

CAREER GUIDE FOR LICENSED PRACTICAL AND VOCATIONAL NURSES

SOC Code: 29-2061

Pay Band(s): 3 ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Care for ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled persons in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, private homes, group homes, and similar institutions. May work under the supervision of a registered nurse. Licensing required. Must be a graduate from an accredited School of Practical Nursing.

Licensed Practical and Vocational Nursing positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Nursing/Physician Assistance Career Group](#):

[Licensed Practical Nurse](#)

Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses within the Commonwealth are all located within the Nursing/Physician Assistance Career Group. *Individuals may want to pursue a degree program in order to qualify for higher-level roles in this career group.* Depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Direct Service](#)
[Program Administration](#)

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

Skills

Note: *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
2. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
3. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
4. Managing one's own time and the time of others.
5. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
6. Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.
7. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
8. Actively looking for ways to help people.
9. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.

10. Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem solving and decision-making.
11. Performing patient care delivery, medication administration, and other clinical procedures.

Knowledge

Note: *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The Knowledge of:

1. The structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
2. The information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat human injuries, diseases, and deformities. This includes symptoms, treatment alternatives, drug properties and interactions, and preventive health-care measures.
3. The principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
4. The principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.
5. The principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
6. Human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
7. Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.
8. Relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
9. Business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
10. The chemical composition, structure, and properties of substances and of the chemical processes and transformations that they undergo. This includes uses of chemicals and their interactions, danger signs, production techniques, and disposal methods.
11. Principles and practice of practical nursing.
12. Normal anatomy, pharmacology, body mechanics and nursing procedures.

Abilities

Note: *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The Ability to:

1. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
2. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
3. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
4. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
5. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).
6. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
7. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
8. Identify and understand the speech of another person.
9. Speak clearly so others can understand you.
10. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
11. Carry out the nursing procedures.

Tasks

Note: *The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by **Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses**. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.*

1. Observe patients, charting and reporting changes in patients' conditions, such as adverse reactions to medication or treatment, and taking any necessary action.
2. Administer prescribed medications or start intravenous fluids, and note times and amounts on patients' charts.
3. Answer patients' calls and determine how to assist them.
4. Measure and record patients' vital signs, such as height, weight, temperature, blood pressure, pulse and respiration.
5. Provide basic patient care and treatments, such as taking temperatures and blood pressure, dressing wounds, treating bedsores, giving enemas, douches, alcohol rubs, and massages, or performing catheterizations.
6. Help patients with bathing, dressing, personal hygiene, moving in bed, and standing and walking.
7. Supervise nurses' aides and assistants.
8. Work as part of a health care team to assess patient needs, plan and modify care and implement interventions.
9. Record food and fluid intake and output.
10. Evaluate nursing intervention outcomes, conferring with other health-care team members as necessary.
12. Administer nursing care to group of patients requiring nursing care as assigned by the RN based on age specific standards of nursing practice and within scope of licensure.

INTERESTED?

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

The nursing occupation is Social, Investigative and Realistic. **Social** occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Licensure is required for Practical and Vocational Nursing positions in Virginia state government.

According to the Department of Labor:

All States and the District of Columbia require Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) to pass a licensing examination after completing a State-approved practical nursing program. A high school diploma or its equivalent usually is required for entry, although some programs accept candidates without a diploma or are designed as part of a high school curriculum.

Most practical nursing programs last about 1 year and include both classroom study and supervised clinical practice (patient care). Classroom study covers basic nursing concepts and patient care-related subjects, including anatomy, physiology, medical-surgical nursing, pediatrics, obstetrics, psychiatric nursing, the administration of drugs, nutrition, and first aid. Clinical practice usually is in a hospital, but sometimes includes other settings.

Licensing information for the Commonwealth of Virginia is available on the Department of Health Professions web site at <http://www.dhp.state.va.us/nursing/default.htm>

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Degree programs for Practical Nurses are offered by the following Virginia Community Colleges:

[DABNEY S. LANCASTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

[DANVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

[GERMANNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

[LORD FAIRFAX COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

[NEW RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

[RAPPAHANNOCK COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

[SOUTHSIDE VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

[VIRGINIA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

[WYTHEVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE](#)

Additional sources of educational and occupational information for practical nursing:

National League for Nursing, 61 Broadway, New York, NY 10006, or on the web at <http://www.nln.org>

National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses, Inc., 605 Poole Dr., Garner, NC 27529, or on the web at www.nflpn.org

National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service, Inc., 8607 2nd Ave., Suite 404 A, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or on the web at <http://www.napnes.org>

From the Department of Labor:

Most LPNs provide basic bedside care, taking vital signs such as temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and respiration. They also prepare and give injections and enemas, monitor catheters, apply dressings, treat bedsores, and give alcohol rubs and massages. LPNs monitor their patients and report adverse reactions to medications or treatments. They collect samples for testing, perform routine laboratory tests, feed patients, and record food and fluid intake and output. To help keep patients comfortable, LPNs assist with bathing, dressing, and personal hygiene. In States where the law allows, they may administer prescribed medicines or start intravenous fluids. Some LPNs help deliver, care for, and feed infants. Experienced LPNs may supervise nursing assistants and aides.

In addition to providing routine bedside care, LPNs in nursing care facilities help evaluate residents' needs, develop care plans, and supervise the care provided by nursing aides. In doctors' offices and clinics, they also may make appointments, keep records, and perform other clerical duties. LPNs who work in private homes may prepare meals and teach family members simple nursing tasks.

COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

The Commonwealth Competencies are:

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of

a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm. For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example:

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES	MANAGEMENT ROLES
3	Licensed Practical Nurse	
4	Registered Nurse I	
5	Registered Nurse II Nurse Practitioner I Physician Assistant	Registered Nurse Manager I
6	Registered Nurse III Nurse Practitioner II	Registered Nurse Manager II

Sample Career Path:

[Licensed Practical Nurse](#)

The Licensed Practical Nurse role provides career tracks for licensed practical nurses performing duties ranging from entry level to first line supervision. Employees provide a variety of patient care activities such as administering medications, maintaining patient records, and assisting in the treatment and direct care of patients.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS REQUIRED FOR PROGRESSION IN THIS CAREER GROUP

[Registered Nurse I](#)

The Registered Nurse I role provides career tracks for registered nurses performing responsibilities ranging from entry level to journey level. Employees' responsibilities include providing professional nursing care and treatment to patients by conducting needs assessments, developing, implementing and evaluating treatment plans and providing patient care and education through case management.

[Registered Nurse II/Nurse Practitioner I/Physician Assistant](#)

The Registered Nurse II/Nurse Practitioner I/Physician Assistant role provides career tracks for registered nurses, certified nurse practitioners, and physician assistants. The first career track is for registered nurses whose responsibilities range from advanced level focusing in a specialty area of nursing or research to having either charge or supervisory responsibilities. The second career track is for certified nurse practitioners performing entry level to journey level responsibilities that require an advanced level of nursing certification and license. The third career track is for physician assistants performing entry to advanced responsibilities that require training and license as a physician assistant.

[Registered Nurse III/Nurse Practitioner II](#)

The Registered Nurse III/Nurse Practitioner II role provides career tracks for registered nurses and the certified nurse practitioners. The first career track is for registered nurses that provide expert nursing services or statewide nursing program consultation, typically for a medical specialty area. Some employees may require advanced education and/or certification as a Registered Clinical Nurse Specialist. The second career track is for certified nurse practitioners performing responsibilities that require an advanced level of certification and/or license as a Certified Nurse Practitioner.

[Registered Nurse Manager I](#)

The Registered Nurse Manager I role provides career tracks for management-level registered nurses responsible for a component or multiple components of a nursing program. Responsibilities include leadership and management of nurses, programs, resources, and research programs.

[Registered Nurse Manager II](#)

The Registered Nurse Manager II role provides career tracks for nurses having management-level responsibilities for all aspects of a comprehensive nursing program.

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*NET (Occupational Information Network)
http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page

Virginia Community Colleges System
<http://www.so.cc.va.us/>

National League for Nursing
<http://www.nln.org>

National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses
www.nflpn.org

National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service
<http://www.napnes.org>

Virginia Employment Commission
<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop
<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network
<http://www.vacrn.net/>