



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission
P.O. Box 47864
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The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission supports Federation of State Medical Boards' statement released on July 29, 2021 regarding COVID-19 vaccine misinformation.

"Physicians who generate and spread COVID-19 vaccine misinformation or disinformation are risking disciplinary action by state medical boards, including the suspension or revocation of their medical license. Due to their specialized knowledge and training, licensed physicians possess a high degree of public trust and therefore have a powerful platform in society, whether they recognize it or not. They also have an ethical and professional responsibility to practice medicine in the best interests of their patients and must share information that is factual, scientifically grounded and consensus-driven for the betterment of public health. Spreading inaccurate COVID-19 vaccine information contradicts that responsibility, threatens to further erode public trust in the medical profession and puts all patients at risk."

The NCQAC expands this statement to include nurses in Washington State and does not limit this perspective to vaccines but broadly applies this standard to all misinformation regarding COVID-19 treatments and preventive measures such as masking. Nurses who generate and spread COVID-19 misinformation, or disinformation, erode the public trust in the nursing profession and endanger patients.

With vaccination mandates by the Governor and others in Washington, the NCQAC will review any complaints received regarding nurses (LPNs, RNs, or ARNPs) granting exemptions to vaccination or masks that are not based in established science or verifiable fact. A practitioner who grants a mask or other exemption without conducting an appropriate prior exam and without a finding of a legitimate medical reason supporting such an exemption within the standard of care, may be subjecting their license to disciplinary action.

The NCQAC bases masking and vaccination safety on expert recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH).