

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR NURSE AIDES

1. I would like to become a registered nurse aide. What do I need to do?

You will need to complete a minimum 75-hour state approved nurse aide training program. There are over two hundred programs located throughout the state. Nurse Aide training programs are offered in high schools, adult education, nursing homes, community colleges, some American Red Cross agencies and a few other agencies. A good source for existing programs is a local newspaper advertisement or employment advertisements. The State of Michigan does not recognize on-line programs.

TRAINING:

The training programs vary in length but the minimum number of training hours is 75. The 75-hour training includes 51 keys tasks that a nurse aide needs to be trained in. Upon successful completion of the training program, you are issued a certificate showing you have completed that training program.

TESTING:

Once you have successfully completed the training program, you must take and pass a clinical and written test. You will have to apply to take the test by completing a State of Michigan Competency Evaluation Registration Form and submitting it with a copy of your certificate of completion from the training program, to our examination contractor, Prometric. Your registration form and testing must be submitted within one year of completing the training program.

If you are eligible to test, you will be sent an Authorization to Test (ATT). When you receive your ATT, you will also receive a list of the testing sites in Michigan. You will call the testing center, where you want to test, to schedule an appointment to test. The ATT is valid for one year. During that year, you must first pass the clinical test and then the written test. You will have three chances to take and pass the clinical test. If you are not successful, you will have to take a training program again. Additional information is available at the Prometric website at www.prometric.com/nurseaide/mi.

Upon passing the clinical and the written test, a nurse aide certification will be issued to you. It will be valid for two years. You will be required to renew your certification every two years. To be eligible for renewal, you will be required to document that you have worked at least 8 hours in the past 2 years, as a nurse aide, for pay, in an approved setting, under the supervision of a registered nurse. The renewal application is sent to you about sixty days before your certification expires.

- 1a. Are there any exceptions to the training requirement?

A. If you hold a Nurse Aide registration/certification in another US state:

You need to obtain a Request for Exemption from Nurse Aide Training form (call 517-241-0554 or go on-line to www.michigan.gov/healthlicense). Complete the exemption form and return it to this office with a copy of your out-of-state document. You will need to send the Verification of Nurse Aide Registration form to the state(s) in which you hold or held certification and have them send verification of your certification/registry. We need verification that your certification is still valid and no disciplinary action has been taken.

1a continued –

A cont. Once this information is received and it meets the requirements, we will send you the necessary paperwork to apply with Prometric to take the clinical and written examination to be put on the Michigan Registry.

If you are registered in more than one state, we need verification from all the states you have held registration in. This is to ensure there have not been any disciplinary actions or suspensions and to ensure that your current license is in good standing.

NOTE: If your registry document has expired or if there is no expiration date, we must receive a signed original letter, on facility letterhead, from the employer in your previous state of registration confirming that you have worked under the supervision of a registered nurse and been paid as a nurse aide in a long-term care facility for at least 8 hours in the last 24 months. **A copy of the employer letter is NOT acceptable.**

B. If you are currently enrolled in an approved RN/LPN nursing program and have completed a fundamentals of nursing course within the last year with a C or higher grade:

You need to obtain a Request for Exemption from Nurse Aide Training form (call 517-241-0554 or go on-line at www.michigan.gov/healthlicense). Complete the form and return it to this office. You will need to contact the school you are currently attending and have them submit **official transcripts** directly to this office to the attention of Nurse Aide Certification. You may submit the transcripts with your request; however, they must be received in an envelope sealed by the school. If approved, you will be exempt from training, but you will have to take both the written and clinical nurse aide exams to become registered.

C. If your registry document is past the 60-day grace period and/or it expired within the last 24 months from today's date:

You will need to complete a request for exemption from nurse aide training form, which can be obtained by calling 517-241-0554 or go on-line at www.michigan.gov/healthlicense. You will need to provide verification, by an employer letter, confirming that you have worked and been paid as a nurse aide in a long-term care facility for at least 8 hours in the last 24 months. Once this request for exemption and the employment verification are received, we will review your request. We will send you the necessary paperwork to apply to take both the clinical and written examinations, if you qualify. **Faxes or copies of employer letters are not acceptable.**

1b. The facility where I use to work is now closed or no longer exists; how do I provide verification that I worked there?

We will allow you to provide verification by using your pay stub or your W-2 form, only if you cannot verify your employment through a facility. The facility name and date of work week being paid for **should** appear on the pay stub.

2. Can I obtain an exemption from training application on-line?

The application form is available on-line at www.michigan.gov/healthlicense. You can also contact our automated service at 517-241-0554 and an application will be sent in 3-5 business days.

3. Is there a fee to apply for exemption?

There is no fee to apply for exemption from training.

4. Can I fax my paper for exemption to you?

We can receive the **application** for exemption form back via fax. However, you cannot fax the transcripts, verification of certification/registration or letter verifying your employment. This has to be a signed original letter on facility letterhead. Copies or faxes are not acceptable.

5. How can I know what is missing from my exemption application or what the status of my application is?

It takes 3-5 weeks to process an application for exemption. If your application is complete, you will receive the necessary paperwork to apply with Prometric to take the examinations. If more information is needed, we will correspond with you by mail.

6. Once I am approved for exemption, how long will it take to receive an authorization to test?

That depends on how soon you submit the required forms to Prometric. Once Prometric receives your request to test, it should only take 5-7 business days to process.

7. How long is the exemption valid for?

Once you are granted an exemption, you have 6 months in which to take and pass the clinical and written examinations. **No** extensions will be granted for exemptions from training.

8. Can a nurse aide work while they are in the process of applying for a training exemption?

Individuals **cannot** work as a nurse aide in a nursing home or long-term care facility in Michigan **until** they have received an approval from training exemption from the State of Michigan. The training exemption has a six-month expiration and is only issued one time. Once the nurse aide has received the approved training exemption, he/she may work as a nurse aide in a nursing home or long-term care facility for up to 120 days (four-months), from their date of hire, while they complete the competency examinations and receive their certificate.

9. What do I need to do if I do not pass the examination in the 6-month period?

If you do not pass the examinations or fail to test within the 6-month period, you will be required to complete a minimum 75-hour nurse aide training program at a state approved facility. Once the program has been completed, you can apply directly with the Prometric to take the examination.

10. How much does it cost to take the nurse aide examination?

The current cost to take the nurse aide examination is \$176.50 for first time testers for both exams. If you are retesting for the clinical skills portion, it is \$119.00. If you are retesting for the knowledge portion, it is \$45.50.

11. Can I be reimbursed for the cost of the testing?

Long term care facilities that receive Federal funding are required to reimburse individuals for the cost of testing and training for up to one year from the date of completion of an approved training program. Talk to your employer regarding reimbursement.

12. How many times can I take the test?

You will have three opportunities to pass the clinical and written tests. You must pass the clinical exam before you are eligible for the written exam. If you are unable to pass in three attempts, you will have to retrain and retest.

13. Where are the testing sites located?

We have regional test sites located throughout Michigan. Once you submit your information to Prometric to test, and it is approved, they will send a listing to you with your authorization to test.

14. I was convicted of a misdemeanor or a felony a few years ago. Can I still become a Nurse Aide?

Michigan requires a criminal background check on all Nurse Aides that are hired after May 10, 2002. If an individual has been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony within the last 15 years, Michigan law prohibits that individual from being hired as a nurse aide (Act 303 of the Public Acts of 2002).

15. I'm registered in another state as a CNA. Can I work while I am waiting to receive my exemption paperwork and take the test?

Once you receive exemption approval from the State, you can work up to 4 months from your date of hire. Your certificate/registration from the other state must be in good standing. It is up to the individual facility if they want to allow you to work. If you do, you must get your testing done quickly because you can only work four months from your date of hire without a Michigan nurse aide certificate.

16. I have been a CNA for years, why do I have to retest?

The State of Michigan follows the Federal Rules and Regulations that govern the nurse aide profession. You have to renew your registry document every two years and document at least 8 hours of work experience within the past 24 months. Failure to renew requires that you demonstrate again that you have the basic skills needed by a nurse aide.

- 17a. I have been an RN for years, but I would like to be a Nurse Aide now. How can I apply?

- b. My LPN license was revoked. Can I become a Nurse Aide?

Federal regulations prohibit licensed health professionals from being registered as nurse aides. Even if your license was revoked, you are still considered a licensed health professional.

Additionally, the tasks a nurse aide can complete are at a significantly lower level than those of other health professionals. It would be difficult for health professionals trained in a higher-level skill to limit their activities to those of a nurse aide. Practicing higher-level tasks would be a violation of the nurse aide regulations.

18. I've completed a nursing program in another country but I want to practice as a CNA. What do I need to do?

Because the review process can take anywhere from 4-6 weeks, we suggest that an individual who has completed a program outside of the United States complete a minimum 75-hour training program at a state approved facility.

If you choose not to do this, you will need to submit detailed information regarding the program you completed. This information will be compared to see if it is substantially equivalent to what is required for a Nurse Aide in Michigan. If it is equivalent you would be sent an exemption form to complete and return and then you will be sent the proper paperwork to apply with Prometric to take the clinical and written examination. You have six months to take and pass the Michigan test.

19. I am a trained medical assistant or patient care advocate. Can I apply for exemption?

Typically you will not receive the personal care education needed for a nurse aide. You will need to submit detailed information regarding the program you completed (a course syllabus; breakdown of the course) and a copy of your certificate of completion. This information will be compared to see if it is substantially equivalent to what is required for a Nurse Aide in Michigan. If it is equivalent you would be sent an exemption form to complete and return and then you will be sent the proper paperwork to apply with Prometric to take the clinical and written examination. You have six months to take and pass the Michigan test.

20. I never received my renewal. How do I get recertified?

It is the responsibility of the Nurse Aide to ensure that Prometric has a current address on file.

If it has been less than 60 days since your registration expired, you will need to contact Prometric via their website (www.prometric.com/nurseaide/mi) or phone (1-800-752-4724) to obtain a renewal form.

If your registration expired no more than 2 years ago (24 months) from today's date and you have worked as a Nurse Aide at least 8 hours and been paid, you will need to call 517-241-0554 and leave your name and address to receive a Request for Exemption from Nurse Aide Training form or via our website, www.michigan.gov/healthlicense.

Complete the form and return it to the address shown with the requested supporting document(s). Once all the information is received and it is correct, the Bureau of Health Professions will send you the necessary paperwork to apply with Prometric to take the clinical and knowledge examinations. Once both exams are passed, you will receive a current Michigan Nurse Aide registry document.

If your registration expired more than two years ago, you will have to retrain and retest.

21. Nurse Aides are supposed to earn 12 credits of continuing education (in-service hours) each year. What is acceptable?

There are no set guidelines of what is acceptable for the 12 credits. However, the in-service training must be sufficient to ensure the continued competence of the nurse aides' performance. Continuing education should address areas of weakness as determined by the performance review and address the special needs of residents as determined by the facility staff. For Nurse Aides providing services to an individual with cognitive impairments, it would be wise to address the care of the cognitively impaired.

The facility must ensure that nurse aides are able to demonstrate competency in skills and techniques necessary to care for residents' needs, as identified through resident assessments and described in the plan of care.

22. Can I get my 8-hours work experience required to renew my certification during the 60-day grace period?

Yes, effective April 21, 2004, the State will allow nurse aides who did not complete the required 8-hours of work experience during their certification period, to complete the 8-hours of work during their 60-day grace period. The nurse aide must meet all the requirements for renewal. The completed renewal form along with the renewal fee and letter of employment must be received at Prometric **before** the end of the grace period.

23. Can I renew my certificate if I have worked as a home health aide?

Experience as a home health aide would be acceptable if the work was completed under the supervision of a registered nurse.

24. Will my experience in a hospital count as my eight hours in a 24-month period?

This would be considered acceptable only if you are working under the supervision of a registered nurse. Statements of physicians who supervised your work with the patients can be submitted also.

25. I work for individual patients in their homes. Does that count as acceptable experience?

This would be considered acceptable only if you are working under the supervision of a registered nurse. Statements of physicians who supervised your work with the patients can be submitted also.

26. I have taken care of my elderly relatives for several years. Why doesn't this count as acceptable experience?

Although it is admirable that you take care of your family or friends, the work of a nurse aide must be done under the supervision of a registered nurse. Typically home care is done informally without the supervision of any health professional. The regulations for acceptable experience are contained in the Federal regulations.

27. Is my experience in an assisted living facility acceptable?

Only if you were working under the supervision of a registered nurse.

28. What happens if I am accused of hitting a patient, taking a patient's money or personal goods? Neglecting patients?

If the abuse is reported to the Department, an investigation will begin. Investigators will talk with the facility staff, the patient and the accused. If the evidence supports the charge, a formal complaint will be filed against the nurse aide. The nurse aide will have a chance to respond to the complaint in a formal hearing. A decision will be made regarding the case. If the decision is against the nurse aide, a flag is placed on the registration record. If the nurse aide registration is flagged, the individual will not be able to work as a nurse aide in any facility.

29. How can I get the flag removed from my record?

The flag on a CNA registration is permanent unless a court overturns the conviction. Court documents (evidence) attesting to your innocence can be submitted for consideration by the Department. Contact the Health Regulatory Division at 517-373-9196 for additional information.

30. How do I verify the status of an individual's certificate?

You can verify an individual's certificate by looking it up on Prometric's website at www.prometric.com/nurseaide/mi, linking to the Registry through the nurse aide section in our website www.michigan.gov/healthlicense or by calling Prometric at 1-800-752-4724.