

NURSING PROFESSIONALS LIVING IN SOUTHWEST GEORGIA WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE NURSE REENTRY PROGRAM

Q&A

Q: How many parts are there to the Reentry Program and how long does each take?

A: There are 3 parts to the entire reentry process:

- ❖ The Georgia Board of Nursing application process and initial meeting with the AHEC reentry coordinator can take anywhere from 1-2 months, depending on how long it takes to complete required documents.
- ❖ There is a required self-study didactic component comprised of 29 modules, with associated exam questions that must be completed with a passing score of 80% or higher. The didactic component is designed to reflect 40 hours of study and testing. The average amount of time past participants required is approximately 1-3 weeks.
- ❖ The clinical component requires 160 hours of hands-on, supervised experience which demands competent reproduction of tasks. Clinical schedules are dependent on the preceptor's schedule and availability. Most clinicals are completed in a 1-3 month period.

The completion of the reentry process is strongly influenced by the reentry candidate's ability/availability to accomplish all of the requirements/competencies in a timeline that fits their personal goals and needs. **Note:** Once a temporary license has been issued by the Georgia Board of Nursing, the entire reentry process must be completed within 6 months or the candidate must begin the entire process from the beginning, if still interested.

Q: What will I need to do to enroll in your Reentry Program?

- A:
- ❖ Access the Georgia Board of Nursing website at <http://sos.ga.gov/georgia-board-nursing#> and download the application for reentry as a nurse.
 - ❖ Complete the application and return it to the Board of Nursing along with the indication that you desire to enroll in SOWEGA-AHEC's Nurse Reentry Program. SOWEGA-AHEC has been approved by the Georgia Board of Nursing as an authorized provider of reentry services.
 - ❖ Contact SOWEGA-AHEC's Nurse Reentry Coordinator and schedule an appointment to request services.
 - ❖ Board acceptance of your application and SOWEGA-AHEC's determination will initiate a search for a preceptor/facility willing to provide clinical experience for your reentry clinical requirement.
 - ❖ Once a viable preceptor has been identified, agreement will be established for services from SOWEGA-AHEC.
 - ❖ The didactic study material and modules will be provided and the process of reentry will proceed.

Note: If your name has changed, include a copy of marriage certificate, divorce decree or court order. Currently, you must be living in the 38-county SOWEGA-AHEC region (see county listing at www.sowega-ahec.org) in order to be considered as a potential reentry student for our AHEC.

Q: Who completes Form A, B, and C for the Board of Nursing?

A: The RN Reentry Coordinator at SOWEGA-AHEC will complete the forms, once you have sent in the rest of the application.

Q: Prior to meeting with the AHEC's nurse reentry coordinator, what do I need to do?

- A:
- ❖ Get a history and physical exam (within the last 6 months) that states you are in good health. No specific form is needed. A signed statement/letter is acceptable.
 - ❖ Get PPD or chest X-ray (if history of positive PPD skin test within past 12 months).
 - ❖ Get Tetanus/Diphtheria (DTaP) booster within past 12 months.
 - ❖ Provide AHEC with proof of current immunizations for: MMR (or Rubella titer), Polio, DTaP, Varicella virus, and Hepatitis B series. Positive antibody titers are acceptable. If you have not had the Hepatitis-B series, begin series immediately, or you may decline by submitting a waiver.
 - ❖ Provide proof of current American Heart Association or American Red Cross CPR certification. The "Provider" version is preferred. This must be valid for the entire reentry supervised practice time period.

Q: How long will the entire reentry program take?

A: It takes anywhere between two to six months, depending on your time management and availability during the didactic (self-study) and clinical components.

Q: After I meet with the AHEC's reentry coordinator, how soon can I begin?

A: Contact the AHEC when the Board of Nursing issues your temporary license online. Estimates are made based on the success of obtaining a valid preceptor and that preceptor's availability. Once a preceptor is identified, agreement for services can be arranged and you can receive the materials for your didactic studies.

Q: How does the didactic portion work?

- A: You receive access to 29-module self-study curriculum from AHEC.
- ❖ You will take a test after each module.
 - ❖ Submit all 29 tests when you have completed all the modules. You must pass with a minimum score of 80% on each module in order to move into the clinical phase.
 - ❖ The tests are open book.
 - ❖ There is no penalty for failure to pass a module with 80% or higher score. If you do not pass a module, you can restudy the module and retake the test.
 - ❖ We are trying to ensure that you have regained basic knowledge in each of the 29 areas.

Q: What is the cost for the entire program?

- A: The total cost of the RN Reentry Program through SOWEGA-AHEC is \$1,200.
- ❖ \$600 is expected at the time an agreement is legally entered into between SOWEGA-AHEC and the reentry candidate.
 - ❖ \$600 is expected before the first day of clinical rotation.

Q: Are there any other costs associated with the program?

A: You will have to pay for your immunizations, physical exam, malpractice insurance, CPR certification, background check, the Board of Nursing's application fee, Jurisprudence Exam fees, drug screening that may be required by the clinical site, and shipping costs if curriculum is mailed to you. **Note:** Expenses incurred during clinical rotations may include transportation, meals, uniforms/clothing, and housing needs.

Q: How often will I meet with AHEC Reentry Coordinator?

A: At least 2 times:

- ❖ The first time will be when the reentry request is initiated and the agreement for services is entered into.
- ❖ Then, at the end of your clinical rotation (usual the last clinic day). The Georgia Board of Nursing Forms B and C require notarization, so the Reentry Coordinator needs to be present, along with the preceptor.
- ❖ **Note:** You can expect the coordinator to also communicate with you via phone, text, mail and email, as needed.

Q: I have not practiced in the last four years, do I need a reentry program?

A: The Georgia Board of Nursing states: "Applicants that cannot document three months or 500 hours of licensed practice as a registered nurse within the last four years immediately preceding the date of application must complete a Board-approved reentry program."

Q: I have not practiced for years, do you think I can do this?

A: Yes! We have been doing this for >15 years and have had nurses who have been out of nursing for as many as 17 years who have been successful in completing the program and obtaining employment as a nursing professional. Effective January 2017, as an added incentive, Georgia RN's are invited to apply for a multi-state license in which 28 states participate.

Q: What if I do not finish the Reentry program within the six months in which my temporary license has been issued?

A: You must reapply to the Board of Nursing and start the process over from the beginning.

Q: Who actually contacts the facility to obtain a preceptor?

A: The AHEC's Nurse Reentry Coordinator will work with you to identify someone at an appropriate hospital, surgical center, Primary Care clinic, or Public Health Department setting who is qualified and willing to precept your clinical rotation. You may initiate contact with a specific facility. Be aware that you may need to meet with the facility's human resources or education director to ascertain their partnership.

Q: Do I have to do the 160 hours in a hospital?

A: No. the Board allows for clinical experiences to be obtained in a variety of settings, to include hospitals, Primary Care clinics, surgical centers, and Public Health departments. The appropriate facility for your clinicals will be tailored to your professional goals.

Q: May I have more than one clinical preceptor for my experience?

A: No.

Q: What role does the clinical site play?

- A: ❖ They allow you to attend their facility's orientation (the orientation does not count towards your required 160 hours).
- ❖ They identify a qualified RN, who has practiced at least 1.5 years in his/her role, to supervise you.
- ❖ They allow you to spend 160 hours of supervised time in the facility in order to help you reenter the workforce. You will not get paid while doing the 160 hours of clinicals. This is not a shadowing experience. You can expect to function as a licensed nurse once competency of a task has been established.

Q: Will I have to have a criminal background check?

- A: Each institution requires some type of background check. We will inform you of how to proceed once the institution has been identified. Also, the Georgia Board of Nursing requires a criminal background check from a specific venue, in addition to what the institution may require.

Q: Is an institution obligated to let me do the clinicals if something negative shows up in my background check?

- A: No.

Q: Who arranges the actual hours I will work during my clinicals?

- A: You and the preceptor work together to make those arrangements, but you must document the actual days and hours worked and submit that information to AHEC at the end of your clinicals.

Q: Will the facility require that I work for them once I finish the Reentry Program?

- A: No, but they are probably hoping that their investment in you will yield future employment at their facility. While there is no obligation by either party to continue a working relationship, facilities do tend to offer competent reentry nurses employment opportunities.

Q: Are there certain competencies I must demonstrate during the clinical experience?

- A: Yes. You and your preceptor will be given a copy of the competencies that are expected to be demonstrated for that specific type of facility.

Q: Do I have to work 12-hour shifts?

- A: Most hospital nurses have schedules with 12 hour shifts. While 12 hour shifts are not mandatory, effective training occurs with 8 - 12 hour shifts. Plan on a minimum of 8 hours per shift. Coordination of your shift will ultimately be between you and your preceptor.

Q: If I work 7AM to 3PM and take 30 minutes for lunch, how many hours will I get credit for towards the needed 160 hours?

- A: 7.5 hours. Lunches and breaks do not count as part of the 160 hours.

Q: What do I wear to work?

A: Your preceptor will advise you on the professional wear expected during your clinical rotation. Examples include scrubs, color-coded garments, lab coats, closed-toe shoes, etc.

Q: Do I need malpractice liability insurance?

A: Yes, but you will not be eligible to obtain it until you obtain your temporary license from the Board of Nursing. You must have proof of malpractice insurance prior to beginning your clinical rotation.

Q: Do I need accidental health insurance (medical coverage) during my supervised practice period?

A: Yes. You must maintain personal medical coverage, as the facility is not responsible for providing for your medical needs.