

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO A CAREER IN PRACTICAL NURSING



Everything you need to know about
starting a career as a Practical Nurse



ABOUT WEST VIRGINIA JUNIOR COLLEGE

West Virginia Junior College (WVJC) is a group of hands-on, short-term career training schools with campuses in Bridgeport, Morgantown, and Charleston, West Virginia, serving the state of West Virginia and online students in the surrounding states.

WVJC students can expect caring and knowledgeable instructors who uphold our core values, **WE CARE**, and our purpose.

OUR
PURPOSE
....
To empower
change by
creating
opportunity



OUR CORE
VALUES
....

W **WORK ETHIC**
WE ACHIEVE SUCCESS THROUGH HARD WORK AND UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO OUR PURPOSE.

E **EXEMPLARY**
WE DEMONSTRATE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF INTEGRITY, ETHICAL STANDARDS, AND PROFESSIONALISM.

C **CARING**
WE SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS, COMMUNITIES, AND EACH OTHER, IN WAYS THAT LEAVE LASTING IMPRESSIONS.

A **ACCOUNTABILITY**
WE MAINTAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR VALUES AND OUTCOMES.

R **RELATIONSHIPS**
WE BUILD MEANINGFUL AND TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS AS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR CULTURE.

E **EXCELLENCE**
WE EXECUTE GOALS WITH PASSION, PURPOSE, AND PERSEVERANCE, STRIVING FOR THE HIGHEST QUALITY RESULTS.



WHAT IS A LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE?

Licensed Practical Nurses are vital members of any healthcare team. In many cases, LPNs are one of the patient's first contacts in a medical facility. The job duties of Licensed Practical Nurses are typically patient-focused, including managing basic patient care.

Practical Nursing could be a great career option for those looking to work in a career that can directly and positively impact the patient's experience in a healthcare facility. LPNs work closely with Registered Nurses to provide routine care to sick and injured patients. Practical Nurses implement care plans that are essential to patient care and comfort.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are approximately 6,190 Licensed Practical Nurses working in West Virginia as of May 2021.



NURSING SHORTAGE IN WEST VIRGINIA

The need for nurses across the United States is at an all-time high, according to The American Nurses Association. The lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have intensified the need for new nurses. Many factors have contributed to the shortage of nurses across America, including the aging population of patients and current nurses. As the Baby Boomer Generation ages, the need for patient care is expected to grow.

Another impact on the workforce as a result of the pandemic is burnout in nursing. As frontline workers, many nurses experience prolonged periods of stress, which can lead to a high turnover rate in some situations. A study by McKinsey & Company showed that up to 22% of nurses have considered leaving the nursing profession due to burnout.



NURSING SHORTAGE IN WEST VIRGINIA

The effects of the nationwide nursing shortage have been impacting the state of West Virginia for some time. In a study conducted by the West Virginia Center for Nursing, by 2026, the demand for qualified nurses was and will continue to be high in 32 West Virginia counties. The remaining 18 counties have a moderate demand level, making the need for nurses a statewide issue.

HOW WVJC CAN HELP

By offering those interested in starting a practical nursing career the option to obtain a Diploma in Practical Nursing in just 12 months, WVJC allows future nurses to learn the skills and knowledge needed to start their careers and enter the workforce quickly.

As part of the curriculum in the Practical Nursing program, students will partake in clinical experiences that help them establish relationships with local hospitals in preparation for entering the workforce.



FIRST STEPS TO BECOMING A PRACTICAL NURSE

Once deciding to pursue a career in nursing as a Practical Nurse, prospective students begin researching schools that offer programs that fulfill education requirements for licensing in West Virginia. Licensed Practical Nurses must complete an approved program that is 12 months in length and it is recommended that the program should provide preparation for the NCLEX-PN* exam.

Before beginning practical nursing school, students must also obtain a high school diploma or GED.

An admissions team member at WVJC Bridgeport will outline the application process in detail. One of the first steps is to take the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) exam.

**Passing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.*



TEST OF ESSENTIAL ACADEMIC SKILLS (TEAS)

The Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) exam is designed by Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) to evaluate a student's preparedness to enter a health science field.

The TEAS test consists of material from the following subjects: Reading, Mathematics, Science, and English and Language Usage. Students are given three hours and twenty-nine minutes to complete a series of 170 multiple-choice, multiple-select, fill-in-the-blank, ordered responses, or hot spot questions.

Prospective students planning to take the TEAS exam for entrance to the Practical Nursing Diploma program at WVJC have access to a variety of materials to help them study, including online preparation groups and online practice videos. ATI recommends that students prepare for the exam for at least six weeks before taking it, so beginning the process early can help you be successful.



NCLEX-PN EXAM

The National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nursing (NCLEX-PN)* exam is the industry-passing standard test that reflects a nurse's ability to work as a practical nurse in the field safely and competently. As nursing practices change, the NCSBN Board of Directors reviews the exam every three years and makes necessary changes to ensure the standards are up to date.

The WVJC Practical Nursing program includes important preparation for the NCLEX-PN exam, but students also have access to online study methods.

The NCLEX exam is a high-level exam that requires critical thinking and decision-making skills to analyze and answer situation-based questions. The test is divided into four sections based on client needs: Safe and Effective Care Environment, Health Promotion And Maintenance, Psychosocial Integrity, and Physiological Integrity.

**Passing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.*



NCLEX-PN EXAM

The NCLEX exam operates using computerized adaptive testing (CAT) to administer the exam. By using this system, the computer can evaluate the testee by their ability to answer the questions accurately. This allows each exam to be individualized to determine true ability.

The test is graded on a pass-or-fail system determined by one of the following three rules. Learn more about how these rules operate by clicking each box.

The 95% Confidence Rule

The Maximum-Length Rule

The Run-Out-Of-Time Rule



TIPS FOR STUDYING

Studying for these exams can be a process that can span for weeks. By determining what learning tools can help you retain information and get the most out of your time, you can be better prepared to take standardized exams such as the TEAS test or NCLEX exam.

There are various strategies that can help each learning type when studying that benefit their specific needs.

VISUAL LEARNER

Benefits from having visual aids to plan tasks.

Helpful tools:

- Planners
- Calendars
- Color Coding



KINESTHETIC LEARNER

Benefits from being able to physically touch and move.

Helpful tools:

- Sticky Notes
- Diagrams
- Movement



AUDITORY LEARNER

Benefits from hearing and speaking out loud.

Helpful tools:

- Voice Memos
- Background Music
- Study Groups



ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING

ABHES - West Virginia Junior College is institutionally accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools to award diplomas and associate's degrees. The Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools contact information is 6116 Executive Blvd, Suite 730, North Bethesda, MD 20852, Phone (301) 291-7550.

CTCS - West Virginia Junior College Bridgeport campus is authorized to offer post-secondary education programs leading to a certificate, diploma, or associate degree in the state of West Virginia in accordance with its permit issued by the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education, 1018 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Suite 700, Charleston, WV 25301, (304) 558-0265 in accordance with Chapter 18B of the West Virginia State Code.



ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING

West Virginia State Board of Examiners for Licensed Practical Nurses – The West Virginia Junior College Practical Nursing program has been granted full approval by the West Virginia State Board of Examiners for Licensed Practical Nurses. 101 Dee Drive, Suite 100, Charleston, WV 25311-1688, Phone (304) 558-3572.

NC-SARA – approved to participate in the *National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)*. For the most current list of NC-SARA member states and to determine if your state is a member state, visit the [NC-SARA](#) website.



YOUR EDUCATION

Students will utilize the nursing process to provide safe and effective care by applying scientific nursing principles and will be prepared to function as healthcare team members by exercising sound nursing judgment, critical thinking, and competent care for patients.

Students in the LPN* diploma program at West Virginia Junior College will complete instruction and clinical experiences in gerontological, medical, surgical, obstetric, and pediatric nursing in the following courses:

LPN Diploma Courses

Nursing Fundamentals
PN Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology
Social Sciences/Practical Vocational Nursing I
Medical-Surgical Nursing I
Nutrition for Practical Nursing
Nursing Pharmacology I
Nursing Pharmacology II
Maternity Nursing
Pediatric Nursing
Social Sciences/Practical Vocational Nursing II
Medical-Surgical Nursing II
Social Sciences/Practical Vocational Nursing III

**Passing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.*



OUR PROCESS

Using an established, five-step process, West Virginia Junior College can provide quality education, training, and preparation for practical nursing students.

LEARN

Classroom instruction to teach you the skills you need in your career.

APPLY

Real-world environment through instructor led clinicals.

START

Begin your professional journey.



PRACTICE

Reinforce classroom lessons through hands-on lab sessions.

EARN

Prepare to sit for an industry-specific licensure* exam in your field of study.

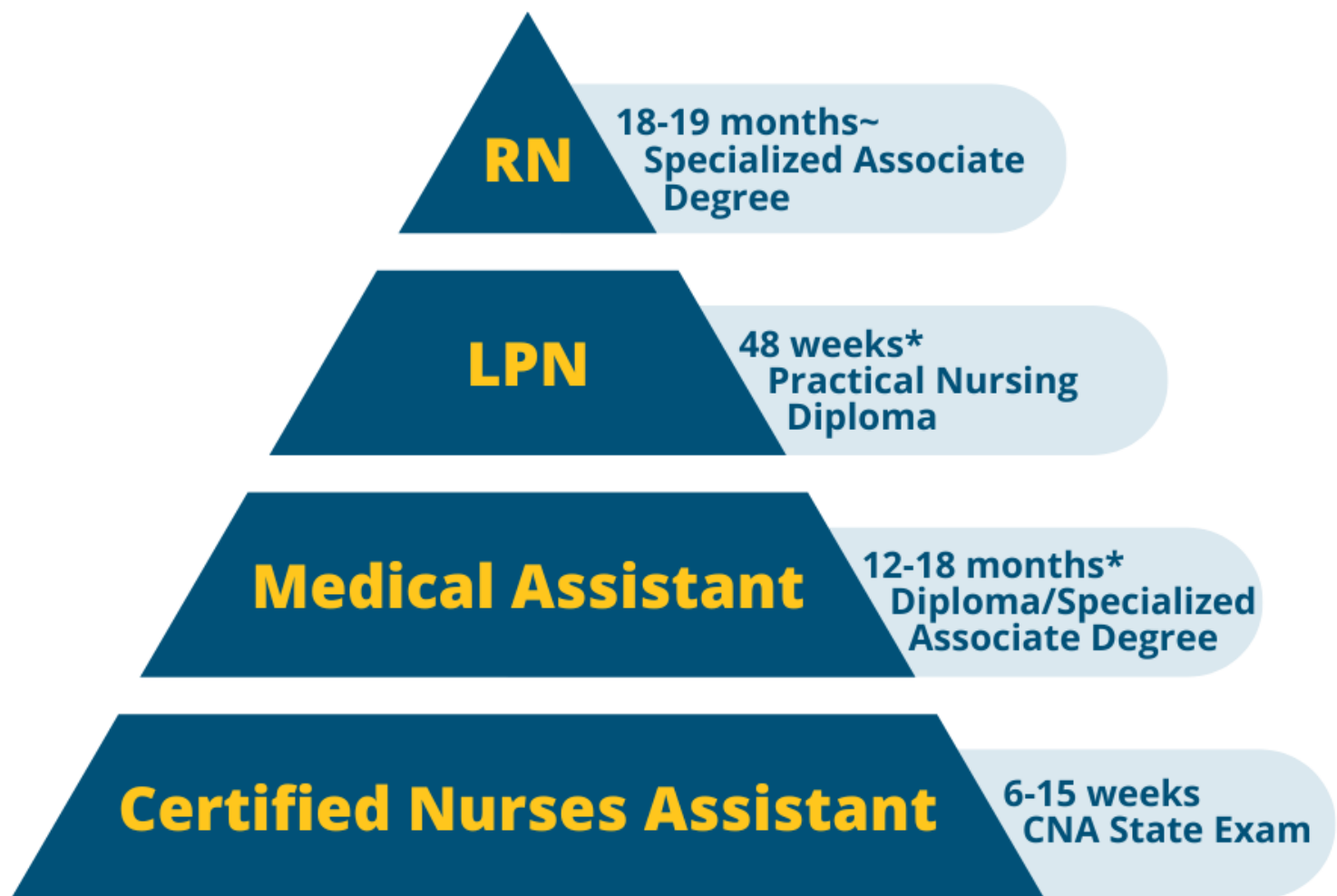
**Passing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.*



HEALTHCARE POSITIONS IN WEST VIRGINIA

Many healthcare careers are available with varying education levels and time commitments.

Below are the educational requirements and time investments for common positions in West Virginia.



*WVJC program length.

~Program length is dependent on start date.



PATHWAY OPTIONS

Medical Assisting to Practical Nursing Pathway

WVJC offers our medical assistant graduates the option to move into the Practical Nursing program by utilizing our pathway option. This option works as a stepping stone, allowing students to complete our medical assistant training, then move on to the LPN* training program. This is an excellent option for someone who has yet to gain experience in the healthcare field, so they are better prepared for the rigorous nursing classes.



Start Medical
Assisting
Training



Develop
Necessary
Medical Skills



Benefit From
Waived
TEAS Exam



Begin Practical
Nursing
Program

**Passing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.*



PATHWAY OPTIONS

Medical Assisting to Practical Nursing Pathway

Students who partake in the pathway program also benefit from having the TEAS exam requirement waived, allowing them to move directly into the Practical Nursing program. This can be helpful for students who struggle with standardized testing, allowing them to use hands-on skills learned in their medical assistant training program to prove their ability to continue to nursing school.

Practical Nursing to Registered Nursing Pathway

Practical Nurses who attended WVJC can later complete the LPN^o to RN[~] Pathway Program if they decide to further their education within five years of graduation from the Practical Nursing program. WVJC graduates who pursue this option can enter the Nursing program without taking the TEAS exam and having their seat fee to the program waived.

^oPassing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.

[~]Passing the NCLEX-RN exam is required to become a Registered Nurse.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN LPN AND RN

One of the most notable differences between becoming a Licensed Practical Nurse and a Registered Nurse is the time investment in education. WVJC's Diploma in Practical Nursing can be completed in 12 months, while other nursing programs can take up to four years to complete coursework at traditional institutions. WVJC's Nursing program can take 18 to 19 months, depending on the start date.



Licensed Practical Nurse

- 12-month diploma program
- Must pass the NCLEX-PN^o exam
- Works directly with patients providing basic care
- Works closely on teams with doctors and Registered Nurses



Registered Nurse

- 18-19 month* program at WVJC
- Up to four-five years at traditional institutions
- Must pass the NCLEX-RN~ exam
- Coordinates patient care, medication, educates healthcare team, and more

**Program length is dependent on start date.*

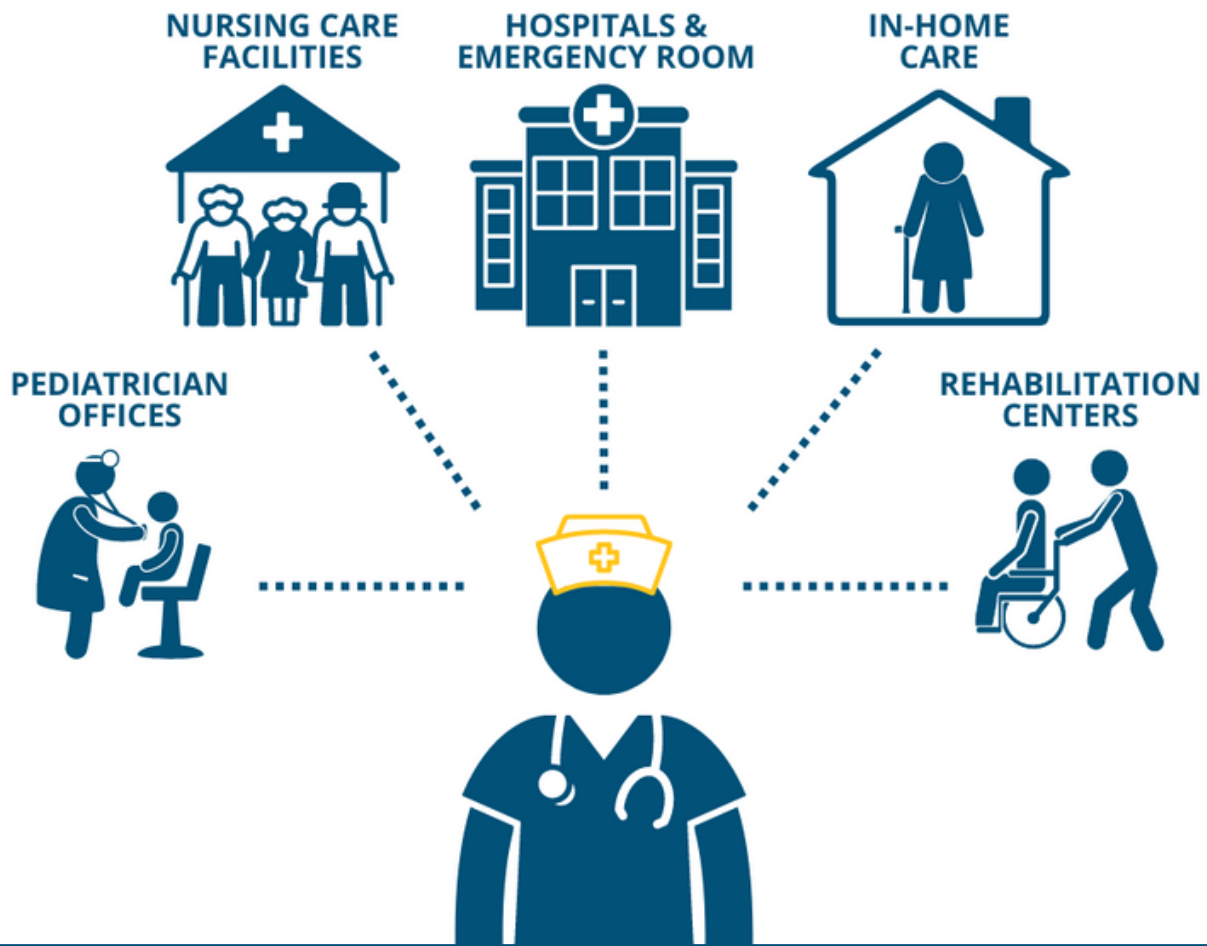
^oPassing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.

~Passing the NCLEX-RN exam is required to become a Registered Nurse.



WHERE CAN A LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE WORK?

The skills LPNs learn in their education make them valuable team members in many medical facilities, including long-term care nursing home facilities, in-home agencies, pediatrician offices, hospitals or emergency rooms, private physicians, and more.



BENEFITS OF OUR PROGRAM

At West Virginia Junior College, the student experience is our top priority. We understand that students need to balance family, work, and school. Below are a few of the advantages of your WVJC practical nursing journey.

Direct Admission

WVJC employs a direct admission policy, meaning students will save time and money by not taking unnecessary classes or taking classes to find out later they are not accepted into the nursing program.

Career and Student Services

At WVJC, students have access to support services, including academic, personal, and career, to discuss their goals and how to achieve them. WVJC Alumni are also eligible for career management support and refresher courses as their industry evolves.



BENEFITS OF OUR PROGRAM

Hands-On Training and Clinical Experiences

West Virginia Junior College students have the opportunity to learn fundamental skills during lectures, then apply hands-on skills during clinical rotations at local area medical facilities where they will work with actual patients in a real-world environment. At the end of the Practical Nursing program, students will be prepared to sit for the NCLEX-PN* licensure exam.

Accelerated Training

As a result of our direct admission program, students will complete their training in only twelve months.

Accelerated training allows students to learn the necessary practical nursing skills, prepare to sit for the NCLEX-PN* exam, and enter the workforce quickly.

**Passing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.*



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What does a Practical Nurse do?

A: In many cases, Practical Nurses work directly with patients, but their skills include reviewing medical histories, collecting samples for lab testing, monitoring vitals, and more.

Q: What is the difference between an RN and LPN?

A: RNs have completed more education and therefore have a larger scope of work than LPNs, who focus on basic patient medical care. Because of their extended education, RNs take on managerial roles and generally can perform more complex procedures.

Q: How long does it take to become an LPN in West Virginia?

A: Students pursuing a Practical Nursing Diploma in West Virginia can expect to be prepared to sit for licensing exam in 12 months.

Q: Where can an LPN work?

A: Practical Nurses can work in a variety of medical settings, including pediatrician offices, hospitals, emergency rooms, nursing care facilities, home health agencies, or private physicians.

**Do you still have questions?
Click here to contact an admissions team member!**

**Passing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.*



WHY CHOOSE WEST VIRGINIA JUNIOR COLLEGE?

At WVJC, we are committed to helping our students be successful in their new careers. Check out what these students say about their journey at WVJC Bridgeport!

"I recommend this school because it is a fast-paced program and if you want your LPN quickly this is the place to go!

-Ali, WVJC Bridgeport Student

"My experience at WVJC has been one of my best experiences in a school setting. Hands down one of the best decisions I've made educationally."

-Brianna, WVJC Bridgeport Student

"If you want the proper guidance into the medical field, this is the place to go!"

-Kayla, WVJC Bridgeport Student



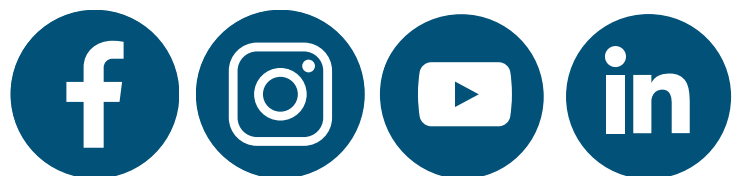
START YOUR JOURNEY TO BECOME AN LPN!

Licensed Practical Nurses* are essential healthcare team members, and West Virginia Junior College is here to help you take the next step to start a respected and valued career.

Are you prepared to begin your education with WVJC as a practical nursing student? Our admissions team is ready to help you get started. Take the first step by calling (304)-842-4007 or [Requesting information](#).



**STAY CONNECTED BY
FOLLOWING US:**



**Passing the NCLEX-PN exam is required to become a Practical Nurse.*

