



Your Partners in Supporting Nurse Practitioners in Canada

Regulatory College



Key Role

Protect the public by ensuring NPs provide safe, competent, and ethical care.



Scope

Provincial/Territorial



Responsible for:

- Licensure and registration.
- Writing and enforcing the standards of practice.
- Investigating practice complaints and disciplining members.
- Regulating profession's education and title/registration.

Union



Key Role

Protects and advocates for the rights, wages, and working conditions of **certain NPs** in a **specific employer-employee relationship setting**.



Scope

Employer-specific but generally organized by province/territory



Responsible for:

- Negotiating collective agreements (wages, benefits, workload).
- Facilitating grievances related to employer violations of the collective agreement.
- Advocating in matters that relate to workplace safety, labour law, and human resources.

Provincial Association



Key Role

Advocates for the professional interests and advancement of **all NPs within the province**.



Scope

Provincial/Territorial



Responsible for:

- Provincial-level advocacy.
- Contributing to health policy, standards and recommendations.
- Supporting professional development and education.
- Hosting and leading provincial NP councils.
- Partnerships with provincial associations, the Nurse Practitioner Association of Canada (NPAC) and other organizations.

National Association (NPAC)



Key Role

Advocates for professional interests and advancement of **all NPs across Canada**.



Scope

National



Responsible for:

- Federal-level advocacy.
- Contributing to health policy, standards and recommendations.
- Supporting research, leadership development, and education.
- Hosting and leading the pan-Canadian NP council.
- Partnerships with provincial associations and other organizations.
- Accreditation.

References

Alberta Association of Nurses. (n.d.). *Association vs. Union vs. Regulatory Body*. Retrieved from <https://albertanursing.ca/about-aan/association-union-regulatory/>
Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators. (n.d.). *The role of a regulatory college, an association, a union and the government* [Handout].

In summary, the college does not have a mandate to protect NPs but rather is there to protect the public, while the union only advocates on behalf of NPs **covered** under their agreement. The needs of NPs within a province are not the same as those across the country. Each province has unique **political** and social landscapes that require provincial-level advocacy to best address those **needs**. **Nationally**, pan-Canadian matters, engagement and participation are central to the work of **the NPAC**. Provincial NP associations and the NPAC are **both equally** vital in advancing the NP profession, supporting patients — and membership in both strengthens the NP voice.