A Nurses’ Guide to Filling Out an Assignment Despite Objection (ADO) Form

Objective »»
- To educate nurses about what to do when given an assignment they believe is potentially unsafe for patients and staff.
- To inform nurses about how to properly fill out an ADO form.

The ADO Form »»
- Is used by registered nurses to formally document circumstances in which the RN identifies an unsafe patient care environment.
- Ensures and documents that nursing administration has been notified.
- Is received, reviewed, and analyzed by the Professional Practice Committee (PPC) to identify trends and collect data which negatively affects patient and nurse safety.
- Is admissible in court, with regulatory agencies, and is a protected activity under federal labor laws. It is unlawful for an employer to retaliate or discipline an RN for filing an ADO.

How the ADO Works

STEP 1 The RN(s) with the concern makes a good faith effort to inform the manager, assistant manager, or nursing supervisor at the time of the objection to the assignment. The nurse(s) must notify their supervisor or the “person in charge”, not the charge nurse or team leader. The immediate goal is to address the concerns at hand, relative to quality or safety within the resources available, or appropriate scope of practice or policy. The supervisor must be aware of the problem to be able to solve the problem.

STEP 2 It’s important that RNs complete the ADO, whether to document the failure or success in resolving the issue with management.

STEP 3 Copies of the ADO are submitted as follows:
1. White copy to nursing unit manager.
2. Pink copy to PPC.
3. Green copy to bargaining unit president.
4. Golden copy to your labor rep.

STEP 4 When management receives a copy of the ADO, the date and time it was received will be noted on the upper right corner of the form.

STEP 5 Management will respond in writing to the ADO within one week of its receipt. If there are extenuating circumstances necessitating additional time to respond to the ADO, the initiating RN(s) and PPC shall be notified within one week that the ADO is under review.

STEP 6 Management will return the response to the initiating RN(s), PPC chair, and the CNE.
ASSIGNMENT DESPITE OBJECTION

“You must VERBALLY protest your assignment to your supervisor which based on your professional judgment is unsafe. This is usually at the start of the shift, but may occur at any time. If your supervisor does not make a satisfactory adjustment to the assignment, complete this form to the best of your knowledge and distribute the ADO copies according to the instructions on the reverse side.”

SECTION I • Nurse(s) Information
Print your name and other nurses’ names.
Employed: facility, unit, shift.
Protest assignment as: check all that apply.
Given to you by: list supervisor’s name.

SECTION Ia • Objection
Why are you objecting to the assignment? Check all that apply.

SECTION Ib • Working Conditions
Did you miss your meal period or break? Did you work overtime? Check all that apply.

SECTION III • Acuity Information
What was the census and unit capacity? Check appropriate acuity description.

SECTION IV • Staffing Count
Check appropriate answers and staff categories.

SECTION V • Problem Statement
Explain the situation.

SECTION VI • Patient Care Affected
How was patient care affected? (E.g. unable to ambulate patients, delay in patient care, unable to discharge or transfer, etc.)

SECTION VII • Action
Fill in notified supervisor’s name, date, time, and response.