

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: CNAs & Other Workers**

Illinois Department of Public Health

Health Care Worker Registry, 525 W. Jefferson St., Fourth Floor, Springfield, IL 62761

Phone: (844) 789-3676 Fax: (217) 524-0137 E-mail [DPH.HCWR@Illinois.gov](mailto:DPH.HCWR@Illinois.gov)

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## **CNA CERTIFICATION**

### **WHAT IS MY CNA CERTIFICATE NUMBER? CAN I GET A COPY OF MY CERTIFICATE?**

There is no CNA certificate or license number for CNAs in Illinois. **The State does not issue credentials, numbers, certificates, or licenses to CNAs.**

### **WHAT DO I DO IF AN EMPLOYER ASKS FOR MY CNA CERTIFICATE NUMBER?**

If you are completing an application form that asks for your CNA certificate number, enter “Not Applicable” or “N/A.” All Illinois health care employers are **required** by State law to check the Illinois Department of Public Health’s Health Care Worker Registry (HCWR) to verify a CNA’s status. If an employer asks you for proof that you passed the CNA exam, please ask the employer to check the HCWR or call the HCWR at (844) 789-3676. Under Illinois law, proof of CNA training shall be obtained only from the HCWR.

### **WHEN DOES MY CNA CERTIFICATION EXPIRE?**

CNA certification does not expire. However, a CNA will lose his/her active CNA certification status if he/she goes for a period of 24 consecutive months after his/her last competency evaluation without providing nursing or nursing-related services for pay under the supervision of a licensed nurse. To maintain an active CNA certification, a CNA must work at least one 8-hour shift within a 24-month period, performing nursing or nursing-related services for pay under the supervision of a licensed nurse. A CNA who continuously works in such a capacity will continue to retain an active CNA certification regardless of how many years that individual works. The CNA’s employer is required to add work history to the HCWR to ensure the CNA maintains his/her active certification.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN 24 MONTHS SINCE I HAVE WORKED AS A CNA?**

If you have not worked as a CNA for more than 24 months, your CNA certification will be shown as “Inactive” on the HCWR and you will be ineligible to work as a CNA until you have recertified. If you have no Administrative Findings of Abuse, Neglect, and/or Theft, you may recertify by successfully completing manual skills testing and competency testing only. Southern Illinois University (SIU) handles the recertification process. You may call SIU at (877) 262-9259, or you may visit their website at [www.nurseaidetesting.com](http://www.nurseaidetesting.com).

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## **MY EMPLOYER HAS NOT ENTERED MY WORK HISTORY. WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

Health care employers are **required** by State law to add work history on the HCWR for each employee and to provide employment verification for each employee at least annually. This work history information is used by the HCWR to notify the last-known employer of any disqualifying convictions reported by the Illinois State Police.

The law requires an employer to enter employment and termination dates within 30 days after hiring or terminating an employee. The employer must also indicate the employment category and job title. An employer's failure to comply with this law constitutes a licensing violation and may result in a fine of up to \$500.

If your employer has not entered or verified your work history, you should talk to someone in your employer's Human Resources Department and ask him/her to update your work history. If the issue is not resolved, you can ask your employer to contact the HCWR at (844) 789-3676.

## **WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF MY LAST EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION IS LISTED AS "ACTIVE"?**

A notation of "Active" next to your last employment verification **does not necessarily** mean that your CNA certification is still active. Our system looks to see if there is any work history or any employment verification added within the last 24 months—regardless of type of position; if so, it will indicate "Active." An employer, however, is required to check **all work history** to ensure there is no gap of more than 24 months during which you did not perform nursing or nursing-related duties under the supervision of a licensed nurse. If there is such a gap, your CNA certification is **not active**.

## **WILL I KEEP MY ACTIVE CERTIFICATION IF I WORK AS PRIVATE DUTY IN SOMEONE'S HOME?**

No. For work history to count towards maintaining an active CNA certification, the CNA must be **performing nursing or nursing-related duties for pay under the supervision of a licensed nurse**. Private duty work does not meet that requirement.

## **TRANSFERRING CNA CERTIFICATION**

### **CAN I BE A CNA IN MORE THAN ONE STATE?**

Yes. Each state, however, has different requirements for maintaining active CNA status. You should contact the state in question for complete regulations and guidance.

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### **HOW DO I TRANSFER MY CNA CERTIFICATION INTO ILLINOIS?**

You may transfer your CNA certification from another state, if you have been deemed competent on another state's registry for CNAs. You must meet the following criteria to transfer your certification to Illinois:

- You must have documentation of current registration from another state indicating requirements listed in the Code of Federal Regulations [42 CFR, Sections 483.151 and 483.152] have been met.
- You must have no Administrative Findings of Abuse, Neglect and/or Theft (misappropriation of property) on your home state's CNA Registry or any other state's CNA registry.

To apply to transfer your CNA certification from another state, complete the Out of State Application, which can be found under "Forms" on the HCWR [Public Website](#). Once you have completed this application, mail it to Southern Illinois University (SIU) Nurse Aide Testing at 1840 Innovation Drive, Suite 103, Carbondale, IL 62903. You must include the fee of \$25.00 with your application (see "What is the cost to transfer my CNA certification into Illinois?" below). The fee can be paid by money order or cashier's check; no personal checks or cash will be accepted. You may call SIU at (877) 262-9259, or you may visit their website at [www.nurseaidetesting.com](http://www.nurseaidetesting.com) for more information.

### **DO I NEED TO RETEST IF I TRANSFER MY CNA CERTIFICATION INTO ILLINOIS?**

No. Once you have been granted reciprocity status, you are eligible to seek employment in the State of Illinois as a CNA.

### **WHAT IS THE COST TO TRANSFER MY CNA CERTIFICATION INTO ILLINOIS?**

Effective July 1, 2019, there is a \$25.00 fee to transfer your active CNA certification from another state to Illinois. Please verify your status on the Registry from your current state prior to submitting an application to transfer to Illinois.

### **HOW DO I TRANSFER MY ILLINOIS CNA CERTIFICATION TO ANOTHER STATE?**

To transfer your Illinois CNA certification to another state, you will need to contact that state's CNA Registry. The other state will direct you to their application for transferring your CNA certification. Some states require you to complete the application and submit it to the Illinois Health Care Worker Registry (HCWR). HCWR staff will then complete

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the application and attach a Registry Verification Letter to show your Illinois CNA certification status. Other states require you to complete the application and return it to that state. That state will then contact the Illinois HCWR for verification of your CNA certification status.

### **DO I LOSE MY ILLINOIS CERTIFICATION IF I TRANSFER TO ANOTHER STATE?**

No. To maintain your active CNA status, however, you must maintain active work status in Illinois. This would entail working in Illinois for at least one 8-hour shift within a 24 month period, performing nursing or nursing-related duties for pay under the supervision of a licensed nurse.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

### **HOW DO I FIND MY NAME IN THE HEALTH CARE WORKER REGISTRY?**

You can search for yourself on the Health Care Worker Registry (HCWR) [Public Website](#). On the right side of the page, under “Resources,” click on “Search the Health Care Worker Registry.” You will then be prompted to enter your name. Enter just the **first few letters of your last name and the first few letters of your first name**. Once you enter your name and click “Search,” you will be taken to a separate page with a list of names that match the search criteria. At the end of each line, there is a square icon with a silhouette of a person and a magnifying glass. Clicking on that icon will take you to the profile page. At the top right of the profile page, there is a link to “Validate SSN.” If you click that link, you can enter your Social Security Number to verify you are looking at the correct profile. This is helpful if you have a common name, because there might be several listings for your name.

### **WHAT DO I NEED TO DO IF MY NAME HAS CHANGED?**

To change your name on the HCWR, you must provide us with a copy of your new Driver’s License or Social Security card, or a copy of your marriage license (or divorce decree or court order granting the name change). **Be sure to include your former name, your date of birth, and the last four digits of your SSN.** You may fax your document to (217) 524-0137, e-mail it to [dph.hcwr@illinois.gov](mailto:dph.hcwr@illinois.gov), or mail it to HCWR, 525 W. Jefferson, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Springfield, IL 62761.

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### **WHO CAN TAKE THE ILLINOIS NURSE ASSISTANT/AIDE COMPETENCY EXAMINATION (INACE)?**

An individual who has completed an approved Basic Nurse Assistant Training Program and who has met all other requirements of the HCWR may take the competency exam. Individuals placed on the HCWR based on reciprocity from another state are not required to take the Illinois written competency exam. (See “How do I transfer my CNA certification into Illinois?” above.) An individual may also be eligible to take the competency exam based on military training or training as a foreign nurse. Those individuals should contact the HCWR at (844) 789-3676 for more information.

### **DID I PASS THE EXAM? WHEN/HOW WILL I RECEIVE MY TEST RESULTS?**

Official INACE results will be available on the HCWR approximately two weeks after testing. You can search for yourself on the HCWR [Public Website](#). (See “How do I find my name in the Health Care Worker Registry?” above.) Near the bottom of your profile page, you will see a section labeled “Certification Program Information.” At the bottom of that section is information on “Date of Competency Evaluation.” Your testing results are posted here, along with a Competency Code. The Competency Codes are as follows:

- P = Passed
- F = Failed (F1 = Failed 1<sup>st</sup> Time, F2 = Failed 2<sup>nd</sup> Time, etc.)
- NS = Did not show up for the test
- R = Granted reciprocity from another state to work in Illinois as a CNA

### **WHAT DOES THE DESCRIPTION UNDER “DATE TRAINING SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED” MEAN?**

Near the bottom of an HCWR profile page, you will see a section labeled “Certification Program Information.” Directly beneath that is information on “Date Training Successful Completed.” The date someone completed his/her CNA training appears here, along with the name of the CNA program he/she completed. If the CNA recertified, transferred his/her CNA certification from another state, or took one of the other paths to CNA certification, one of the following descriptions may be listed in place of the name of the CNA program:

- **DEEMED COMPLETENT IN IL BASED ON \_\_\_\_ INFO.** This is the description used for someone who transferred his/her CNA certification from another state and was granted Reciprocity.
- **IDPH FUNDAMENTALS OF NURSING.** This description is used for someone enrolled as a student in a nursing program who has completed the requirements to be a CNA.

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- **IDPH FOREIGN LPN OR RN.** This is the description used for a licensed nurse in a foreign country who has applied to become a CNA in Illinois.
- **IDPH MILITARY EQUIVALENT TRAINING.** This description is used for someone who had medical training in the military that is considered equivalent to that of a CNA.
- **IDPH CERTIFICATION BY NACEP EXAM.** This is the description used for someone who has recertified by taking the CNA exam.

As long as the Competency Code associated with one of these descriptions is “P” or “R,” the person has successfully completed all requirements and holds certification as a CNA in Illinois.

### **HAVE MY BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS COME BACK? MY EMPLOYER SAID I SHOULD CALL.**

You should not call the HCWR to see if your background check results have come back. Once you have had your fingerprints scanned, **your employer is responsible for monitoring the HCWR for the results.** The Illinois State Police (ISP) has 45 days to return the background check results to the HCWR. Those background check results are automatically uploaded to the HCWR, and they will be posted to your Registry profile. If your employer finds that your background check results have not been uploaded after 45 days, your employer can contact the HCWR at (844) 789-3676.

### **WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ILLINOIS CNA REQUIREMENTS?**

More information on CNAs and the Illinois requirements can be found on the HCWR [Public Website](#). Click on “CNA Facts” on the left side of the page.