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NEWS RELEASE



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**ANA POSITION STATEMENTS PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON
PIVOTAL TOPICS AFFECTING NURSING PRACTICE**

SILVER SPRING, MD – The American Nurses Association (ANA), the largest nursing organization in the U.S., has approved two instructive and interpretive policy documents – a revised position statement drafted by ANA’s Center for Ethics and Human Rights and its Advisory Committee on Ethics and Human Rights entitled *Nurses’ Role in Capital Punishment*, and an initial position statement drafted by the Congress on Nursing Practice and Economics entitled *Just Culture*.

“ANA takes very seriously its obligation to provide thought leadership and guidance to nurses everywhere on matters of significant professional and ethical consequence,” commented ANA President Rebecca M. Patton, RN, MSN, CNOR. “Issues such as capital punishment and error reporting contain many complex and unique dimensions, and affect many nurses both directly and indirectly in their day-to-day work. The ANA position statements provide a clear framework nurses can use to enhance their understanding and guide their decision-making in these important areas – always, of course, with the best interests of the patient in mind.”

Nurses’ Role in Capital Punishment articulates ANA’s clear stance against direct or indirect nurse participation in all phases of capital punishment, because it is contrary to the fundamental goals and ethical traditions of the nursing profession. Of particular note, the document takes special care to

guide nursing professionals – using highly specific examples – in their thinking and decision-making as they consider the complex dimensions of this issue.

ANA, while recognizing that individual nurses may have views that are different from the official position of the profession, stands by the basic belief that the role of the nurse is to promote, preserve, and protect human health – and therefore opposes all forms of nurse participation in capital punishment, by whatever means.

The ANA *Just Culture* document outlines its formal support of the Just Culture model – a concept widely used within the aviation industry to create an environment that encourages individuals to report mistakes, so that systemic issues contributing to these errors can be identified and eliminated. In essence, the Just Culture concept suggests a general move away from punitive models of error reporting, and advocates that individual practitioners should not be held accountable for system failings over which they have no control.

It is ANA’s belief that the tenets of Just Culture – when applied to nursing – can create a personal sense of responsibility and accountability for system improvement, enhance the ability to improve patient care delivery systems, and create a workplace culture that encourages quality and safety.

To access the complete content of *Nurses’ Role in Capital Punishment* and *Just Culture*, visit (insert link – to come). Additional background information (including supporting documentation and references) is available to ANA members (member login required).

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The ANA is the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation's 2.9 million registered nurses through its constituent member nurses associations, its organizational affiliates, and its workforce advocacy affiliate, the Center for American Nurses. The ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting the rights of nurses in the workplace, projecting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and by lobbying the Congress and regulatory agencies on health care issues affecting nurses and the public.

The Congress on Nursing Practice and Economics (CNPE) is an organized, deliberative body which brings together the diverse experiences and perspectives of ANA members. The Congress focuses on establishing nursing's approach to emerging trends within the socioeconomic, political and practice spheres of the health care industry by identifying issues and recommending policy alternatives to the Board of Directors. The CNPE is responsible for revising ANA's foundational documents, and for

the creation and revision of Position Statements relating to issues of strong importance to the organization and the nursing community at large.