

Your journey to registration as a nurse: a reference sheet for Ontario RN and RPN nursing students



Your first step: create an account

As you near the end of your nursing program, CNO will reach out via email when it's time for you to start the application process. Follow the steps in that email to create your account in our applicant portal.

- ⚠ **Tip:** To avoid creating a duplicate profile within our system, use the email address we contacted you at to set up your account.
- ⚠ **Tip:** Your name as shown in your CNO account should match your citizenship documents. Please [contact us](#) if there is a discrepancy.



Authorization to work

Upload proof of citizenship, residency status or [other authorization](#) to practice nursing in Ontario to the applicant portal.

- 🕒 **Timing:** Can be completed at any time during the application process.



Jurisprudence exam

Complete this multiple-choice exam to demonstrate your understanding of the [laws, regulations and standards](#) that guide nursing practice in Ontario.

- 💰 **Cost:** See our list of [Application and Membership fees](#).
- 🕒 **Timing:** Can be completed online at any time during the application process.
- 🕒 **Expires:** Once you pass the exam, that pass is valid toward your registration for up to five years from the date you passed.

⚠ **Tip:** Once you pay your exam fee, you have 30 days to write the exam. You have unlimited exam attempts within those 30 days.

💡 **Tip:** Use our [study resources](#) and review these [sample exam questions](#) to prepare.



Police criminal record check

Via the applicant portal, create an account with our secure, third-party criminal record check provider. If there are issues, the provider will contact you directly. [Learn more.](#)

- Cost:** \$22.70 (plus HST), paid directly to the third-party provider.
- Timing:** Can be completed at any time during the application process.
- Expires:** Once complete, valid towards your registration for up to six months.

Tip: Use your legal name, and the same email address associated with your CNO account.



Character, conduct and health declaration

Truthfully respond to questions about your [suitability to practice](#) nursing via the applicant portal.

- Timing:** Can be completed at any time during the application process.

Tip: Review your answers carefully before submitting — make sure you've only ticked the boxes you meant to tick.



Other registrations

Let us know if you are registered as a nurse anywhere else and arrange for that regulator to provide us with [verification of your registration](#).

- Timing:** Can be completed at any time during the application process.



Nursing education

You meet this requirement when you complete an approved nursing program in Ontario for the category in which you are applying. [Learn more.](#)



Evidence of practice

You meet this requirement when you complete an approved nursing program in Ontario. [Learn more.](#)

- Expires:** Valid towards your registration for up to three years from the date you completed your nursing program.



Transition to practice

You meet this requirement when you complete an approved nursing program in Ontario. [Learn more.](#)



Expires: Valid towards your registration for up to three years from the date you completed your nursing program.



Language proficiency (in English or French)

You meet this requirement when you complete an approved nursing program in Ontario. [Learn more.](#)



Expires: Valid towards your registration for up to two years from the date you completed your nursing program.



Registration exam

The registration exam tests your nursing knowledge, skills and judgment. RN applicants write the [NCLEX-RN](#) and RPN applicants write the [REx-PN](#).



Costs: Paid directly to the exam provider, see our list of [Application and Membership fees](#).



Tip: Use our [NCLEX-RN resources](#) and [REx-PN resources](#) to study and prepare.



Become eligible to write the exam

When you're ready to take the exam, refer to the message we sent you in the applicant portal message centre. Follow the instructions to create an account with Pearson, the exam provider. Pay the exam fee and wait to receive an email from them called your Authorization to Test. This confirms your exam window.



Tip: [Accommodation requests](#) need to be approved by CNO before you can write the exam.



Schedule your exam

Once you have your Authorization to Test email, log in to your Pearson account and choose a testing location, date and time.



Timing: Your Authorization to Test is valid for 90 days.



Optional: Registering in the Temporary Class

You can register in the [Temporary Class](#) and practice under specific terms, conditions and limitations while preparing for the registration exam.

You need:

- An open General Class application with all requirements met except for the [registration exam](#)
- To create a new Temporary Class application
- An offer of employment from an [approved facility](#) in Ontario

To apply to the Temporary Class, create a new, separate Temporary Class application and upload your completed [Temporary Class Offer of Employment form](#).

 **Costs:** See our list of [Application and Membership fees](#).

 **Timing:** You are eligible once you have met all requirements except for the registration exam.

 **Expires:** Your registration in the Temporary Class will have an expiry date, and once it expires, you cannot reapply, as you may only register in the Temporary Class once.



Our tips for a smooth, easy registration:

- If you are nearing graduation and have not heard from CNO about applying, check your email's junk or spam folders and any alternate email addresses first. Then contact your school to verify if your information was sent to us. You can contact us if it's been more than 15 days since your school sent your information.
- When creating your account with CNO, make sure to use the same email address as the one we reached out to you at, and double check it for typos. If you use a different email, it will create a duplicate account in our system, which causes delays. If you'd like to use a different email address, you can update your email preferences after you've created your account.
- We [recommend using a desktop or laptop computer](#) (rather than a tablet or smart phone) to create your application. It's easier to view the information in the portal this way.
- Review everything carefully before submitting. Make sure all answers are complete and accurate. (For example, make sure you've only ticked the boxes you meant to tick, especially when completing your health and conduct and findings declarations.) If we find something inconsistent or you haven't filled something out, we will follow up with you to sort it out — this takes time.
- If you need to contact third parties for documents, do so as soon as possible in case there are delays on their end.
- Don't register for your exam until we tell you are eligible. Registering for the exam before CNO tells you that you are eligible can cause delays.

- Monitor your email and the applicant portal message centre so you don't miss important communication from us.
- Be mindful of the expiry dates for requirements you've already met. Going back and re-meeting a requirement because your evidence expired can be time-consuming. You can see the expiry date associated with each requirement in the applicant portal.
- Prepare well for the [NCLEX-RN](#) or [REx-PN](#). Use the study materials on our website.
- Confused? [Reach out!](#) We're here to answer your questions and support you.