I'm not just a nurse.

I'm serving those who have unselfishly served our country.

Arlette, VA RN

Become a VA nurse.

Veterans Health Administration

Why **VA**?

The **best care** starts with the **best opportunities.**

More than a century ago, President Lincoln made a promise to America's servicemen and women, pledging the care and concern of a grateful Nation for the sacrifices they made to preserve freedom. Since 1930, the mission of the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) has been to keep that promise.

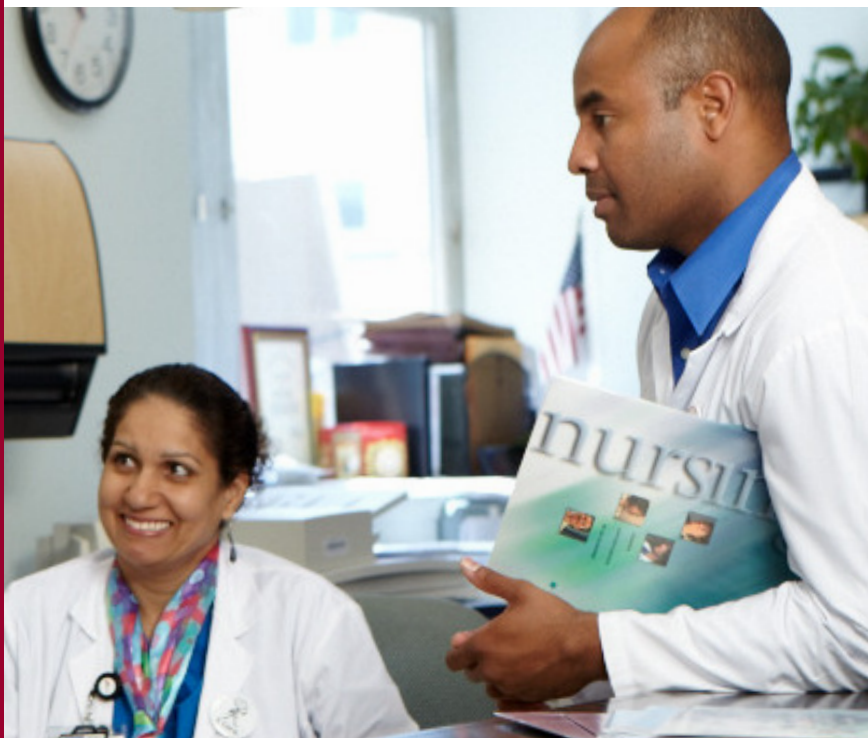
Today, VA has more than 1,400 medical centers and outpatient clinics across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories, and is the largest, most technologically advanced health care system in the U.S. Our employees work at 153 medical centers, 909 ambulatory and community-based outpatient clinics, 135 nursing homes, and many other facilities, such as domiciliaries and readjustment counseling centers. Whether you're newly minted or an experienced nurse looking for a change, we invite you to explore the many opportunities and benefits VA affords, including a higher level of nursing practice that is patient-centered.

VA and the practice of **nursing.**

When you work for VA, you expand your options as a nurse. Our nurses are part of the interdisciplinary care team that includes physicians, therapists, and other health care specialists, who decide the best course of care in both inpatient and outpatient settings. From staff and clinical careers to management, education and research positions, VA offers our nurses a wider range of employment settings and advancement opportunities, as well as the chance to work with the largest employer of nurses in the U.S.

In return for your commitment to quality nursing care for our Nation's Veterans, VA offers competitive salaries, first-rate employment benefits, a wide range of practice settings, and ample paid leave.

Simply put, a nursing career within the VA health care system will allow you to make the most of your training and experience.



More opportunities **to excel.**

As the Nation's largest employer of nurses, VA offers the best range of practice settings and opportunities. Whether you choose a position in a VA hospital, clinic, nursing home, or other facility, you will be a vital member of our interdisciplinary patient care team framework. And, you will have the ability to change nursing roles and pursue advancement opportunities throughout your career, which is simply unmatched in the private sector.

NURSES AS PROVIDERS

From the bedside to case management, our nurses are responsible for ensuring that our patients receive the best treatment possible. The work is challenging, as Veterans often require complex care. Today's Veterans include a whole new population of patients who are facing polytraumatic injuries that will require care for the rest of their lives.

NURSES AS LEADERS

At the forefront of the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) movement, VA employs CNLs who serve as the point person on patient care teams. VA supports nurses pursuing advanced degrees in this specialty by offering scholarship opportunities. VA nurses can also further their careers as nurse executives, nurse educators, or in other leadership roles through a variety of nursing leadership programs, including the Nurse Manager Core Curriculum, Nurse Executive Rotation, and the Nurse Executive Leadership Program.

NURSES AS INNOVATORS

VA nurses are encouraged to pursue their ideas for improving patient care and patient safety. A VA nurse suggested VA's most rapidly adopted technology, the Bar Code Medication Administration (BCMA) system. Additionally, VA nurses have received awards and recognition from the VA Office of Nursing Services, the Joint Commission and National Quality Forum, the American Nurses Association, and the American Nurses Credentialing Center for their innovations in chronic pain management, spinal cord injuries, wheelchair safety, and reducing falls.

NURSES AS RESEARCHERS

As one of the largest research organizations in the U.S., VA offers funded research opportunities to nurses. This research aims to improve patient safety, evaluate care delivery models and nursing systems of care, and determine how best to use these delivery models to implement evidence-based practices.

Hiring the **best nurses.** Providing better **career options.**

Nurses are essential to VA s ongoing ability to provide the best care to our Nation s Veterans. VA nurses have the opportunity to work in the following areas:

- **Informatics**
- **Administration**
- **Research**
- **Education**
- **Teaching**
- **Health systems management**

- **Direct patient care**
  - **Acute care med/surg**
  - **Ambulatory care**
  - **Critical care**
  - **Emergency care**
  - **Mental health**
  - **Polytrauma**
  - **Rehabilitation**
  - **Specialty services**

Did you know **that VA:**

- Is the largest employer of nurses in the Nation, with more than 61,000 RNs, LPNs/LVNs, and nursing assistants
- Provides clinical rotations to one out of every four professional nurses in the U.S. through affiliations with nursing schools
- Recently hired more than 100 nurses from the VA Learning Opportunities Residency (VALOR) program
- Serves a population of more than 8 million Veterans, providing inpatient care to about 650,000 Veterans and managing more than 75 million outpatient visits each year
- Treats 70 percent of Veteran patients for obesity and one out of five for diabetes. That's why VA is committed to battling these twin threats with the "Healthier U.S. Veterans" program, many components of which are coordinated by VA nurses
- Has facilities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories
- Provides medical care backup to military hospitals as well as active service members and their families during national emergencies, and operates command centers to coordinate services through the National Disaster Medical Service during major disasters
- The VA Nursing Outcomes Database (VANOD) Program is building a national database of nursing-sensitive indicators to support strategic decision making through benchmarking for all care across the continuum
- Has embraced Magnet® principles across all sites of care and is supporting the achievement of Magnet designation at VA facilities
- Safe Patient Handling and Movement Program is a top VA initiative that focuses on preventing musculoskeletal injuries to nursing staff
- Has invested in the cutting-edge technology needed to support its nurses and the entire patient care team, including the Bar Coded Medication Administration system, a computerized patient record system, wireless handheld connectivity, telehealth, and more
- Offers flexible work schedules, such as four, six, or 12-hour shifts

The best **locations.**

Mobility is just one of the advantages of working for VA. We offer employment opportunities from coast to coast and beyond. So, whether you enjoy living beachside, in a bustling metropolis or in the serene countryside, there's likely a VA facility nearby.

Testimonial

"I was active duty military throughout nursing school, and I knew I wanted to work at VA after I graduated. My assignment to the cardiac step down unit was intimidating at first, but my orientation was so great, I felt ready for the challenge. But my favorite thing about VA is the Veterans. I don t have to read about history, I hear it firsthand!"

— Lawrence, VA RN

Advance **your training**.

VA is committed to offering education opportunities throughout a nurse s career, beginning when he or she is in school. These opportunities are designed to enhance participating nurses knowledge and enable them to deliver better patient care.

In addition to clinical rotations for students and extensive orientation programs for all newly hired nurses, VA offers in-service education courses, leadership courses, and National Employee Education Services courses. VA also leads the industry in providing educational assistance and incentive programs that help nurses repay their loans and obtain advanced degrees. (All programs are subject to the availability of funding.)

VA LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES RESIDENCY (VALOR)

The VALOR program allows outstanding students who have completed the final semester or quarter of their junior year in an accredited baccalaureate-nursing program to participate in a paid work experience with a preceptor at an approved VA health care facility.

NATIONAL NURSING EDUCATION INITIATIVE (NNEI)

The NNEI scholarship is awarded to permanent full- and part-time registered nurses who have worked for VA for at least one year to cover tuition costs and related educational expenses for courses in which they are currently enrolled.

EMPLOYEE INCENTIVE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (EISP)

This program provides VA nurses with scholarships to further their education and obtain degrees qualifying them for health care positions for which recruitment and retention is difficult.

TUITION SUPPORT PROGRAM

Employees in health care disciplines that have been identified as VA shortage categories may be eligible for funding to enroll in job-related courses, continuing education courses, and conferences.

UPWARD MOBILITY TRAINING PROGRAMS

These programs offer, on a competitive basis, opportunities to advance to higher-level positions.

Testimonial

"I m honored to have been a VALOR participant. I cannot express the amount of knowledge, teamwork, and hands-on skills I accumulated through the program. I was eager to apply here after graduation and have loved being an employee ever since. The dedication to patient care makes every day a wonderful experience."

— Kristin, VA RN

Better benefits. **The best care.**

VA's mission is to provide the best possible care for America's Veterans. In return for helping VA achieve this goal, VA offers extensive benefits to all of our employees.

LEAVE AND HOLIDAYS

- Full-time VA nurses earn 26 days of paid annual (vacation/personal) leave each year and may accumulate up to 85 days. Annual leave begins to accrue immediately and can be used as it is earned, with supervisory approval
- Nurses earn 13 days of sick leave each year with no limit on accumulation
- There are 10 paid annual Federal holidays
- The Family and Medical Leave Act and the Family Friendly Leave Act allow employees to balance their work and family lives by taking reasonable amounts of leave for medical reasons, for the birth or adoption/foster care of a child, and for the care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health problem
- The Voluntary Leave Transfer Program allows Federal employees to donate annual leave for a medical emergency of an employee or family member
- Military leave is authorized up to 15 days a year for active reservists and National Guard members

HEALTH AND LIFE INSURANCE

- VA offers a wide variety of health insurance plans with premiums partially paid by the Federal Government. You may change plans yearly during open season
- VA employees have the option to use Flexible Spending Accounts, which allow you to set aside tax-free dollars to pay for medical, dental, and vision care expenses that are not reimbursed by your health insurance plan
- Term life insurance, family, and additional coverage options are available with the cost shared by the Federal Government
- Long-term care insurance is available as an option

MOBILITY AND LICENSURE

Where can a nursing career at VA take you? How about anywhere you'd like to live in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. An employee may seek employment at any VA location where there is a vacancy and, if hired, transfer without loss of benefits. Only one active, unrestricted state license is required to practice in a VA facility in any of the above locations.

RETIREMENT

VA nurses are covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). FERS is a three-tier retirement plan composed of Social Security benefits, FERS basic benefits, and the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Similar to the 401(k) savings plans widely available in the private sector, the TSP allows employees to tax defer up to a fixed dollar amount of their income each year, subject to the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service. The Federal Government also provides a basic contribution and matching, depending on the amount of the employee contribution. For retired military personnel, these benefits are in addition to full monthly retirement pay or pension. Retirement health care insurance is also available.

LIABILITY PROTECTION

As Federal employees, VA nurses are protected by the Federal Government in instances of alleged malpractice or negligence resulting from the performance of their duties in or for the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The United States Government accepts responsibility and liability for its employees' negligent or wrongful acts or omissions during the exercise of their official duties. This applies when employees' actions are in accord with the policies of the institution in which they are practicing.

AWARDS AND HONORS

VA bestows both monetary and honorary recognition for superior performance, along with awards for special or unique achievements. Annual VA nursing award programs include the Secretary's Award for Excellence in Nursing, the Secretary's Award for Advancement of Nursing Programs, the Office of Nursing Services Innovation Awards, and National Nursing Awards. In addition, substantial monetary rewards are available to nurses who participate in VA's Employee Suggestion Program.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- Free parking at most facilities
- Smoke-free and drug-free workplace
- Child care at some facilities
- Uniform allowance
- Employee associations
- Annual physical examination
- Employee wellness programs
- Fitness centers at some facilities
- Compensation for attaining national certification in practice area (e.g., oncology nursing, critical care, etc.)
- Compensation for job-related illness and injury
- Credit unions
- Dining facilities and retail store
- Public transit subsidies at some facilities

VA hiring **policies.**

QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum qualifications for appointment as a VA nurse are:

- U.S. citizenship (non-citizens may be hired when it is not possible to recruit qualified citizens)
- Graduation from a state-approved and NLN/CCNE accredited school of professional nursing
- Current, full, active, and unrestricted registration as a graduate professional nurse in a State, Commonwealth, or Territory (e.g., Puerto Rico) of the United States and in the District of Columbia
- Successful professional record for experienced nurses
- English language proficiency
- Satisfactory physical examination (may include drug screening)

SALARY INFORMATION

- VA nurses are compensated according to a Locality Pay System (LPS), in which salary ranges vary according to facility location. The LPS ensures that they are paid competitive rates within each local labor market. Pay is reviewed periodically to ensure competitiveness with salary rates in effect in the local community
- Starting salaries and pay grades are recommended by a Nurse Professional Standards Board, and are based on the nature and extent of professional education, training, and experience
- VA offers premium pay to nurses for on-call, weekend, overtime, and holiday duty. Nurses receive 10 percent of their base hourly pay rate for night shifts, 25 percent for weekends, 50 percent for overtime, and double pay for holidays
- Nurses receive consideration for promotion to higher grades with correspondingly higher salaries as experience requirements and performance standards are met
- Accelerated increases within each grade may be awarded for length of service, enhanced qualifications or assignment, specialized skills, professional achievements, or high levels of performance
- Cash bonuses may be authorized for certification, exceptional job performance, or exemplary job achievement

Join VA and achieve a higher level of nursing practice that more fully matches your training. Call the Human Resources Management Office at your local VA health care facility or visit VAcareers.va.gov to learn more. For more information, call **1-800-949-0002**.

How to Apply:

VAcareers.va.gov

VA can take you anywhere you want to live and work. We have facilities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories. So, whether you're a confirmed urbanite, fond of the beach, or in search of peaceful Midwestern landscapes, you can explore VA nursing opportunities.

Because hiring decisions are made locally, you should apply directly to the Nurse Recruiter or Human Resources Management Office at the VA health care facility where you desire employment consideration. Information about VA nursing and application procedures may be obtained from any VA facility.

Employment information can also be obtained by contacting the

Department of Veterans Affairs
Placement Service
1250 Poydras St, Suite 1000
New Orleans, LA 70113

The toll-free number is **1-800-949-0002.**

Employment information and job applications can also be found on the Internet at

VAcareers.va.gov

Veterans Health Administration

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