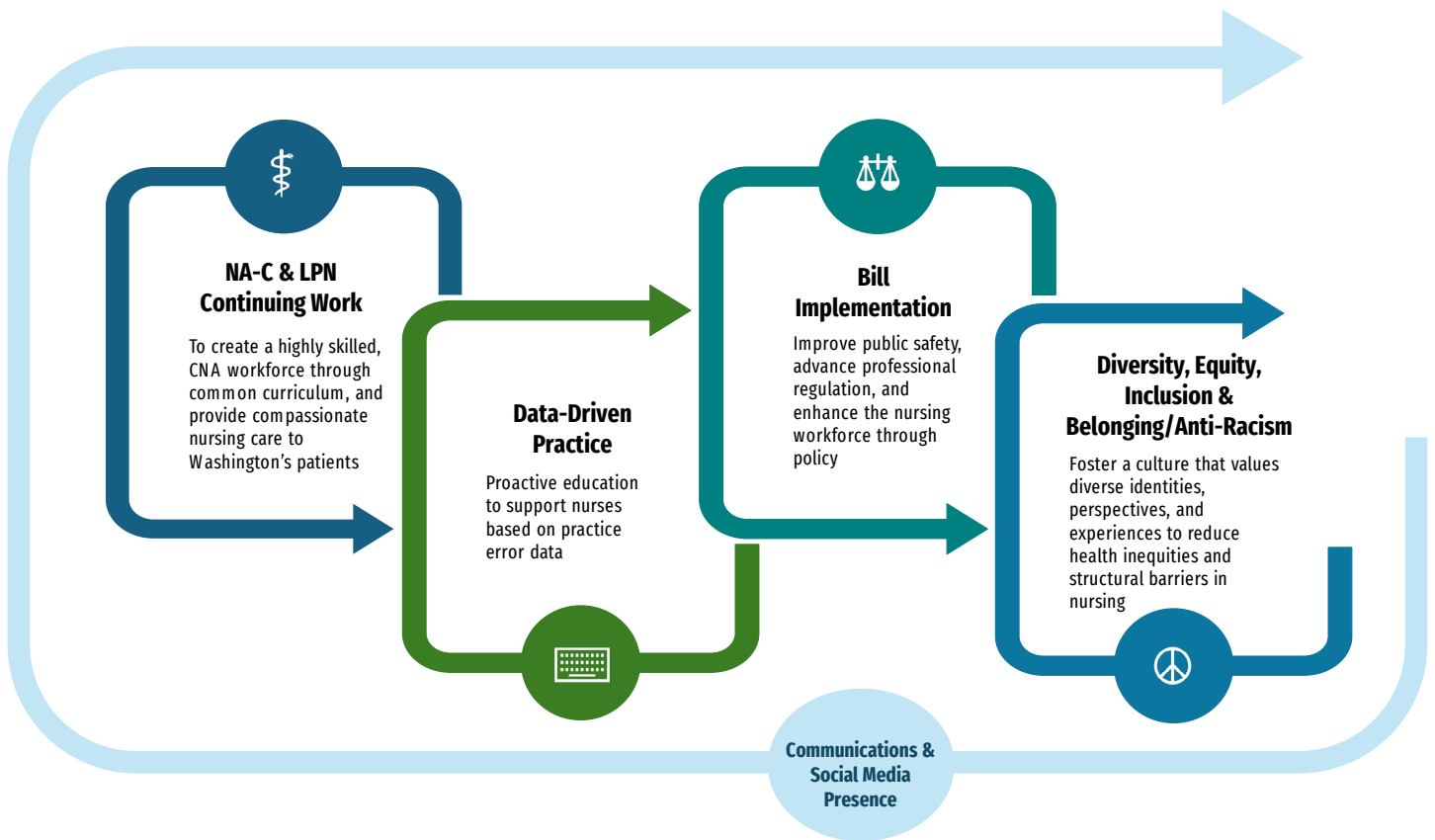
WABON has been an independent public agency, within the State Department of Health, since 2008 when a legislative pilot project established this relationship. Articulation with the Department of Health and shared service agreements is clarified in the Joint Operating Agreement which is reviewed and updated annually.

The Board consists of 15-members, including 12 nurses and three public members. The Governor appoints all members to meet specified roles outlined in [RCW 18.79.070](#). The Board partners with the Executive Director and staff to achieve strategic and operational initiatives.

# WABON 2023-2025 Strategic Plan

The WABON strategic plan focuses on four initiatives that center on workforce development and support, program implementation, expansion of the understanding of WABON’s functions in the community, and in-depth analysis of structural barriers contributing to systemic racism and discrimination. All priorities contain aspects of research and impact evaluation, ensuring that funding and initiatives support positive change. The plan covers two fiscal years (FY24, FY25).

In terms of partner development and collaboration, WABON continued to build networks with nurses across care settings, professional associations, unions, industry partners, employers, and policy makers, to bring awareness to nursing challenges following the COVID-19 pandemic and appropriately align board initiatives.

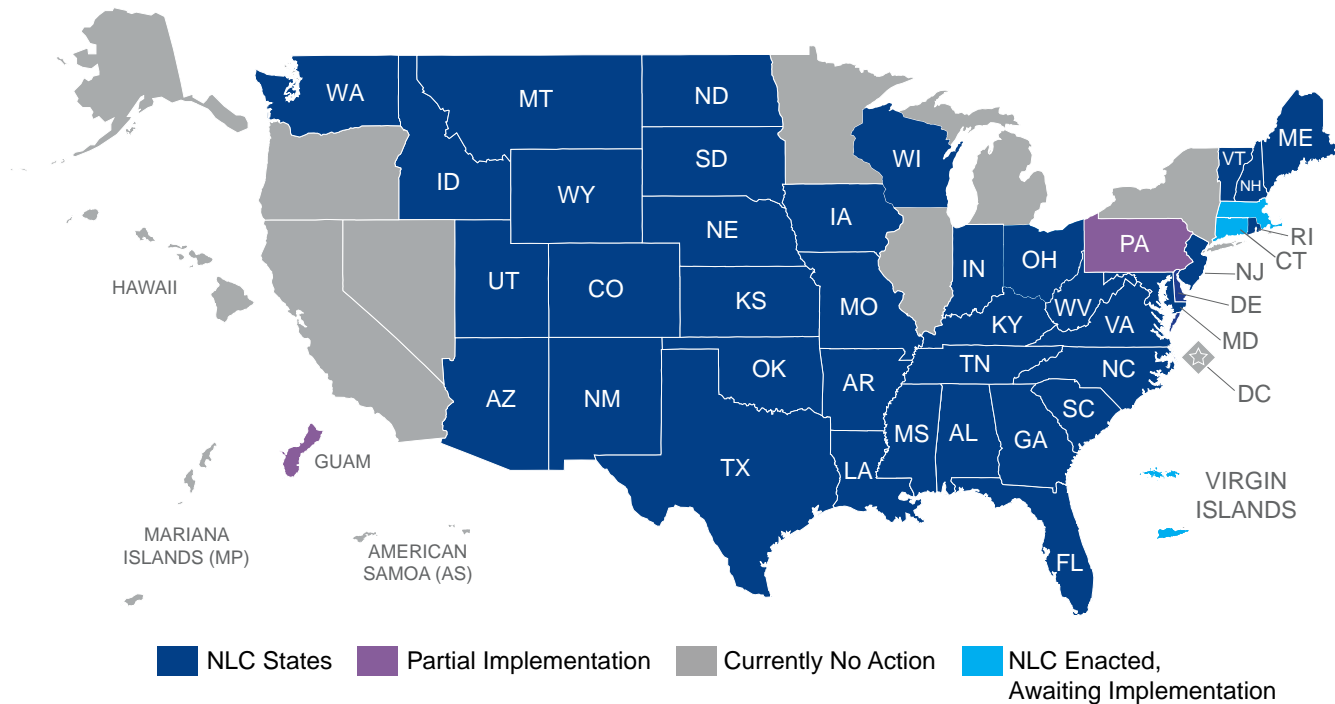


# Licensing

In 2024, the licensing unit focused on implementing the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). Washington was the 40th jurisdiction to join the NLC, allowing for registered and practical nurse license portability across compact states without additional fees or paperwork impacting their ability to enter the workforce.



## 43 jurisdictions have enacted the NLC



Following initiation of the compact on July 24, 2023, WABON began offering a Washington multistate license on January 30, 2024. In anticipation of this launch, WABON held several educational sessions for nursing programs, employers, and the public allowing for frequent communication and development of supportive resources for nurses and employers. Analysis of the NLC continues to understand the demographics and patterns of multistate license

holders within, and outside of Washington state, including a new Multistate License dashboard.

[Workforce Data Dashboard | Washington State Board of Nursing](#)

**Despite this large-scale implementation, the unit maintained an annual licensing time average below the target for temporary practice permits (TPP) of seven days.**



## Discipline



Nursing discipline represents a key aspect of protecting public safety, yet impacts only 2% of the almost 133,000 nurses in Washington state.

[Discipline Dashboard | Washington State Board of Nursing](#)

Opportunities to enhance public safety continue with analysis of fraudulent Florida nursing programs, termed Operation Nightingale, and new risks as part of NLC mobility. Ensuring public safety included communication best-practices with other Boards of Nursing and coordinated efforts with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Department of Justice, and Federal Bureau of Investigations.

The legal services unit is primarily responsible for the review and resolution of discipline cases that are processed by the case management team and investigated by health care investigators. Legal services also support all units within WABON by providing programmatic direction, rulemaking consultation, and assignments to projects that may require legal direction.

### *Additional accomplishments:*

- Developed processes and implemented the system to coordinate investigations and discipline for nurses under the privilege to practice according to the NLC.
- Assessed performance metrics and continued trend to close more cases per month than are opened to address backlog.
- Produced algorithm to triage appropriate case workload and reduce delays in processing.
- Transitioned public discipline communication notifications from DOH to WABON team.
- Developed and implemented a new complaint form to include discrimination/bias as a reason for potential investigation and discipline.
- Developed a WABON policy statement on discrimination and updated complaint intake form to identify discrimination as a cause or factor in the complaint.
- Support research and plan for publication on discrimination in regulatory complaints against nurses.

## Alternative to Discipline Program (Washington Health Professional Services)

Washington Health Professional Services (WHPS) offers substance use and mental health monitoring for nurses struggling with substance use disorder.

[WHPS Support Recovery Confidence Infographic](#)

The Washington Recovery and Monitoring Program (WRAMP) offers similar services for 86 other health professions, including nursing assistants. Both programs exist within the WABON structure.

The WHPS program has an average of about 240 participants in the program, recently including voluntary nurse participation for mental health monitoring, addressing the need for mental health support structures for healthcare providers.

*Additional accomplishments:*

- Implementation of 2023 HB 1255. WABON instituted a financial support program for

nurses with substance use disorders. The legislation also directed WABON to reduce the stigma of substance use disorder by removing the discipline flag from the public-facing provider credential search website after a nurse successfully completes the WHPS program.

- Developed a WHPS mentorship program to pair recent WHPS graduates with new WHPS participants.
- Published Mental Health Resources list for nurses.

[Mental Health Resources for Nurses](#)





## Nursing Practice

Nursing practice scope and standards frequently come into question as nurses are introduced to new care settings, employers look to expand nursing roles, nurses new to Washington state adjust to practice standards, and healthcare practice offers new directions, such as medical aesthetics. The ability to clarify practice standards is incredibly important to remain current and support nurses working to the top of licensure. In 2024, the practice team took initiative to develop a new strategic goal to proactively offer educational resources to nurses related to common questions or errors. This data-driven approach used complaint data to trend errors and direct early intervention. Future work will expand to DSHS and DOH facility data to best support nurses practicing in those environments.

- Continued to publish Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), Advisory Opinions, and other guidance documents to support nurses in their practice: nurse delegation, patient abandonment, telehealth, continuing competency requirements, COVID-19 testing, LPN and MA scope of practice comparison, and nurse delegation in schools – out of state field trips.
- Published annual comparison of the Nurse Practice Act across compact states.
- Performed regular outreach to nursing programs and healthcare delivery sites to educate nurses on authority governance and regulation, practice standards, scope of practice, and continuing competency.
- Revised the Jurisprudence and Practice 101 modules to be used for nursing students, early remediation program, education of the DOH Assistant Attorney General cohort, and the public.
- Provided real-time support to RN, LPN, nurse technician, and nursing assistant practice questions.
- Ensured educational sessions for Board meetings (Evidence-Based Regulation of Simulation, Artificial Intelligence, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Panel, e.g., AI, DEI panel, IV Hydration Businesses, and 988 Suicide and Crisis Line).
- Created interagency taskforce on aesthetics to compare challenges and develop aligned approach to regulation.





## Advanced Practice Nursing

Like the work by the practice team, the Advanced Practice (AP) team looks at issues and support for questions essential to the independent practice and prescribing of advanced practice nurses.

- Convened ARNP workgroups for assessment of the Advanced Practice compact, implications for AP practice in Washington state, and created recommendations for next steps.
- Analyzed workforce impacts with introduction of new professions (e.g., Anesthesia Assistants, Certified Midwives) or expansion of scope (e.g., Naturopaths).
- Initiated communication on title protection changes from ARNP to APRN fully effective July 2027.
- Nurture collaborative partnerships with ARNPs United, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, and specialty professional organizations.
- Continued to develop, update, and revise Advisory Opinions requested by ARNPs such as business practices and telehealth.
- Support rules revisions when linked to ARNP practice providing data as well as content and practice expertise to inform policy.



## Research



The Research Unit works to improve access and utilization of available data to inform policy decisions, evidence-based regulatory practice, and research. Every year the unit takes on several different projects along with standing annual items including external data requests, the Student Engagement Program, and assisting with the preparation and analysis of data-driven reports. The unit also develops and maintains public-facing data dashboards on the WABON website that display up-to-date information on Washington's nursing workforce, education, licensing, and discipline, improving the interactive access to survey data through dashboards across units. The unit continues to find new avenues for improvement in data access and use as well as efficiency through the use of SharePoint and automation.

This past year, research initiatives focused on augmenting external facing data dashboards on Education, Licensing, Discipline, Workforce. Publicly available workforce data provides real-time data for a variety of program and policy needs across the state. In 2024, data reports were expanded to include survey data from multistate license nurses providing insights into workforce ingress and key employee demographics. The team was heavily focused on developing internal

process metrics and developing a standard reporting structure across units to identify key areas of volume, turnaround time, and customer satisfaction, to create transparency around performance.

- Provided consultative input to Health Enforcement Licensing Management System (HELMS) development team regarding HB 1503, demographic surveys for RN/LPN/ARNP.
- Provided data sharing and data management strategic approach for WABON including HELMs, SharePoint, Survey Monkey.
- Supported graduate nursing student placement (50 over five years) and individual research objectives to augment existing WABON work.
- Refined survey questions through partnership with programs and WABON units; publish nursing education and nursing assistant education reports.
- Maintained collaborative partnership with the Washington Center for Nursing and National Council of State Boards of Nursing to ensure measurement and workforce outputs are well aligned to state needs.



## Nursing Education



Nursing education is the foundation for development of the workforce pipeline. Oversight of program standards ensures a high level of educational quality and workforce readiness. Key to this success is close partnerships with program deans and directors and associated state agencies to best understand needs, opportunities, and challenges. To this end, the team fostered a joint process improvement initiative related to easing the burden on programs for documentation, transparency of board processes, and educational development related to regulatory standards for faculty, deans, and directors.

- Offered routine faculty support, and new deans/directors orientation sessions.
- Developed 2:1 simulation rule to outline the infrastructure needed to provide high quality simulation. Seven public workshops to collect broad stakeholder input.
- Initiated the rule making process required by (SB 5582) for degree requirements for nurse administrators of baccalaureate nursing programs.
- Continued to administer the preceptorship program (SB 5582) each quarter and added a certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA) preceptorship program in July 2024.
- Conducted site visits, reviewed program changes, and investigated complaints related to nursing programs.
- Supported NCSBN education research, NCLEX item reviews, and Model Rules development.
- Supported expansion of nursing scholarship funding with Washington Scholarship Opportunities to include certified nurse midwives.
- Supported innovative pilot of nursing education and clinical placements using a variation of the Academic Practice Partnership framework.
- Supported approval of out of state nursing programs to offer clinical placement for Washington state residents in pre and post licensure programs.

## Nursing Assistant Education



Nursing Assistant (NA) regulatory oversight is a shared effort across WABON, DSHS, and the Department of Health. This contributes to challenges in streamlining processes and aligned support for this groups of licensees. WABON's focus is on the approval and oversight of nursing assistant training programs, an area that has struggled since the COVID-19 pandemic to meet community needs. Part of this challenge is that NA education uniquely requires a skills and written exam to qualify for licensure. In 2024, an initial pilot program transitioned the skills exam directly to the training programs to decrease delays in scheduling. Testing volumes grew 140% to over 1200 students completing training per month. A second pilot in Q4 2024 will further streamline processes as skills testing will occur now as part of the training program, versus following graduation. Centers for Medicare/Medicaid approval was key to this step as this profession must meet many federal standards.

- Developed two innovative NAC testing pilot programs in WA, including supporting the scheduling and grading all skills exams in Washington state.
- Created and implemented the Common

Curriculum for Washington state aligned with program renewals as of September 1, 2024.

- Refined the use of NAR/NAC licensing and created tools such as the [NAR/NAC comparison](#).
- Initiated a High School Pathways pilot program (SB 5582) to establish NA training partnerships between high schools and rural hospitals with cohorts starting January 2025.
- Continued to consult on the LPN Apprenticeship program; first cohort started in fall 2024.
- Offered routine orientation and support sessions for training program directors, new program openings, and using the common curriculum.
- Initiated national educational recommendations for changes to federal regulations with Washington State Hospital Association, Washington Health Care Association, Leading Age.
- Participated in numerous long-term care and workforce committees to support NAs and allied healthcare providers.



## Regulatory Affairs

In 2024, the new Regulatory Affairs unit achieved numerous successes in finalizing rules and policies, implementing and developing legislation, and furthering WABON's strategic plan.



Photo courtesy of Washington State Legislative Support Services.

- Convened multidisciplinary meetings to develop a feasible mental health proposal for healthcare providers.
- Developed and refined legislative panel processes, including staff roles, and released a [legislative training module](#).
- Facilitated and completed rulemaking on nine new projects (i.e., 1:2 simulation, nursing assistant common curriculum, health equity continuing education, blood glucose management, JAARC-required definition for graduate degree, multistate licensure fee, SUD stigma and stipend program, initial out-of-state exam and endorsement licensing, and nursing temporary practice permits).
- Developed a phased approach to complete a five-year review and revision of chapter 246-840 WAC to begin in August 2024 (this is a DOH statutory requirement and has not been previously conducted for this chapter).
- Created and led the WABON DEIB taskforce to implement the Board's strategic plan: published a board statement, promoted and facilitated DEIB Board education, and developed metrics to address structural bias and discrimination within the agency.
- Developed 2025 request legislation to consolidate regulatory authority for Nursing Assistants under WABON and decision packages seeking funding for SUD evaluation, monitoring, and treatment.
- Developed and passed WABON's first successful request legislation, House Bill 2416 (APRN Title Protection).
- Analyzed over 200 bills and closely tracked 49 bills during the 2024 legislative session.
- Provided written and oral testimony before the legislature.
- Completed the implementation of several bills passed during the 2023 legislative session.
- First publication of WABON's legislative priorities in [2024](#) and new priorities in [2025](#).
- Responded to legislative inquiries and requests for analysis: [Nursing Faculty Salaries](#) and strategic funding options to support simulation education.

## WABON Outreach & Communications

In 2024, WABON strengthened its commitment to education and connection, expanding its outreach to nurses, healthcare professionals, and the broader community across Washington and the Pacific Northwest. The board delivered numerous presentations throughout the year, showcasing its activities and initiatives, fostering greater awareness of its vital role. Building on our ongoing success, WABON released its eighth episode of BONcast, continuing to leverage this platform to share essential and broad services, changes, and updates.

The shining jewel of presentations and outreach culminated in WABON's day-long conference in the fall, *Voice and Vision: The Possibilities*. The highly regarded conference focused on wellness in nursing, with speakers who discussed renaissance nursing, coordinating body and mind to regulate stress, and a WHPS panel that highlighted the program and supports available.

- Social Media Campaigns:** WABON launched its social media presence in May 2024, establishing a strong footing on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. This initiative, guided by policies and a strategic posting calendar, significantly broadened outreach beyond traditional email and website communication channels.
- Website Enhancements:** Using data analytics, WABON refined its website to ensure content remains relevant and user focused. These updates were designed to amplify WABON's online presence and deliver value to its diverse audience. In 2024, WABON's website saw 1,190,290 unique users which resulted in 4,184,399 page views.
- Rebranding Efforts:** In a significant milestone, WABON successfully transitioned its identity from Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC) to Washington State Board of Nursing (WABON) as instructed by the legislature, complete with a refreshed logo, updated virtual backgrounds, and cohesive branding elements that reflect its mission and values.
- Branding & Visual Support:** The board provided essential support across all units, ensuring a consistent and professional approach to branding, publishing, and visual communications.
- Technological Leadership:** WABON led the charge in modernizing operations by implementing SharePoint across all units, becoming the first agency within the Department of Health to achieve full adoption of this collaborative tool.





## WABON Finance/Operations

As the foundation for the board's work, Operations focused on financial analysis and support for board members to optimize their work with WABON.

- Provided accurate financial analyses for review/input, including MSL fee development.
- Adjusted elective spending to ensure budget saliency with \$3.5M in cost savings.
- Developed multi-phase board orientation including micro-modules, in-person orientation with case studies and application of learnings, refine new board member orientation resource materials, clarify mentor expectations.
- Analyzed board member time and continue to refine staff processes to ensure board time values their expertise.
- Appointed and supported pro tem (1-year appointment) board members to ensure specialty representation in board activities.



## WABON Board Members

<p><b>L. Dawn Morrell, BSN, RN – Chair</b>            Position 05 - Staff Nurse Providing Direct Care  <i>Terms:</i>            October 8, 2018 - June 30, 2022            July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2026</p>	<p><b>Quiana Daniels, GCertHealthSC, BS, RN, LPN – Vice Chair</b>            Position 08 - Licensed Practice Nurse Member  <i>Terms:</i>            December 17, 2021 - June 30, 2025</p>
<p><b>Maikia Moua, RN – Secretary/ Treasurer</b>            Position 15 - Registered Nurse Manager or Nurse Executive  <i>Terms:</i>            July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2025</p>	<p><b>Adam Canary, LPN</b>            Position 10 - Licensed Practice Nurse Member  <i>Terms:</i>            July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2020            July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2024 – serving until replaced.</p>
<p><b>Jacob (David) Garcia, MBA, MSN, RN, PCCN</b>            Position 09 - Registered Nurse Member  <i>Terms:</i>            November 21, 2023 - June 30, 2027</p>	<p><b>Ella Guilford, MSN, M.Ed., BSN, RN</b>            Position 13 - Registered Nurse Faculty at 2-year community college  <i>Terms:</i>            June 20, 2019 - June 30, 2021            July 01, 2021 - June 30, 2025</p>
<p><b>Alisha Halverson, DNP, CNM, ARNP</b>            Position 01 - Advanced Registered Nurse  <i>Terms:</i>            December 13, 2024 - June 30, 2026</p>	<p><b>Luis Herrera, DNP, ARNP, FNP-BC</b>            Position 03 - Advanced Registered Nurse  <i>Terms:</i>            December 13, 2024 - June 30, 2026</p>
<p><b>Heleena Hufnagel, BS, MBA-HCA</b>            Position 02 - Public Member  <i>Terms:</i>            October 18, 2023 - June 30, 2025</p>	<p><b>Ajay Mendoza (Angelo John) ARNP, CNM, RN</b>            Position: 12 - Registered Nurse Faculty at 4-year university  <i>Terms:</i>            November 23, 2022 - June 30, 2025</p>
<p><b>Sharon Rott Ness, RN</b>            Position 14 - Staff nurse providing direct care  <i>Terms:</i>            August 02, 2017 - June 30, 2021            July 01, 2021 - June 30, 2025</p>	<p><b>Norma Perez, M.Ed.</b>            Position 11 - Public Member  <i>Terms:</i>            November 21, 2023 - June 30, 2026</p>
<p><b>Michael Syputa, LPN</b>            Position 06 - Licensed Practical Nurse  <i>Terms:</i>            December 13, 2024 - June 30, 2026</p>	<p><b>Kimberley Tucker, PhD, RN, CNE</b>            Position: 4 - Registered Nurse Member  <i>Terms:</i>            July 01, 2020 - June 30, 2024            December 13, 2024 - June 30, 2028</p>





**For more information about the Washington State Board of Nursing, contact:**

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Washington State Board of Nursing

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