



Subject: Temporary Nurse Aide Testing Waiver

Dear Nursing Home Operator,

In April of 2020, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) posted blanket waivers which allowed facilities to use nurse aides who are not yet listed on the Ohio Nurse Aide Registry beyond four months if the facility found the nurse aide minimally competent to care for their residents. This allowed the use of temporary nurse aides in Ohio's skilled nursing facilities during significant staffing shortages created by COVID-19.

Under current NATCEP requirements, a nurse aide would need to attend a training course for a minimum of 75 hours of education: a minimum of 59 classroom hours and 16 clinical experience hours before taking the state test, becoming certified an STNA, and being placed on the Ohio Nurse Aide Registry. Under normal circumstances, individuals can work in a facility only for four months while completing the 75 hours of education and sitting for the tests. In the Ohio Revised Code and Code of Federal Regulations, Nurse aides have three attempts to pass the written and skills tests, respectively.

Recent legislation says that an individual who has worked for a minimum of 75 hours in a long-term care facility including on-site observation and worked as a nurse aide under a COVID-19 pandemic waiver issued by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services during the COVID-19 public health emergency declared of the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services may sit for the Ohio STNA exam to become a State Tested Nursing Assistant. If gaps in on-site training are identified, the individual also must complete supplemental training.

For nurse aides who have worked in a skilled nursing facility and received training equaling the training provided in 42 CFR §483.152 (b) during the Public Health Emergency:

- The Ohio Department of Health will consider this an equivalent to the standard 75-hour NATCEP course and use the person's clinical experience to fulfill the NATCEP educational and clinical requirements. For nurse aides to apply to take the state test, their employer must provide a letterhead statement on how the facility provided the same educational requirements as a NATCEP. This letter should be directed to the state testing company.
- Nurse aides who meet this waiver will have three attempts at passing the written test and the skills tests, respectively.
- If after three attempts, the nurse aide is unsuccessful in passing the written or skills portion of the test, they will be subject to NATCEP training requirements at Ohio Administrative Code 3701-18 and required to attend a formal NATCEP prior to subsequent testing.
- Nurse aides who worked in a skilled nursing facility under the CMS blanket waiver have four months to complete this pathway, sit for and pass the state test once the CMS blanket waiver has ended.

If you have any questions, please contact the NATCEP Unit at (614)752-8285.