Becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) in Utah

Why do I have to be Certified?

In 1987, the Nursing Home Reform Act was adopted by Congress as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA '87). It was designed to improve the quality of care in long-term health care facilities and to define training and evaluation standards for nursing assistants who work in such facilities. Each state is responsible for following the terms of this federal law.

As defined in the OBRA regulations, a Nurse Aide Training and Competency Evaluation Program (NATCEP) provides specific standards for nursing assistant-related knowledge and skills. The purpose of a NATCEP is to ensure that candidates who are seeking to be nursing assistants understand these standards and can competently and safely perform the essential job functions of an entry-level nursing assistant.

The nursing assistant certification process in the State of Utah requires test candidates to complete at least 100 hours of training in an UNAR-approved training program (NATCEP). Training programs across the state are subject to UNAR oversight but are run independently. A test candidate who has successfully completed a training program is eligible to take the state competency evaluations to prove minimal competency for certification.

How do I Certify:

First Time Certification:

CNA is an acronym for *Certified Nursing Assistant*. To earn a certification in the State of Utah, an individual must be at least 16 years of age, complete a UNAR-approved training program, and pass both the State Written Knowledge Exam and State Manual Skills Exam. (See *Approved Training Programs* on our website, *utahcnaregistry.com* .)

CNA candidates are given 1-year and three (3) attempts to pass both the written knowledge and manual skills portions of the exam. If you are unable to pass either exam after three attempts, you will need to repeat a UNAR-approved NATCEP program. No extensions are given to this 1-year time frame.

Certification Renewal:

CNAs work under the direction of a licensed nurse. Job duties include assisting residents with activities of daily living and performing basic nursing skills. (See *What Can a CNA Do* , which is on our website, utahcnaregistry.com)

CNAs maintain their certification by submitting signed verification of work for a minimum of 200 hours of paid nursing or nursing-related services under the direction of a licensed nurse during the 24 months following initial certification or last certification renewal.

Renewal forms can be found in your TMU account. Please contact the UNAR office if you need assistance with your TMU login. office@utahcnaregistry.com

Renewal forms can be submitted using the CNA RENEWAL button located on our website. utahcnaregistry.com.

Expired Certification:

You may renew your certificate up to 6-months after your expiration date by meeting all renewal requirements, submitting your completed renewal form to UNAR, and paying any late fees that are due. This 6-month period is not an extension to finish working the required 200 paid hours necessary to renew.

If you are between six (6) and 24 months expired, you may be eligible to recertify by successfully passing the state written knowledge exam and manual skills exam. To apply for the competency evaluation exams, visit our website, utahcnaregistry.com, scroll down to our *Form* section, and fill out and submit our *Expired Certificate Application*.

If you are more than 24 months expired, you are ineligible to test under our Expired Certificate Application. You will need to complete another training program and pass the state competency evaluation exams. A list of UNAR's Approved Training Programs can be found on our website.

Nursing Students:

If you are a nursing student who has completed the course, *Fundamentals of Nursing,* within the past 2 years, you may be eligible to apply to take Utah's CNA written knowledge and manual skills exams. You will need to fill out and submit our *Nursing Student Waiver Application*.

In addition, you will need to contact your nursing school or a third-party national clearing house and request that your official transcript be emailed to UNAR at office@utahcnaregistry.com. Applicants cannot email their transcripts to our office, as they will be considered unofficial transcripts and will be denied. Official transcripts must be received via email within three (3) weeks of submitting your application.

Nursing students are given 1-year and three (3) attempts to pass both the written knowledge and manual skills portions of the competency evaluation. If you are unable to pass either exam, you will need to complete a UNAR-approved NATCEP program. No extensions are given to this 1-year time frame.

Nurses:

If you are a nurse with an expired license who can show proof of previous licensure in any state and who was in good standing with that state's professional board, you may be eligible to test under a *Nursing Waiver.* Send an email with your request to take the CNA Competency Evaluation exams to office@utahcnaregistry.com. Attach a copy of your photo ID and a copy of your expired nursing license.

Nurses are given 1-year and three (3) attempts to pass the written knowledge exam and manual skills exam. If you are unable to pass either exam, you will need to complete a UNAR-approved NATCEP program. No extensions are given to this 1-year time frame.

Reciprocity:

Reciprocity is the process a CNA goes through to have their current, active certification recognized through endorsement when moving into or out of Utah. For additional information on the reciprocity process, view the Reciprocity section of our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.