POLICY:

To ensure the adequate number of nursing personnel are available to perform nursing care to the patient/residents on a continuous basis, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Nursing personnel monitors each patient’s/resident’s status and coordinates the provision of nursing care while assisting other professionals in implementing their plans of care. To accomplish this goal, the hospital provides a sufficient number of qualified nursing staff members to:

- Assess the patient’s or resident’s nursing needs;
- Plan and provide nursing care interventions;
- Prevent complications and promote improvement in the patient’s comfort and wellness; and alert other care professionals to the patient’s condition, as appropriate.

NURSING COVERAGE:

- RN, LPN and/or NAC coverage will be provided 24 hours per day.
- RN, LPN and/or NAC coverage will be based on minimum staffing requirements and the current census load.
- Sufficient staff to meet the nursing care needs of all patients/residents shall be assured. On-call personnel shall be utilized on an as-needed basis to meet this requirement.
- When possible, nursing personnel shall be assigned duties consistent with experience, educational and/or training background.
- In times of need, nursing personnel shall be assigned other duties such as the role of NAC or UC.

NURSING STAFF MATRIX:

- The Emergency Room Registered Nurse matrix is:
  - 1-2 Registered Nurses for one ER Patient ESI-1 (until they are downgraded to ESI-2 or lower ESI).
  - 1-Registered Nurse for one to two ER Patients with ESI-2.
  - 1-Registered Nurse for one to five ER Patients with ESI-3.
  - 1-Registered Nurse for one to six ER Patients with ESI-4.
  - 1-Registered Nurse for one to seven ER Patients with ESI-5.

- The Observation/Acute Care/Swing Bed Nursing matrix is:
  1 - Registered Nurse or LPN for one to six patients depending on their acuity.
The Long-Term Care (LTC) Nursing Matrix is:
1 - Registered Nurse or LPN for one to sixteen residents.
1 – 2 Nurse Aide Certified for one to sixteen resident(s) on days.
1 - Nurse Aide Certified for one to sixteen residents on nights.

**STAFF REQUIREMENTS:**

A. The minimal nursing staff for the facility during times of low patient census, or limited staffing, availability will be:

   **0600 - 1830:**
   - 2 - Registered Nurses (RN) or 1 - Registered Nurse (RN) and 1 LPN
   - 1 - Nurse Assistant Certified (NAC)

   **1800 - 0630:**
   - 2 - Registered Nurses (RN) or 1 - Registered Nurse (RN) and 1 LPN
   - 1 - Nurse Assistant Certified (NAC)

B. The normal/standard nursing staff for the facility will be:

   **0600 - 1830:**
   - 2 - Registered Nurses (RN) or 1 - Registered Nurse (RN) and 1 LPN
   - 2 - Nurse Assistant Certified (NAC)
   - 1 - Unit Clerk

   **0800 – 2030**
   - 1 - Registered Nurse (RN) or 1 LPN

   **1800 - 0630:**
   - 2 - Registered Nurses (RN) or 1 Registered Nurse (RN) and 1 LPN
   - 1 - Nurse Assistant Certified (NAC)
   - 1 - Unit Clerk
C. Additional Staff: Staffing needs are the decision of the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), or in his/her absence the charge nurse.

D. Low Census Policy: Low census is defined as a decline in patient care requirements resulting in temporary staff hour reduction. During periods of low census, the CNO or Nursing Supervisor will first ask for volunteers to take time off before determining and implementing the reduced staffing schedule required. In the event there are no volunteers, the CNO/Nursing Supervisor will endeavor to rotate low census equitably among nurses assigned to each area by shift, subject to competence, ability, and availability as determined by the CNO/Nursing Supervisor.

E. On-Call Nurses: On-Call personnel will be used for additional staffing for sick calls, inter-facility transports, or other staffing needs as determined by the CNO.