



Collective Statement on Accountability, Equity, and Leadership in Nursing Organizations

September 25, 2026

Recent allegations concerning the leadership and workplace culture of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing have generated significant discussion across the nursing community. We recognize the seriousness of the concerns being raised and the importance of an appropriate and independent process to establish the facts. The Professional Organizations representing Nurses of Color (PONC) will not speculate on the circumstances of an ongoing matter. We commend the action by Sigma to act on the allegations. We are, however, paying attention to the broader concerns being raised about racism in nursing, the exercise of power within professional institutions, the safety of those who raise concerns, and organizational accountability when concerns involve leadership.

PONC is a collaboration of organizations representing nurses of color. Our organizations have distinct missions and communities, but we maintain direct relationships with one another to share information, understand what our communities are experiencing, identify concerns that cross organizational boundaries, and determine when collective engagement is needed. Nursing organizations hold significant influence over professional recognition, leadership, scholarship, education, networking, and the development of the profession. That influence carries responsibility. Commitments to equity and inclusion must be reflected in organizational culture, leadership practices, accountability processes, and the treatment of those who raise concerns.

We call on nursing organizations and their governing bodies to:

- **Ensure safe reporting and protection from retaliation**, including accessible mechanisms for reporting racism, discrimination, harassment, and other concerns.
- **Establish fair and independent accountability processes**, particularly when concerns involve senior leaders, and apply standards consistently regardless of title, tenure, or influence.
- **Strengthen governance, transparency, and representation** by ensuring meaningful board oversight, communicating appropriately when serious concerns affect institutional trust, and including nurses of color in leadership and decision-making.

We also call on nursing organizations to establish and sustain relationships with organizations representing nurses of color. These relationships should be part of the profession's ongoing infrastructure for understanding workforce experiences, identifying systemic concerns, and developing responses with affected communities. PONC does not speak for every nurse of color, and each participating organization retains its own voice and authority. Signatures on this statement does not constitute authorization for PONC or any participating organization to speak on behalf of another signatory. Our collaboration provides a structure for our organizations to remain connected, informed, and prepared to act collectively when circumstances affecting our communities arise. We expect the institutions that represent nursing to uphold the same standards

of ethical leadership, accountability, dignity, and equity that the profession expects nurses to uphold every day.

This statement reflects the shared commitment of professional organizations representing racially and ethnically diverse nurses across the United States, including:

1. The Academy of Diversity Leaders in Nursing (ADLN)
2. The Alliance of Cosmetic Nurse Practitioners™ (ACNP)
3. Asian American/Pacific Islander Nurses Association
4. Black Nurse Collaborative, Inc.
5. Black Nurses Week®
6. Black PhD Nurse Scientists
7. Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Incorporated
8. Deborah Stamps Consulting, LLC
9. Diversity in Nurse Anesthesia Mentorship Program
10. DLJames Consulting
11. DNPs of Color
12. Ghanaian-Diaspora Nursing Alliance (G-DNA)
13. International Association of Latino Nurse Faculty/Nurse Leaders
14. McIntosh Advocacy and Consulting, LLC
15. Multicultural CRNA Conference
16. National Alaska Native American Indian Nurses Association
17. National Association of Hispanic Nurses
18. National Black Nurses Association, Inc.
19. Network of Black Male Nurse Leaders
20. Nursing Social Justice Collaborative
21. Philippine Nurses Association of America
22. Society of Internationally Educated Nurses and Nursing Allies (SIENNA)
23. Society of Latinx Nurses (SOLN)
24. The Institute for Health and Social Equity
25. The Melanin Initiative Podcast
26. The Monica
27. The National Black Nurse Practitioner Association
28. The Society of PMHNPs of Color

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About the Professional Organizations representing Nurses of Color (PONC)

The Professional Organizations representing Nurses of Color (PONC) is a grassroots collaborative of nursing organizations committed to advancing ethical practice, protecting human dignity, and advocating for just policies that impact nurses and the communities they serve. PONC works across specialties and practice settings to elevate the voices of nurses of color, address systemic inequities, and promote accountability, transparency, and safety within healthcare and society. Through collective advocacy, education, and coordinated action, PONC affirms the ethical obligations of nursing and supports efforts that safeguard both the nursing workforce and the public.

