*Policy for Reimbursements to Nursing Facilities for*

*Nursing Assistant Certification (NAC) Training and Testing*

**Purpose:** This policy sets out:

1. The laws authorizing the Nursing Assistant Training and Competency Evaluation Programs (NATCEP)
2. How ALTSA reimburses for Nursing Assistant Certification (NAC) training programs and competency evaluation programs for Medicaid Nursing Facilities (NFs).

All NFs will be notified of these policies and procedures on an annual basis.

**Introduction**

As part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1987, Medicare and Medicaid regulations were amended to require the certification of nursing assistants employed by Medicare and Medicaid participating facilities.

The certification of nursing assistants (NA’s) was to ensure that there was standardized academic education, skills, and practical learning related to caring for individuals who are residents of nursing facilities.

Programs are conducted by approved Nursing Facilities, Community Colleges, Private Vocation Schools, High Schools, Hospitals, County Jobs Programs and Private Training Programs.

**Employer Reimbursement Responsibility**

**The Code of Federal Regulations provides the following direction regarding the obligation and responsibilities for payment or reimbursement to Nurse Aides (NA) for Nursing Assistant Training and Competency Evaluation Program (NATCEP) training course work at 42 CFR §483.158(b)**

(b) FFP is available for State expenditures associated with nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs and competency evaluation programs only for-

(1) Nurse aides employed by the facility.

(2) Nurse aides who have an offer of employment from a facility.

(3) Nurse aides who become employed by a facility not later than 12 months after completing a nurse aide training and competency evaluation program or competency evaluation program; or

(4) Nurse aides who receive an offer of employment from a facility not later than 12 months after completing a nurse aid training and competency evaluation program or competency evaluation program.

Nursing facilities are **not** allowed to enter into a contract with the student to continue employment with the facility providing the training.

**Reimbursement by DSHS**

The NAC reimbursement program covers the following components:

* All costs associated with the training coursework
* Fees for textbooks or other required course materials
* Administration fees for competency examination and re-testing examinations, if necessary, either both parts or just the written/oral or just the skills portion of the examination.

DSHS encourages facilities that accept Medicaid residents to participate in the NAC reimbursement program. This program reimburses facilities for the Medicaid proportion of NA education costs incurred by the facilities, for full time employees (32+ hours per week). Reimbursement requests must be submitted to DSHS on the current forms, available on our website at <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/management-services-division/nursing-assistant-certified-reimbursement-forms>, and emailed by the appropriate quarterly due date. The website also contains instructions and helpful information for filling out the reimbursement forms.

**Current DSHS policy**

If a nursing assistant had paid for their training and any testing expenses prior to becoming a full time (32+ hours per week) nursing facility employee, and it is the first nursing facility to hire them within 12 months of completion of a NAC training and competency evaluation program, the facility must reimburse the full-time nursing assistant for all of their training and testing expenses per Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §483.158(a)(b)(1)(2)(3)(4).

Reimbursement may be made using the following process and procedures:

* If at any time the facility prefers to make reimbursement to a nursing assistant in a single “lump sum payment” they may do so
* Reimbursement for training and testing expenses is not considered salary but is a repayment and is not subject to payroll deductions.
* If at any time the nursing assistant or the facility terminates employment, or employment is no longer full time, the reimbursement ends and no further reimbursement is due the nursing assistant.
* If the nursing assistant becomes employed at another nursing facility, that facility has **no** responsibility for reimbursement.
* Facilities should only reimburse for books, supplies, tuition, and testing fee expenses when the nursing assistant presents a receipt that clearly show they have paid for the item or service.
* At the time the initial payment is made to the nursing assistant, the facility is encouraged to write on each receipt a statement indicating that they have begun the reimbursement process for this nursing assistant. The statement should be signed, dated, and a copy retained in the facility files.

Medicaid reimbursement is available to most nursing facilities for nursing assistant training and testing expenses.

Most nursing facilities are eligible to request Medicaid reimbursement for repayment costs and other NAC training and testing expenses by using the “Nursing Assistant Training and Testing Reimbursement Process.” Reimbursement will be made to the facility at their Medicaid rate. When a nursing facility holds the training at their own facility, they may request reimbursement for the following:

* Facility trainers, on-line training or contract trainers used by the facility per class. The maximum number of training hours for which ALTSA will reimburse is 150 hours per class per quarter. \*\*No matter how many instructors teach the class\*\* In addition, the maximum amount of payroll taxes we will reimburse for is 7.85% of wages, no matter what the taxes actually paid were.
* Books and teaching materials
* Equipment required to deliver the training, such as televisions and DVD players dedicated to the NATCEP program
* Anatomically correct mannequins
* CPR classes and supplies used in the clinical portion of the program

Supplies and moveable asset expenses over $750 per item will be paid through the NAC training program. This is for classroom specific items only and should correspond to average class sizes. For instance, if a facility generally only teaches 10 students, we will not allow 20 computers/tablets/etc. to be reimbursed. We would not allow items such as a bed hoist, since that is equipment that is normally used in the nursing home and could be borrowed for the class.

All reimbursement requests must include invoices and proof of payment for claimed expenses.

DSHS continues to promote the development of this necessary workforce and facilities cannot charge any of the students in their course for training.

When a graduate is hired full time (32+ hours per week) by a facility, the employee must be reimbursed in incremental payments, no slower than 1/12th per month.

Federal regulation and State administrative rule specifically prohibit charging trainees for participation if the trainee is employed by or has an offer of employment from a nursing facility. Facilities reported to be in violation of rules regarding charging for training or failure to reimburse or reimburse timely may be investigated by DSHS or its affiliates.