



NURSING CAREER GUIDE

2021-2022



WHAT IS NURSING?

According to the American Nurses Association, nursing is both an art and a science. At its heart, lies a fundamental respect for human dignity and an intuition for a patient's needs. This is supported by the mind, in the form of rigorous core learning. Due to the vast range of specialisms and complex skills in the nursing profession, each nurse will have specific strengths, passions, and expertise. In accessing a patient, nurses do not just consider test results. Through the critical thinking exemplified in the nursing process, nurses use their judgement to integrate objective data with subjective experience of a patient's biological, physical, and behavioral needs. This ensures that every patient, from city hospital to community health center; state prison to summer camp, receives the best possible care regardless of who they are and where they may be.

All nurses, regardless of specialty, utilize the same nursing process; a scientific method designed to deliver the very best in-patient care, through five simple steps:

- Assessment – nurses assess patients on an in-depth physiological, economic, social and lifestyle basis.
- Diagnosis – through careful consideration of both physical symptoms and patient behavior, the nurse forms a diagnosis.
- Outcomes/Planning – the nurse uses their expertise to set realistic goals for the patient's recovery. These objects are then closely monitored.
- Implementation – by accurately implementing the care plan, nurses guarantee consistency of care for the patient whilst meticulously documenting their progress
- Evaluation – by closely analyzing the effectiveness of the care plan and studying patient response, the plan to achieve the very best patient outcomes.

IS A NURSING CAREER THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR ME?

Deciding to pursue a career in nursing can mean putting yourself on a career trajectory that will provide endless avenues for advancement in the future. Making the decision can be difficult. Thankfully, there are resources available to help you explore and decide.

- WV Community and Technical College System “Career Coach”:
<https://wvctcs.emsicc.com/?radius=®ion=State%20of%20West%20Virginia>
- Johnson and Johnson “Find Your Specialty” Tool:
<https://nursing.jnj.com/diagnostic#.WJjXYfJ8mFo>
- Nursing Careers and Specialties for RNs: <https://www.registerednursing.org/nursing-careers/>

CERTIFIED NURSE ASSISTANT (CNA)



Certified nursing assistants help patients with direct care needs under the supervision of RNs or LPNs. Certified nursing assistants work directly with patients helping them with physical and complex tasks associated with patient care like moving, grooming, bathing, and feeding patients, answering patient calls, documenting information, and cleaning patient rooms.

CERTIFIED NURSE ASSISTANT (CNA)

JOB DUTIES

- Turning or moving patients
- Gathering medical supplies
- Bathing patients
- Grooming patients by brushing hair, teeth, shaving them, etc.
- Feeding patients and documenting their food and liquid intake
- Checking vital signs like blood pressure and heart rate
- Answering patient calls
- Documenting information
- Cleaning rooms and bed linens
- Stocking supplies
- Assisting with some medical procedures
- Safety procedures
- Transporting patients
- Taking care of wounds

SALARY

According to the Bureau for Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages dataset, nursing assistants in West Virginia had a mean annual wage of \$28,200 in 2020.

JOB DEMAND

According to the EMSI dataset, West Virginia should see 6% growth in employment of nursing assistants between 2020 through 2030.

CERTIFIED NURSE ASSISTANT (CNA)

WORK SITES AND CONDITIONS

CNAs can be found in hospitals, long term care facilities, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and adult daycare centers. Some work sites will require lifting patients and turning them in a bed. Most CNAs are in close contact with patients experiencing illness, pain, discomfort, and death as well as patients in healing and recovery.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All CNA programs in West Virginia are approved by the Office of Healthcare Facility Licensure and Certification. Some programs require passage of a general education exam, Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) or other pre-requisite examinations. Program admission requirements vary based on the type of program offered. Many CNA programs allow high school students to enroll and many others are managed by healthcare facilities for employees to complete. CNA programs are often housed within institutions of higher learning and may provide additional certifications to students beyond the CNA certificate.

Most programs also conduct a drug/alcohol screening and criminal background check before admission to a program. Most programs require a student to submit transcripts from all post-secondary schools attended.

CERTIFIED NURSE ASSISTANT (CNA)

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Students in CNA programs are may eligible to receive aid to assist in paying for their education. Most programs in West Virginia accept Veteran's Benefits, Pell Grants, and are eligible to receive other financial aid provided by employers, and CNA programs.

Students may also be eligible for scholarships through their nursing program or a nearby healthcare provider. For more information about these programs, please contact your Nursing Program Director and visit www.wvcenterfornursing.org/other-scholarship-programs/

PROGRAM CURRICULUM AND CLASSES

Each CNA program has developed individual curriculum and classes that follow state requirements set by the Office of Health Facility Licensure and Certification. Most programs take approximately 6 months to complete. Generally, the following types of classes are taken by CNA students:

- Basic nursing skills
- Resident rights
- Infection control
- Personal care skills
- Clinical rotations to access competency

CERTIFIED NURSE ASSISTANT (CNA)

GRADUATION

After successful completion of an CNA program, a student is awarded a diploma to signify graduation from the nursing program. After graduation, students become eligible completion of an examination and registration with the Nurse Aide Registry.

REGISTRATION

After graduation, a CNA may register for the Nurse Aide Registry when working at a federally certified nursing home. To do this, a CNA must verify they are on the Nurse Aide Registry as a result of completing an approved nurse aide training and testing program or has successfully completed an approved nurse aide competency test.

Inclusion with the Nurse Aid Registry includes identification of individuals who have successfully completed and passed the nurse aide training and/or completed competency evaluation with a passing score. The registry also documents allegations of resident abuse, neglect or misappropriation of resident property by a nurse aid in a nursing facility including an accurate summary of findings. If a nurse aid disputes the findings, the information will also be entered into the registry.

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN)



Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) provide basic duties in settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, and long-term care facilities. They work under the supervision of RN's performing duties such as taking vital signs, collecting samples, administering medication, ensuring patient comfort, and reporting the status of their patients to their supervisors. Additionally, LPNs may also be responsible for supervising Certified Nursing Assistants and Nursing Assistants.

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN)

JOB DUTIES

- Take and record temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and respiration
- Collect blood and specimens for testing
- Perform catheterization and colostomy care
- Continue and discontinue intravenous fluids
- Administer medications according to patient care plans
- Screen patients and record medical information
- Assist physician and RNs in examinations and treatments
- Set up and clean up examination areas
- Give injections and immunizations
- Instruct clients in the use of medications and self-care procedures
- Observe, record, and report to appropriate persons the physical and mental condition of the patient and signs and symptoms that might be indicative of a change.
- Administer nursing care treatments for wounds, incisions, ostomy and tracheotomy sites
- Administer oxygen
- Inserting and/or replacing nasogastric tubes
- Inventory controlled medications, complete medication usage reports, and control records.
- Participate in the review and implementation of procedures designed to ensure comfort and safety of patients.
- Perform specialized nursing functions such as the preparation and care of patients receiving specialized treatment.
- Assist in the rehabilitation of patients according to the patient care plan.

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN)

SALARY

According to the Bureau for Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages dataset, LPNs in West Virginia had a mean annual wage of \$36,770 in 2019.

JOB DEMAND

According to the Bureau for Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages dataset, West Virginia should see 6.6% growth in employment of LPNs between 2019 through 2029. It also projects that there will be 520 annual job openings per year based on the average annual job openings due to growth and net replacement.

WORK SITES AND CONDITIONS

LPNs can be found in hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centers, nursing care facilities, physician offices, and in-home care. Some work sites will require lifting patients and turning them in a bed. Most LPNs are in close contact with patients experiencing illness, pain, discomfort, and death as well as patients in healing and recovery.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All LPN programs in West Virginia require that an applicant has a high school diploma, GED/TASC, or equivalent prior to admission. Some programs require passage of a general education exam, Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) or other pre-requisite examinations. Most LPN program require a formal practical nursing entrance exam prior to admission. The types of tests required by West Virginia programs include: TEAS, PSB PN, NLN, or ACT.

Most programs also conduct a drug/alcohol screening and criminal background check before admission to a program. Most programs require a student to submit transcripts from all post-secondary schools attended. Some programs require that a student complete and pass prerequisite classes prior to admission. A directory of all nursing programs located in West Virginia can be found at <https://wvcenterfornursing.org/wv-nursing-programs/>.

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN)

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Students in LPN programs are eligible to receive aid to assist in paying for their education. Most programs in West Virginia accept Veteran's Benefits, Pell Grants, and are eligible to receive other financial aid coordinated by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

LPN student may be eligible to receive a scholarship from the West Virginia Center for Nursing. The West Virginia Center for Nursing Scholarship grants scholarships to LPN students who commit to completing a one-year service obligation in West Virginia for each year they receive an award. To be eligible, students must complete half of their nursing program, be in good academic standing, be a resident of West Virginia, and meet the cumulative and nursing GPA requirements set by the West Virginia Center for Nursing Recruitment and Retention Committee. For more information about the program, [click here](#).

Students may also be eligible for scholarships through their nursing program or a nearby healthcare provider. For more information about these programs, please contact your Nursing Program Director and visit www.wvcenterfornursing.org/other-scholarship-programs/

PROGRAM CURRICULUM AND CLASSES

Each LPN program has developed individual curriculum and classes that follow state and national approval/accrediting bodies. Most programs take one year to complete and require full-time class loads. Generally, the following types of classes are taken by LPN students:

- Nutrition
- Fundamentals of Nursing
- Geriatric Nursing
- Pharmacology
- Mental Health Nursing
- Maternal/Pediatric Nursing
- Maternal/Pediatric Clinical Practice
- Medical-Surgical/Social Science
- Medical-Surgical/Clinical Practice

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN)

GRADUATION

After successful completion of an LPN program, a student is awarded a diploma and pin to signify graduation from the nursing program. After graduation, students become eligible for membership to national, state, and local practical nurse organizations and becomes eligible to take the licensing examination to earn the credentials, LPN.

LICENSURE

After graduation, a nursing graduate will be eligible to take the licensing examination, the NCLEX-PN in order to be able to obtain a license to practice as an LPN in West Virginia. The NCLEX-PN is a national examination that all LPNs in the United States take to obtain licensure through their respective boards of nursing.

In order to obtain licensure, nursing graduates must first obtain an application for examination from the Board of Licensed Professional Nurses (Board) and return it prior to sitting for the licensure examination. Graduates can expect to pay \$75 for this fee and may also obtain a temporary permit that allows them to practice as an LPN while waiting for the NCLEX-PN exam results for \$10. Temporary permits are valid for 90 days from the date of graduation.

Graduates must arrange to take the NCLEX-PN examination after filing the application for examination with the Board. The cost of the test is \$200. The exam consists of 85-205 questions and test takers have a maximum of 5 hours to complete it.

REGISTERED NURSE (RN)



Registered nurses (RNs) provide care, treatment, counseling, and health education to well, ill, injured, and infirmed patients and their families. They assist in health maintenance, prevention and management of illness, injury, and disability. RNs can obtain different levels of education and obtain different specialties, but all are registered and licensed through the same licensure examination process. The two nursing programs that lead to a career as an RN for pre-licensure students are Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) and Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).

REGISTERED NURSE (RN)

JOB DUTIES

- Maintain accurate and complete health care records and reports
- Administer medications to patients and monitor them for side effects and reactions.
- Prescribe assistive medical devices and related treatments
- Record patient vital signs and medical information.
- Order medical diagnostic and clinical tests
- Monitor, report, and record symptoms or changes in patient conditions
- Administer non-intravenous medications
- Assess, implement, plan, or evaluate patient nursing care plans by working with healthcare team members
- Modify patient health treatment plans as indicated by patient conditions and responses
- Inspect facilities and act to maintain hygiene and safety
- Provide instant nursing care in emergencies
- Supervise and train LPNs and nursing assistants
- Foster a supportive and compassionate environment to care for patients and their families
- Promoting good health and disease prevention measures

SALARY

According to the Bureau for Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages dataset, RNs in West Virginia had a mean annual wage of \$63,220 in 2019.

JOB DEMAND

According to the Bureau for Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages dataset, West Virginia should see 14.9% growth in employment of RNs between 2019 through 2029. It also projects that there will be 1,550 annual job openings per year based on the average annual job openings due to growth and net replacement.

REGISTERED NURSE (RN)

WORK SITES AND CONDITIONS

RNs can be found in hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centers, nursing care facilities, physician offices, and in-home care. Some work sites will require lifting patients and turning them in a bed. Most RNs are in close contact with patients experiencing illness, pain, discomfort, and death as well as patients in healing and recovery.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Students have two options of pre-licensure programs to enter a career in nursing: ASN and BSN programs. ASN programs typically take 2 years to complete. All ASN programs require an applicant has a high school diploma, GED/TASC, or equivalent prior to admission. In addition to this requirement, ASN programs may also require pre-requisite courses, a minimum GPA, and an admission test prior to acceptance.

BSN programs typically take 4 years to complete. All BSN programs require an applicant has a high school diploma, GED/TASC, or equivalent prior to admission. Additionally, some programs require that applicants are at least a sophomore or higher before applying to their program while others allow direct admissions into a BSN program. Additional requirements for BSN programs include pre-requisite courses, a minimum GPA, and an admission test prior to acceptance. The types of tests required by West Virginia RN and BSN programs include TEAS and HESI.

REGISTERED NURSE (RN)

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Students in BSN programs are eligible to receive aid to assist in paying for their education. Most programs in West Virginia accept Veteran's Benefits, Pell Grants, and are eligible to receive other financial aid coordinated by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. BSN student may be eligible to receive a scholarship from the West Virginia Center for Nursing.

The West Virginia Center for Nursing Scholarship grants scholarships to BSN students who commit to completing a two-year service obligation in West Virginia for each year they receive an award. To be eligible, students must complete half of their nursing program, be in good academic standing, be a resident of West Virginia, and meet the cumulative and nursing GPA requirements set by the West Virginia Center for Nursing Recruitment and Retention Committee. For more information about the program, [click here](#).

Students may also be eligible for scholarships through their nursing program or a nearby healthcare provider. For more information about these programs, please contact your Nursing Program Director.

REGISTERED NURSE (RN)

- Drug and Dosage Calculations
- Health Assessment and Diagnostics
- Introduction to Nursing Concepts
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Microbiology
- Psychology
- Nursing Concepts and Health and Illness
- Professional
- Nursing and health Systems Concepts
- Synthesis of Nursing

BSN nursing programs each develop individual curriculum and classes that follow state and national approval/accrediting bodies. Most programs take four years to complete and require full-time class loads. Generally, the following types of classes are taken by BSN pre-licensure nursing students:

- Foundations of Nursing Practice
- Health Assessment and Communication
- Evidence Based Practice and Research
- Maternal Infant Nursing and Women's Health Care
- Adult Health
- Child and Adolescent Health
- Ethics and Health Policy
- Pharmacology
- Mental Health
- Critical Care
- NCLEX Review

REGISTERED NURSE (RN)

GRADUATION

After successful completion of an RN program, a student is awarded a degree and pin to signify graduation from the nursing program. After graduation, students become eligible for membership to national, state, and local registered nursing organizations and becomes eligible to take the licensing examination to earn the credentials, RN.

LICENSURE

After graduation, a nursing graduate will be eligible to take the licensing examination, the NCLEX-RN in order to be able to obtain a license to practice as an RN in West Virginia. The NCLEX-RN is a national examination that all RNs in the United States take to obtain licensure through their respective boards of nursing.

In order to obtain licensure, nursing graduates must first obtain an application for examination from the Board of Examiners for Registered Nurses (Board) and return it prior to sitting for the licensure examination. Applicants for licensure will need to apply for licensure with the Board, register to take the NCLEX-RN through Pearson VUE, take the receipt of registration from Pearson VUE to receive eligibility from the Board, receive an authorization to test (ATT) from Pearson VUE, schedule an exam. The licensure by application fee is \$70 to be paid to the Board. There is an additional fee to tax the NCLEX-RN exam (usually around \$200). A candidate for licensure waiting to take and receive results from the NCLEX-RN may also pay to receive a temporary permit that allows them to practice for 90 days for an additional fee.

BRIDGE PROGRAMS

In addition to becoming a nurse through traditional pre-licensure programs, a wide array of programs offers a pathway to becoming a registered nurse through both ASN and BSN programs. The types of bridge programs offered in West Virginia include:

- **LPN to ASN** – advance the education of LPNs who currently hold LPN credentials and are seeking to obtain an ASN degree.
- **LPN to BSN** – advance the education of LPNs who currently hold LPN credentials and are seeking to obtain a BSN degree.
- **ASN to BSN** – advance the education of RNs who currently hold ASN degrees and are seeking to obtain a BSN degree.
- **BA/BS to BSN** – advance the education of individuals who hold degrees outside of nursing and are seeking to obtain a BSN degree.
- **Paramedic to BSN** – advance the education of paramedics who are seeking to obtain a BSN degree.

Bridge programs often offer accelerated tracks that allow students to graduate faster than traditional RN programs because they capitalize on the previous experience of their students. Specific programs vary in length. Many of the programs also offer online components that allow students to work while completing the programs. Many nursing students obtain their LPN or ASN and go directly into a bridge program to further their nursing careers.