

November 3, 2022

Dear Skilled Nursing Facility Administrator,

This letter is to inform all Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) and Temporary Nurse Aides (TNAs) of updates as it relates to the TNA Pathway in Pennsylvania.

**TNAs hired on or before June 6, 2022 have until the end of the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE), or April 5, 2023, whichever date comes first, to successfully pass the nurse aide exams and have their name enrolled on the Nurse Aide Registry. The PHE is currently set to expire on January 11, 2023.**

During this time, TNAs may continue performing the duties of a nurse aide per Act 138 of 2020 while completing their testing.

This extension for nurse aide exam testing was granted to Pennsylvania by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and applies to all nursing care facilities in Pennsylvania. Individual facilities do not need to request a separate waiver from CMS for the TNAs that they employ.

Pennsylvania was granted the waiver to address testing backlogs. CMS will be closely monitoring how Pennsylvania implements the waiver and TNAs' progress toward completing exams. CMS is not likely to offer future waivers. At this time, SNFs and TNAs should assume the PHE will end on January 11, 2023, and make every attempt to complete tests by the dates in this letter. **If the PHE ends on January 11, 2023, the TNA waiver will also end on January 11, 2023.**

**Therefore, it is imperative that facilities and TNAs are aware of the following deadlines and make every effort to complete the required training and testing requirements as soon as possible.**

- **November 10, 2022** – All attestation forms must be submitted and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Forms will not be available or accepted after November 10. Forms that are incomplete or contain incorrect information will not be processed.
- **December 31, 2022** – Deadline for TNAs to take and pass the online Written Exam.
- **End of the Public Health Emergency (currently January 11, 2023), or April 5, 2023, whichever is earlier** – Deadline for TNAs to pass the Skills Exam and be enrolled on the State Nurse Registry.

SNFs were notified by our agencies that they could not hire new TNAs after June 6, 2022. Nurse aides hired after June 6 must complete a NATCEP training program approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and pass the required nurse aide exams to be enrolled on the Nurse Aide Registry.

Below is additional guidance about the Act 138 attestation process and nurse aide exams. Please share this information with your staff and TNAs as soon as possible.

#### **Act 138 Attestation Process**

**All attestation forms must be completed, submitted, and approved by PDE by Thursday, November 10, 2022.**

- A TNA who does not have a complete and correct attestation form by November 10, 2022 will be required to complete a PDE-approved NATCEP training program and pass the exams to continue as a nurse aide.
- [Instructions for completing and submitting the attestation form](#) are on the [PDE website](#).
- Each TNA must [create a CNA365 account](#) and submit their own complete and correct attestation form. Facilities should help TNAs complete the form, secure the required signatures from facility staff, and make sure the form is correctly uploaded. However, SNF staff cannot submit the form on the TNA's behalf.
- Please remember a TNA cannot take any of the nurse aide exams until the attestation form is submitted through CNA365 and accepted by PDE. SNFs should help a TNA correctly submit the completed attestation form through CNA365 so the form can be processed, and the TNA can take their exams.
- CMS will be monitoring the number of attestation forms submitted and accepted for testing. As such, the attestation form will be removed from the PDE website on November 10, 2022.

### **Nurse Aide Exams**

TNAs must pass both the written and skills parts of the Nurse Aide Exam to be enrolled on the Nurse Aide Registry. The tests can be taken in any order. Following state policy, TNAs have three attempts to pass the online written exam and three attempts to pass the skills test.

- **TNAs must successfully pass the online written exam by Saturday, December 31, 2022.**

To demonstrate progress to CMS, all TNAs must pass the written exam as soon as possible and no later than December 31, 2022.

The written exam is an online test taken on a desktop computer or laptop. The test is readily available and can be scheduled within 24 hours. A TNA can take the written exam before or after the skills test.

Facilities are strongly encouraged to help TNAs prepare for the written exam. This includes guiding the TNA through the online exam registration process in CNA365; reviewing the [Pennsylvania Nurse Aide Candidate Handbook](#) and test instructions with the TNA and having them practice taking the exam using the practice exam available on Credentia's website; providing access to a computer with reliable Internet and a quiet, private space to take the exam; and ensuring the TNA has the technical/digital skills to take an online test. TNAs must also have access to a smartphone to take the online written exam, as the online written exam requires a security scan of the room where the TNA is taking the test. Please see the candidate handbook for more details.

- **TNAs must pass the Skills Exam by the end of the Public Health Emergency (currently January 11, 2023), or April 5, 2023, whichever date comes first, to be enrolled on the Nurse Aide Registry and continue working as a nurse aide after the deadlines.**

A TNA who has not passed the Skills Exam by the end of the Public Health Emergency will not be able to continue working as a nurse aide until they complete a PDE-approved NATCEP training program, pass the Written and Skills exams, and are enrolled on the Nurse Aide Registry.

The Skills Exam is an in-person assessment with an RN exam proctor and may be taken before or after the online written exam. **The TNA must review the [Pennsylvania Nurse Aide Candidate Handbook](#) for requirements for the Skills test prior to sitting for the exam. The TNA also should prepare to be at the test site for the entire day.**

We continue to work with the test vendor Credentia to make more testing appointments available statewide. TNAs should check CNA365 daily for Skills Exam openings and sign up when an appointment is available. Facilities should document any TNAs' issues with finding or making a skills exam appointment and efforts to make an appointment.

Employers can support TNAs with taking the Skills Exam by reviewing the [Pennsylvania Nurse Aide Candidate Handbook](#) available on the Credentia website and helping TNAs practice the complete set of essential skills listed in the handbook; and making it possible for them to attend testing appointments, including providing paid time off, gas cards or reimbursement.

**\*\*TNAs may take the Skills Test three times. Not showing for a scheduled exam counts as one of the three attempts to test.** Please do everything possible to make sure TNAs can attend these tests.

Sincerely,



**Meg Snead**  
**Acting Secretary**  
**Department of Human Services**



**Denise Johnson, M.D.**  
**Acting Secretary and Physician General**  
**Pennsylvania Department of Health**



**Eric Hagarty**  
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