



# *Virginia Nurse Preceptor Incentive Program (NPIP)*

## *Eligibility Guidelines*

Developed by:

Virginia Department of Health  
Office of Health Equity



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## **A. Background, Purpose, and Priorities**

The 2021 General Assembly established a \$500,000 Nursing Preceptor Incentive Program (NPIP) to provide financial incentives for practitioners who serve as otherwise uncompensated preceptors for Advanced Practice Nurses (APRN), registered nurse (RN), and licensed practical nurse (LPN) students to help increase access to care, address the primary care shortage, handle mental health crises, and manage chronic diseases. All these factors are crucial in improving the health and wellness of all Virginians. For the fiscal year 2024, the General Assembly has approved a budget allocation of \$3.5 million.

## **B. Nurse Preceptor Definition**

The Virginia Nursing Preceptor Incentive Program (NPIP) defines nursing preceptor as a licensed healthcare professional –registered nurse, advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant, or physician (MD or DO) – with at least two years of clinical experience who accepts the responsibility of bridging the gap between classroom learning and actual practice for APRN, RN or LPN students. To qualify for an incentive, the nursing preceptor shall 1) demonstrate evidenced-based clinical best practices, 2) supervise the student during clinical training, and 3) evaluate student performance in collaboration with clinical faculty during a clinical rotation of up to 250 hours per semester. Concurrent compensation does not disqualify a preceptor from applying to the program.

### **Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Definition**

An Advanced Practice Registered Nurse is a nurse who has a master's, post-master's certificate, or practice-focused Doctor of Nursing practice degree in one of four specific roles. The four APRN roles currently defined in practice are Nurse Practitioners (NP), Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS), Certified Nurse-midwives (CNM), and Certified Nurse Anesthetists (CNA).

### **New: Registered Nurse**

In addition to ADN students, the program will now allow preceptorship for RNs and LPNs preceptored by a licensed registered nurse.

### **Regulation: 18VAC90-24-10**

"Preceptor" means a licensed nurse who is employed in the clinical setting, serves as a resource person and role model, and is present with the nursing student in that setting, providing clinical supervision.

### **Regulation: 18VAC90-27-110**

(E.) Preceptors shall provide to the nursing education program evidence of competence to supervise student clinical experience for quality and safety in each

specialty area where they supervise students. The clinical preceptor shall be licensed as a nurse at or above the level for which the student is preparing.

**C. Specialties:** All Specialties are now Eligible.

**D. Priority:** Priority will be given to eligible Preceptors that meet the following:

- Practice sites located in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) and/or serving Medically Underserved Populations (MUPs)

If the program is not oversubscribed, the following specialty rotations qualify for a no-cap designation, but all specialties qualify:

- Psych/Mental Health
- Nurse Midwives
- Ob/Gyn
- Pediatrics

### **E. Eligibility Requirements**

To be eligible for an award, each applicant must:

- Be an eligible preceptor
  - Any Virginia licensed physician, physician assistant, APRN or RN providing clinical education for APRN, RN and LPN students enrolled in a licensed and accredited Virginia public or private not-for-profit school of nursing in Virginia.
- Possess a valid and unrestricted license to practice in Virginia;
- Be employed at an approved Practice Site (See list on Sec. G, pg. 6);
- Commit to providing at least 25 hours of precepting per semester year to earn \$500 or 250 hours of precepting per semester to earn \$5,000. A detailed overview of the award and hours breakdown can be found on page 6, section G, in a comprehensive chart;
- Possess a social security number (*United States Citizen, National, Permanent Resident, Political Refugee*);
- Have no felony or misdemeanor record in Virginia or any other state;
- Acknowledge the following on the proof of hours documentation: 1) demonstrated evidenced-based clinical best practices, 2) supervised the student during clinical training, and 3) evaluated student performance in collaboration with clinical faculty during a clinical rotation of up to 250 hours per semester.

### **F. Eligible Preceptors**

Awardees must possess a valid and unrestricted license in any specialty to practice in Virginia, providing clinical education for APRN, RN and LPN students enrolled in a licensed and accredited Virginia public or private not-for-profit school of nursing in Virginia as one of the following:

- Physician;
- Physician assistant;
- Advanced practice registered nurse
- Registered Nurses

## **G. Eligible Practice Sites**

All site types are potentially eligible with prioritization given to practice sites located in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) and/or serving Medically Underserved Populations (MUPs). Practice site types that will receive prioritization includes the following:

- Community Mental Health Facility
- Critical Access Hospital
- Hospital
- Federally Qualified Health Center
- Free Clinic
- Long Term Care Facility
- Private Practice
- Rural Health Clinic
- Health Department
- Other

## **H. Identifying Shortage Areas & Underserved Localities**

To determine if a practice site is located in a HPSA or MUA visit <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area>. This site enables users to search for HPSA and MUAs by address and county.

Visit VDH's Office of Health Equity webpage for more information about shortage areas in Virginia (<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/health-equity/shortage-designations-and-maps/>).

## **I. Program Requirements**

Applicants' affiliated nursing programs are already required to complete the Certification of Hours (COH) Form /letter to verify preceptor hours. Preceptors will upload the form/letter to their account/application as part of a complete application submitted VDH, Office of Health Equity.

This form/letter simply:

- Verifies the dates of precepting, and position;
- Verifies practice site (s) information;
- Verifies qualifying preceptor hours at the end of each semester;
- Verify the number of students the preceptor is supervising
- Includes an authorized signature (*Executive Director or a Human Resources Director, Program director etc.*).
- Acknowledge the following on the proof pf hours documentation: 1) demonstrated evidenced-based clinical best practices, 2) supervised the student during clinical training, and 3) evaluated student performance in collaboration with clinical faculty during a clinical rotation of up to 250 hours per semester.

*A separate form/letter is required for each nursing program*

**J. Available Funds and Award Amounts**

In FY22 and FY23, \$500,000 in nurse preceptor incentive program dollars is available to be distributed to qualifying applicants who commit to the required service obligation. For the fiscal year 2024, the General Assembly has approved a budget allocation of \$3.5 million.

Awards and award amounts are as follows per semester:

Clinical Hours	Award
25-70	\$ 500
71-115	\$ 1,625
116-160	\$ 2,750
161-205	\$ 3,875
206-250	\$ 5,000

*The Virginia Department of Health will pay incentives directly to the preceptor at the end of each eligible semester (spring and fall).*

**K. Certification of hours/Semester definition**

- The preceptor must track their hours and upload the certification letter/form provided by their affiliate nursing program on the specified date by the VDH Office of Health Equity. Self-certifications will not be accepted.
- Preceptors will submit rotation data through the online portal by the end of each semester. Data on precepting hours will be retrieved and compiled by the VDH, Office of Health Equity for processing.
- **Semester definition:** Spring semester is January through May and fall semester is August through December and can include summer hours. The Virginia Nurse Preceptor Incentive Program honors non-traditional semesters that fall within the traditional semester.

## L. Service Obligation

***New: Double dipping no longer applies.*** A preceptor can fulfill paid service obligations with other entities, including the military, during the application year while serving as a preceptor. Even if a preceptor receives funding from another entity during the application year, they will still be eligible for this program for the same year.

***Concurrent compensation does not disqualify a preceptor from applying to the program. This includes stipends, compensation, and other incentives).***

## M. Applicant Registration Cycles

There are no costs associated with the NPIP program registration or becoming an awardee. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling cycle annually:

January 31<sup>st</sup> through December 1<sup>st</sup>

\* Only one registration is required per semester.

**Incomplete applicant registration will not be reviewed**

## N. How to Apply

NPIP application is available at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/health-equity/nursing-preceptor-incentive-program/>. Applicants must complete the registration form. VDH, Office of Health Equity will follow-up by the end of the applicant registration cycle

Before applying, a preceptor must meet the following requirements and show proof of eligibility at the time of application. 1) demonstrate evidenced-based clinical best practices, 2) supervise the student during clinical training, and 3) evaluate student performance in collaboration with clinical faculty during a clinical rotation of up to 250 hours per semester.

## **O. Application Process**

- Phase I: Applicant submits completed registration application at any time during the application cycle.
- Phase II: Eligible and complete applicant registrations will be reviewed by and acted on by VDH, Office of Health Equity. Additional documents will be requested if needed.
- Phase III: Approved applicants receive awards contingent upon full execution of hours and submission of any additional required documentation.

## **P. Required Documentation**

All applicants being considered for an award will require the following documentation:

- Complete applicant registration
- Certification of hours form/letter (from affiliated programs)
- A valid license to practice as an eligible health professional in Virginia
- Social Security Number (to receive payment from VDH, Office of Health Equity)
- Driver's License with Current Address (*if home address on Driver's License is not current additional documentation will be required*)
- Proof of HPSA/MUA if applicable
- Additional documentation may be required.

## **Q. Other Resources**

3RNET (<https://3rnet.org>) is a national database made available in Virginia at no cost by VDH, Office of Health Equity for employers in rural and underserved areas and health professionals seeking new employment opportunities.

Eligible practice sites may choose to advertise / post open positions on 3RNET.org. Similarly, health professionals may use it to search and apply for open positions in rural and underserved areas.

## **R. Questions**

All questions regarding should be directed to [incentiveprograms@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:incentiveprograms@vdh.virginia.gov)