



“Helen, I’m a wreck... I almost made a mistake today that could have cost someone their life! I was so tired, I wasn’t thinking clearly.”

“Kathy, let me guess, another double shift? Third time this week, right?”

# End Mandatory Overtime. The life you save may be your own.

## Condition Critical:

The double shift is called Mandatory Overtime — and it’s taking its toll on nurses — how long before it takes its toll on you or someone you love?

### Here are the facts

- As many as 98,000 hospital patients die annually in the United States as the result of medical errors according to a report by the Institute of Medicine. New York state accounts for an estimated 6,600 of these fatal errors.
- Forcing nurses to work beyond the point of exhaustion is dangerous. Excessive overtime can impair a nurse’s judgment. A recent study found people who

were awake for 19 hours or more scored substantially worse on performance tests and alertness scales than those with a blood-alcohol level of .08 — a level considered legally intoxicated in 29 states.

- Fewer mistakes would be made if nurses weren’t forced to work as many as three consecutive shifts. A recent survey shows more than 58 percent of nurses employed by New York state are mandated to work overtime on a regular basis.
- Ten other states — California, Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and West Virginia, — have passed laws or regulations to limit or ban mandatory overtime.

### What does it mean to me?

Nurses — *who are mandated more than any other occupational category* — are the most important factor in quality acute care. Providing the bulk of patient care and early warning and rapid intervention for critically-ill patients, fatigued nurses are more likely to make errors, or to miss subtle changes in the condition of patients.

### What can you do now?

Call 1-877-255-9417 today. Tell state lawmakers to end Mandatory Overtime and pass Bill A.1199/S.169 now!

The life you save may be your own.



**New York State  
Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO**

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