

REGISTERED NURSES

OCCUPATION DESCRIPTION

Assess patient health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical records. RNs can specialize in one or more patient care specialties --for example, pediatric oncology or cardiac emergency--depending on personal interest and employer needs. RNs perform duties that include treating patients, educating patients and the public about various medical conditions, and providing advice and emotional support to patients' family members. RNs record patients' medical histories and symptoms, help to perform diagnostic tests and analyze results, operate medical machinery, administer treatment and medications, and help with patient follow-up and rehabilitation. RNs must observe rigid, standardized guidelines to guard against disease and other dangers, such as those posed by radiation, accidental needle sticks, chemicals used to sterilize instruments, and anesthetics. They are vulnerable to back injury when moving patients, shocks from electrical equipment, and hazards posed by compressed gases. RNs should have a caring, sympathetic nature. They should be emotionally stable because working with the sick and injured can be stressful. They also should have keen observational, decision-making, and communication skills. As part of a health care team, they must be able to follow orders and work under close supervision.

METHOD OF ENTRY

Generally requires an associate degree. Completion of the degree program usually requires at least 2 years. Good physical and mental health. Verification of graduation from an accredited professional school of nursing. Examination- National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN).

Foreign-educated nurses wishing to work in the United States must obtain a work visa. Applicants are required to undergo a review of their education and licensing credentials and pass a nursing certification and English proficiency exam, both conducted by the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools. (The commission is an immigration-neutral, nonprofit organization that is recognized internationally as an authority on credentials evaluation in the health care field.) Applicants from Australia, Canada (except Quebec), Ireland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom are exempt from the language proficiency exam. Also, most States have their own requirements.

TRAINING

Texas requires RNs to pass a licensing examination, known as the NCLEX-RN, after completing a State-approved nursing program. A high school diploma or its equivalent is required. Most nursing programs last about 2 years and include both classroom study and supervised clinical practice (patient care).

RESTRICTIONS ON LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION

*Conviction of a felony, or any crime involving moral turpitude; Fraudulent procurement of license; Intemperate use of alcohol or drugs; Unprofessional conduct; Action against LVN or RN license in another state/jurisdiction; Mental or physical illness or disability which interferes with the ability to practice professional nursing. Texas Board of Nursing urges all NCLEX applicants with outstanding eligibility issues that could prevent them from taking the NCLEX examination upon completion of a nursing program to complete a Declaratory Order application. The student is urged to address this early rather than wait until near application for NCLEX. If you are required to answer **"YES"** to any of the following questions, you must request a Declaratory Order Petition.*

1. *Have you ever been denied licensure by any licensing/certifying agency in any state, country or province?*
2. *Have you ever had disciplinary action taken against you by any licensing/certifying agency in any state, country or province?*
3. *Have you ever been convicted of a crime or received a deferred order, with or without an adjudication of guilt, for felony or misdemeanor offense other than a minor traffic violation?*
4. *Have you been diagnosed, treated or hospitalized in the past five (5) years for schizophrenia or other psychotic disorders, bipolar disorder, paranoid personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, or borderline personality disorder. (You may answer "NO" if you have completed and/or in compliance with TPAPN for mental illness.)*
5. *Have you been addicted or treated for the use of alcohol or any drug within the past five (5) years? (You may answer "NO" if you have completed and/or in compliance with TPAPN for substance abuse.)*
6. *Have you been issued any order concerning your eligibility for examination or licensure by the Board of have you ever received a proposal of ineligibility from the Board?*

EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

Average Hourly Wage 2007: \$22.38; Average Openings per year: 700