

HealthForceOntario

# Guidelines for Participation in the Nursing Graduate Guarantee for New Graduate Nurses

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Nursing Secretariat

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

# Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1. Program Overview</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Nursing Graduate Guarantee</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Definition of a New Graduate Nurse</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Goals of the Initiative</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>How It Works</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Need Help?</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Chapter 2. Eligibility and Matching Process</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Eligibility for Participation for New Graduate Nurses</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Eligibility for Employers</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Matching Process for New Graduate Nurses</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Matching Process for Employers</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapter 3. Funding and Reporting Requirements</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Amount of Funding</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Use of Funds</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>How Funds Will Be Provided</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Reporting Requirements for Employers Receiving Funding</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix “A”: Minimum Requirements for Orientation</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Appendix “B”: Eligible Re-Investment Initiatives for the Nursing Graduate Guarantee</b>	<b>18</b>



## Program Overview

# 1

# Program Overview

## The Nursing Graduate Guarantee

The Nursing Graduate Guarantee is designed to support every new Ontario nursing graduate (RN and RPN) in finding full time employment immediately upon graduation.

The Nursing Graduate Guarantee is a comprehensive strategy designed to build capacity within the health care system for nursing workforce planning and management. It is part of the HealthForceOntario, which is the province's strategy to ensure that Ontarians have access to the right number and mix of qualified healthcare providers, now and in the future.

## Definition of a New Graduate Nurse

“New Graduate Nurse” means a person who has graduated from an Ontario accredited nursing program on or after January 1, 2008, for the period of time that the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) continues to implement the Nursing Graduate Guarantee.

## The Goals of the Initiative

This initiative seeks to:

- Provide every New Graduate Nurse with the opportunity to obtain full time employment in Ontario;
- Promote the availability of permanent full time positions for New Graduate Nurses;
- Facilitate “matching” between New Graduate Nurses and Employers;
- Create bridging positions for New Graduate Nurses;
- Support Ontario's New Graduate Nurses as they transition to practice;
- Improve integration of New Graduate Nurses into the workforce;
- Promote retention among Ontario's New Graduate Nurses;
- Facilitate recruitment to all sectors;
- Transform Employer practices to maximize availability of full time nursing positions for all nurses;
- Increase the total supply of nurses in Ontario by providing full time employment to nurses who may otherwise seek employment in other jurisdictions or professions.

## How It Works

The Nursing Graduate Guarantee will use the Online **Nursing Graduate Portal** to link New Graduate Nurses with Employers ([www.healthforceontario.ca](http://www.healthforceontario.ca)).

MOHLTC will provide funding for temporary, full time, above staffing complement positions for 26 weeks for New Graduate Nurses who are matched with Employers with the expectation that these bridging positions will lead to permanent full-time employment for participating New Graduate Nurses.

Accordingly, after a minimum period of 12 weeks, but within 26 weeks, the MOHLTC expects the Employer will hire the New Graduate Nurse into a permanent full time position unless the Employer considers the New Graduate Nurse to be unsuitable for employment (taking into consideration any applicable collective agreement requirements). If the Employer chooses to terminate the employment agreement with the New Graduate Nurse prior to the end of their obligations, the Employer must return the balance of funds to the MOHLTC.

Employers must commit to funding an additional six-week, full time, above staffing complement position for the New Graduate Nurse where the New Graduate Nurse is not bridged into permanent full time employment within 26 weeks.

The bridging position will provide the New Graduate Nurses with an extended orientation that meets minimum requirements, as set out in Appendix “A”, and valuable job experience. New Graduate Nurses will be paid sector-appropriate wages, based on the rates negotiated between the Employer and the applicable collective bargaining unit, and based on the starting salary for a New Graduate Nurse at the Employer’s organization, as applicable, including up to 24% benefits.

***Employers are expected to commit to best efforts to bridge the New Graduate Nurse to permanent full time employment.*** Employers must submit a plan providing an outline of how they expect to bridge the New Graduate Nurse. MOHLTC will work with Employers and others to develop additional comprehensive strategies to raise the level of full time employment for all nurses in the health care system.

Where the New Graduate Nurse is hired into a permanent, full time position during the 26 weeks bridging position (but after the initial 12 weeks), the Employer may use the balance of the funds for other nursing initiatives. Appendix “B”, attached, lists eligible nursing initiative expenses.

### Need Help?

For further information regarding the Nursing Graduate Guarantee, please visit [www.healthforceontario.ca](http://www.healthforceontario.ca) or contact the HealthForceOntario Info Line at **1-866-989-9699** (TTY **1-800-387-5559**).

# Eligibility and Matching Process

# 2

# Eligibility and Matching Process

## Eligibility for Participation for New Graduate Nurses

Participation in the Nursing Graduate Guarantee is open to all Ontario New Graduate Nurses provided that they register on the Online Nursing Graduate Portal within six months of course completion (date after which final grades have been received).

## Eligibility for Employers

The Nursing Graduate Guarantee is open to all sectors including Hospital, Long-Term Care, Home Care, Mental Health, Public Health, and Primary Care provided they register on the portal.

An **Employer** must:

- be a health care organization that employs nurses and is funded by the government of Ontario for the provision of nursing services; and,
- has the infrastructure to support successful implementation of the initiative. This may include physical infrastructure, nursing education or professional development initiatives and management supports.

## Matching Process for New Graduate Nurses

To be eligible to participate in the Nursing Graduate Guarantee, the New Graduate Nurse must use the Online Nursing Graduate Portal (accessible at <http://www.healthforceontario.ca>) and follow the matching process outlined below:

### Step 1: Registration

The New Graduate Nurse must register on the Nursing Graduate Portal by accessing <http://www.healthforceontario.ca> and following the “New Ontario Nursing Graduates - REGISTER HERE” link.

### Step 2: Nursing Graduate Portal Matching

The New Graduate Nurse must use the portal to find an Employer “match” by:

1. Consulting the Online Nursing Graduate Portal job registry regularly and applying to positions offered on the portal by Employers within 6 months of the New Graduate Nurse’s course completion date (date after which final grads have been received);
2. Confirming each month by reply e-mail that the New Graduate Nurse remains interested in being matched with an Employer;

3. Completing the Employer's interviewing process, where the Employer selects the New Graduate Nurse candidate for an interview;
4. Accepting such bridging position through the Nursing Graduate Portal, where the New Graduate Nurse is offered a bridging position. Please Note: New Graduate Nurses have 72 hours to cancel acceptance of the job offer. Once the 72 hour cancellation period has passed and there has been no notice of cancellation from the New Graduate Nurse, it will be assumed that both the Employer and the New Graduate Nurse have agreed to the match and that a match has been made; and,
5. Updating contact information (including email address) if it changes.

### **Step 3: Obtain Temporary Registration**

The New Graduate Nurse must receive Temporary Registration with the College of Nurses of Ontario before commencing employment. For more information on the requirements for Temporary Registration visit the CNO website at <http://www.cno.org>.

## **Matching Process for Employers**

To be eligible for funding, the Employer must follow the process outlined below:

### **Step 1: Matching Process**

The Employer must:

1. Register on HFOJobs by accessing the job portal through <http://www.healthforceontario.ca>;
  2. Post New Graduate Nurse bridging positions by completing the job posting and specifying that it is a New Graduate Nurse bridging position;
  3. Follow the Employer's regular interview process with any New Graduate Nurse(s) who the Employer wishes to consider for a bridging position; and,
  4. Provide any selected New Graduate Nurse with an offer for a temporary, full time, above staffing complement bridging position (that abides by any applicable collective agreement requirements) using the HFOJobs online portal.
- The Ministry encourages early consultation with collective agreement representatives to ensure requirements are met.**

Please Note: The New Graduate Nurse has 72 hours to cancel an accepted employment offer. Employers should not assume that the acceptance of the position is final and a match has been made until the 72 hour cancellation period has passed.

### Step 2: Confirmation and Agreement

Once the New Graduate Nurse accepts a bridging position, the Nursing Graduate Portal will generate a form and the Employer must:

1. Submit the form to MOHLTC confirming the details of the offer;
2. Enter into a funding agreement with MOHLTC outlining the Employer's obligations under the Nursing Graduate Guarantee;
3. The New Graduate Nurse must apply to the College of Nurses of Ontario for Temporary Registration and cannot begin work until this has been confirmed; and,
4. The New Graduate Nurse must begin working within six months of course completion (that is, within six months of receiving final grades).

### Step 3: Provide the Bridging Position

The Employer must provide the New Graduate Nurse with a bridging position that meets the following criteria:

- *Initial Twelve Weeks* - The New Graduate Nurse must be provided with an extended orientation above staffing complement for a minimum period of 12 weeks (during which the New Graduate Nurse cannot be bridged into a permanent, full time position). Orientation must meet minimum requirements, as specified in the attached Appendix "A";
- *Subsequent Fourteen Weeks* - Following the initial 12 weeks of the bridging position, the New Graduate Nurse must continue to be provided with an extended orientation above staffing complement for an additional 14 weeks, unless the New Graduate Nurse is bridged to a permanent, full time position at an earlier date (but after the initial 12 weeks);
- *Additional Employer-Funded Six-Weeks* - Where the New Graduate Nurse is **not hired** into a permanent, full time position within or immediately following the 26 weeks bridging position, **the Employer must fund and provide a six-week, full time position above staffing levels.**
- *Suspension of Funding Following Failure of Examination* - Where the New Graduate Nurse does not successfully pass the applicable Canadian Registered Nurse Examination or Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination on his/her first attempt, **the Ministry will suspend the New Graduate Nurse's funding under the Nursing Graduate Guarantee;**
- *Continuation of New Graduate Nurse Funding After Passes Subsequent Examination Subject to Any Applicable Collective Agreement Requirements-*

Where the Ministry suspended funding for the New Graduate Nurse's participation in the Nursing Graduate Guarantee because the New Graduate Nurse did not pass his or her first attempt of the Examination, the Ministry may continue funding the New Graduate Nurse if he or she subsequently passes the second or third attempt at the Examination and if the Employer has an available Supernumerary Position;

- *Termination of Funding Following Failure of Examination* – Where the New Graduate Nurse does not successfully pass the applicable Canadian Registered Nurse Examination or Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination on his/her third attempt, **the Ministry funding for the New Graduate's participation in the Nursing Graduate Guarantee will be terminated..**

**Step 4: Hire the New Graduate Nurse into a Permanent, Full time Position**

The MOHLTC expects the Employer to make best efforts to hire the New Graduate Nurse into a permanent, full time position, during the period of the bridging position or during the Employer-funded six-week supernumerary position, unless the Employer considers the New Graduate Nurse to be unsuitable for employment (taking into consideration any applicable collective agreement requirements).



# Funding and Reporting Requirements

# 3

# Funding and Reporting Requirements

## Amount of Funding

### MOHLTC Funding

MOHLTC will fund the 26 weeks of salary dollars for each New Graduate Nurse participating in the program. Should the New Graduate Nurse be bridged to a permanent full time position after 12 weeks but prior to 26 weeks, the Employer may use the remainder of the funds for certain other nursing initiatives, as further described in the attached Appendix “B”.

### Employer Funding

Where the New Graduate Nurse is not bridged to a permanent full time position during the 26 weeks, MOHLTC-funded period, the Employer must fund a period of full time, above staffing employment which must continue until the earliest of: (i) the date the New Graduate Nurse is hired into a permanent, full time position; or (ii) six weeks from the date the MOHLTC-funded bridging position ended.

## Use of Funds

The Employer must use the funds provided under the Nursing Graduate Guarantee as follows:

### *Funds for the Initial 12 Week Period*

The funds applicable to the initial 12 week period must be used to provide salary dollars and benefits for the New Graduate Nurse. These funds may not be used for salary costs of nurse educators and/or coordinators or mentors, or for similar purposes.

### *Funds for the Period Following Initial 12 Weeks*

Where the New Graduate Nurse **is not hired** into a permanent, full time position **during the 26 weeks bridging** position, the funds equivalent to salary dollars and benefits for this period must be used for the purpose of providing such salary dollars and benefits. These funds may not be used for the salary costs of nurse educators and/or coordinators or mentors, or for similar purposes.

Where the New Graduate Nurse **is hired** into a permanent, full time position during the 26 week bridging position (but after the initial 12 weeks), the Employer may use the balance of the funds (equivalent to the salary dollars and benefits which would have funded the remaining period of the bridging position) for other nursing initiatives. Appendix “B”, attached, lists eligible nursing initiative expenses.

**Please note that any applicable re-investment funds for new graduates who have been hired into permanent full-time positions must be spent by the end of each funding year (March 31<sup>st</sup>) or these funds will be subject to recovery by the ministry.**

### How Funds Will Be Provided

MOHLTC will provide the applicable funds as follows:

- 80% of the applicable funds will be provided to the eligible Employer by direct deposit following the receipt by MOHLTC of the executed funding agreement if the start date of New Graduates hired by the Employer is between the months of April to mid-October.
- if the start date of the New Graduate is between mid-October to March, the percentage of funding flowed will be gradually deferred (at approximately 10% for every month) to account for the amount of funds that can be spent by the end of the fiscal year (March 31<sup>st</sup>). The outstanding funding as it applies to the first 80% installment will be flowed in the next fiscal year; and,
- provide to the Employer up to the remaining 20% of the applicable funds once the Employer meets all the reporting requirements to the satisfaction of MOHLTC.

### Reporting Requirements for Employers Receiving Funding

Employers who receive funding under the Nursing Graduate Guarantee will be required to demonstrate accountability for use of the funds.

The funding agreement will outline the terms and conditions for the use of the approved funds and will stipulate the reporting requirements of the Employer, including the completion of a final report.

Reports will require the verification of any applicable RN/RPN collective bargaining representative(s).

The Ministry strongly recommends early consultation with collective bargaining representatives and ongoing dialogue in order to ensure their ability to comply with this requirement.

Failure to obtain verification from collective bargaining representatives will result in the suspension of the final balance payment until the Ministry has received a complete final report or a suitable explanation of the variance.



# Appendices

# Appendix "A"

## Minimum Requirements for Orientation

The minimum orientation requirements for the Nursing Graduate Guarantee initiative are as follows:

- Organizations must provide New Graduate Nurses with a minimum of 12 weeks orientation including a minimum of 3 to 6 days of general orientation to the organization.
- The organization must clearly define the roles of the New Graduate Nurse, mentor and orientation leader.
- A learning plan must be developed by the New Graduate Nurse and mentor, with input from the orientation leader, and should be used to monitor the New Graduate Nurse's progress and to guide evaluation.
- Orientation to meet goals of the learning plan should include a variety of teaching strategies and delivery methods to educate on competencies.

# Appendix “B”

## Eligible Re-investment Initiatives for the Nursing Graduate Guarantee

### I. Intraprofessional Mentorship and Preceptorship Programs

Funding may be used for intraprofessional (nurse to nurse) mentorship and/or preceptorship programs.

#### Definitions of Mentorship and Preceptorship for the Nursing Graduate Guarantee

**Mentorship** is a formal supportive relationship between two, or more, health professionals that has the potential to result in professional growth and development for both mentors and mentees. Mentorship helps to maximize a person’s professional practice. While it is often used to support the transition of new graduates, preparing them for the realities of the workforce, it may occur at any stage in a person’s career. Outcomes of mentorship may include enhanced critical thinking and leadership capacity, improved self esteem and confidence, career enrichment and improved job satisfaction. A mentorship program is an initiative that has formal structures in place, which promotes and supports the relationship between a mentor and mentees.

**Preceptorship** is a formal supportive relationship between health professionals and students. These relationships are established to support the preceptee in achieving specific learning objectives, usually tailored to the acquisition of knowledge and skills specific to their practice setting. Potential outcomes of a preceptorship include: skill and knowledge acquisition, anxiety reduction, and professional socialization. A preceptorship program is an initiative that has formal structures in place that supports the relationship between a preceptor and a student preceptee.

### II. 80/20 For Staff Nurses

Funding may be used to back-fill staff nurses, allowing them to spend 20% of their time on professional development opportunities (e.g. work on nursing councils, patient teaching, research, education). The remaining 80% of their time would be spent in clinical practice.

### III. Internships for Experienced Nurses in Specialty Areas

Funding may be used to allow more experienced nurses to spend time in a supernumerary internship in a specialty area to assist them in gaining the knowledge and skills required to fill present and potential vacancies.

### IV. Initiatives to Support Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) who are Registrants in Ontario and Nurses Re-Entering the Workforce

Funding may be used to help IENs who are currently registered in Ontario transition into the nursing workforce.

Funding may be used for extended orientation for nurses who are currently registered in Ontario and re-entering the nursing workforce.

