

National Nursing Education Initiative (NNEI)

NNEI is a scholarship awarded to permanent full- and part-time VA registered nurses seeking baccalaureate and advanced nursing degrees from an authorized, accredited education program. VA requires nurses to have BSN degrees to advance beyond the Nurse Level 1 position. NNEI scholarships may also be used to pursue other advanced degrees in related fields.

(Note: NNEI is a policy-derived program that stems from the legislative authority of EISP.)

Purpose

- Provide our Veteran population with specialized care by increasing the supply of qualified health care professionals.
- Help the VHA meet its need for qualified health care professionals in occupations where recruitment or retention is difficult.

Eligibility

NNEI funding is limited to registered nurses in 0610 occupational series

Applicants:

- Must be in a permanent full-time/part-time appointment at the time of application submission and during participation in program.
- Must have been continuously employed for at least one year with VHA, immediately preceding submission of application.
- Must be enrolled in, or unconditionally accepted for enrollment in, an academic program that prepares the applicant to meet the VA Qualification Standards for employment in a Title 38 or Hybrid Title 38 Occupation (specific degree program must be accredited and meet VA qualification standard).
- Must attend academic institutions located in the United States or its territories and accredited by the professional accrediting body identified in VA Qualification Standards as required for the applicable occupational series.
- Must be within credit and funding limits of NNEI.
- Cannot have an obligation under any other Federal program to perform service after completion of the course of education or training.

Covered Expenses

- NNEI awards cover tuition and related expenses such as registration, fees, and books.
- Scholarship funding limitations:
 - ▶ The maximum funding that may be awarded to an employee enrolled in a full-time curriculum is \$39,563.48 for the equivalent of 3 years of full-time coursework.
 - ▶ The maximum credit hours that may be funded are 90 for undergraduate course work or 54 for graduate level course work.
 - ▶ The maximum funding that may be awarded per credit is \$439.59 per undergraduate credit hour or \$732.66 per graduate credit hour.
- Scholarship awards are not taxable.
- Full-time students have a maximum of 3 years to complete their education.
- Part-time students have a maximum of 6 years to complete their education.

Service Obligation

- Upon completing their educational program and licensure/certification, participants work as permanent, full-time VA employees in the occupation for which the scholarship was provided.

- Participants agree to a 1 to 3-year service obligation.

How Are Awards Determined

- VHA facilities recommend employees for scholarships based on local Workforce Succession and Strategic Plans.
- National funding is prioritized based on VA and VHA workforce needs.

How to Apply

- Facility Directors recommend employees for scholarship program participation.
- Applications are submitted through your local VHA facility.
- Contact your local Scholarship Coordinator for local criteria, application instructions, deadlines, and additional assistance.
- See your local facility intranet for the additional information.

Informational Links

The following links are to Department of Veterans Affairs Intranet Sites:

- [Facilities Locator & Leadership Directory](#)
- [Facility Scholarship Coordinator Listing](#)
- [VA Qualification Standards](#)
- [VHA Handbook 1020, Employee Incentive Scholarship Program Procedures](#)
- EISP Application ([VA Form 10-0003K](#))
- EISP Agreement ([VA Form 10-0003K-2](#))
- [VHA Workforce Management & Consulting \(WMC\)/HR Development, Retention & Policy](#)
- [National Nursing Education Initiative \(NNEI\) SharePoint Site](#)