

# Exploring a Career in Nursing



## Nursing Careers

| Title                           | Job Duties                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) | Provide basic care for patients (turning, moving, grooming, feeding).<br>Supervised by nurses and doctors.                                         |
| Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)  | Provide medical care for patients (taking vital signs, administering medication).<br>Supervised by nurses and doctors.                             |
| Registered Nurse (RN)           | Provide wide range of care (take vital signs, medical information, administer medicine, first aid, and more).<br>Decision-making responsibilities. |
| Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) | Provide specialized care.<br>Collaborate with other health care professionals.<br>Evaluate quality and effectiveness of nursing practice.          |
| Nurse Practitioner (NP)         | Develop treatment plans.<br>Analyze and interpret patient histories and symptoms to develop diagnoses, and more.                                   |

### Scope of Practice

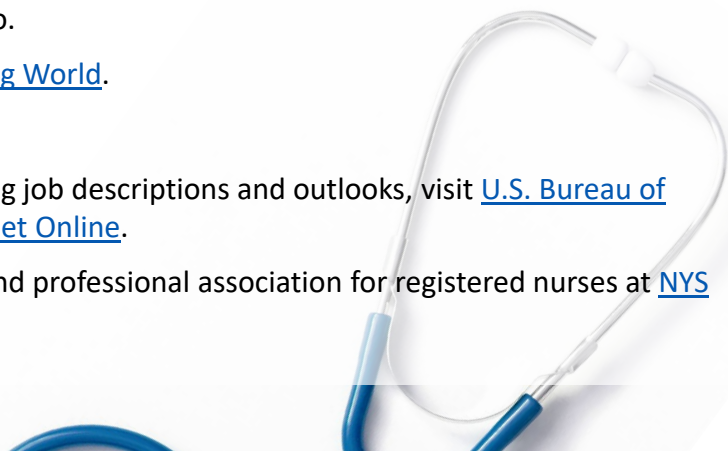
One of the biggest differences among each of the “levels” of nursing careers is the scope of practice. This describes the services and tasks that a health professional is permitted to provide, in keeping with the terms of their professional license. It is the who, what, where, when, and why of what nursing professionals can and cannot do.

Learn more about scope of practice at [Nursing World](https://www.nursingworld.org).

### General Career Resources

To learn more about nursing careers, including job descriptions and outlooks, visit [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook](https://www.bls.gov/occupational-outlook/) or [O\\*Net Online](https://www.o*net.org/).

Learn about New York State’s largest union and professional association for registered nurses at [NYS Nursing Association](https://www.nysna.org/).



| Title | Education and Certification Requirements <sup>1</sup>               | Average Tuition Cost <sup>2</sup> | Annual Salary Ranges <sup>3</sup> |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| CNA   | 2-3 months<br>Certification exam                                    | \$1,150-\$3,000                   | \$32,020-\$52,210                 |
| LPN   | 12-18-month nursing education program<br>License exam (NCLEX-PN)    | \$7,500-\$39,250                  | \$46,240-\$71,610                 |
| RN    | 2-4-year nursing education program<br>License exam (NCLEX-RN)       | \$12,600-\$51,000                 | \$64,840-\$132,950                |
| CNS   | 6-8 years, includes RN license<br>Clinical nurse specialist program | \$36,285-\$222,500                | \$64,840-\$132,950                |
| NP    | 6-8 years, includes RN license<br>Nurse practitioner program        | \$56,720-\$300,720                | \$87,340-\$165,240                |

<sup>1</sup> More information on education requirements for licensed nursing professions can be found at the [NYS Education Office of the Professions](#).

<sup>2</sup> Average tuition costs as of 2024.

<sup>3</sup> All salary ranges from [O\\*Net Online](#).

## Nursing Program Entrance Exams

Before entering a nursing program, potential students are typically required to take entrance exams. The specific entrance exam you take will depend on the program and will be specified in the admission or application requirements. These are some of the most common:

- TEAS (Test of Essential Academic Skills)
- HESI A2 (Health Education Systems, Inc. Admission Assessment)
- NET (Nursing Education Test)
- NLN PAX (National League for Nursing Pre-Admission Exam)

Learn more about nursing program entrance exams at [All Nursing Schools](#).

## Education Resources

To learn more about becoming a CNA, visit [Prometric](#), the NYSDOH partner in administering CNA examinations.

Are you looking to start your career as an LPN? Visit [Practical Nursing](#).

Already have a degree? Learn more about [LPN to RN/BSN programs](#) and [RN to BSN programs](#).

To learn more about the [education and license requirements](#) for the nursing professions, and to find the [list of accredited programs for LPNs](#) and the [list of accredited programs for RNs](#), visit the [NYS Education Department Office of the Professions](#).

To learn more about relevant NYS titles and job openings, review the following resources.

- The [NYS & CSEA Partnership](#) offers educational advisement services and tuition benefits.
- The [Career Mobility Office \(CMO\)](#) offers career counseling and tools, including resume and job interview preparation.
- [Glossary of Titles - Inquiry Tool \(GOT-IT\)](#) is a great tool to learn more about state titles. This is **not** where you find job openings.
- The Department of Civil Service [Nursing Careers in State Government](#) has information on agencies and facilities that employ nurses, entry level nursing positions, professional development, and more.
- The Office of Mental Health [Nursing Careers](#) page contains information on open positions in that agency as well as the Nurse Development Program.
- When you're ready to look for job openings and apply, go to [State Jobs NY](#).

## Paying for School

If you need help paying for school, you can watch a recording or attend one of the Partnership's informational webinars:

- [Financing Your Education](#)
- [Using the Tuition Benefits Program](#)

Other sources of financial aid:

- **NYS** - [Higher Education Services Corporation \(HESC\)](#)
- **Federal** - [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#)



Interested in learning more about how to become a nurse or looking to advance your nursing career?

**Give a Partnership Advisor a call today!**

Call (800) 253-4332 (press 1) or email  
[advisors@nyscseapartnership.org](mailto:advisors@nyscseapartnership.org)

