

**IMPLEMENTATION
THE SKILLED NURSING ASSISTANT
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
MARYLAND BOARD OF NURSING**

In 2004, legislation was passed (SB406/HB526) creating a specialized category of nursing assistant, the “skilled CNA”. The law authorizing this certification becomes effective October 1, 2004. Licensed nursing homes (NH) governed under COMAR 10.07.02 and Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Alternative Living Units (ALU) and Group Homes are eligible to employ the “skilled” CNA.

What Does the Skilled CNA do:

The “skilled CNA” performs delegated nursing functions that are routinely performed by a licensed nurse. The functions that may be considered for delegation are those that are performed over and over each day on the same patient care unit. The nursing functions performed by the “skilled CNA” are unique to the individual facility and the patient population the facility serves. Only licensed nursing homes, DDA ALU or group homes who have Board approved “skilled CNA” training programs may employ the skilled CNA.

How to Become a Skilled CNA Training Program:

- Any licensed nursing home or specific DDA-ALU or group home who is eligible for a “skilled CNA” training program if licensed and regularly surveyed by the appropriate state agency (e.g Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ), Developmental Disabilities Administration DDA).
- The licensed nursing home, DDA-ALU or group home must be in good standing with all state and federal licensing agencies and regulators.
- The facility is not required to have a Board approved CNA Training program in order to have a “skilled CNA” Training Program.
- In order to determine if a licensed nursing home or specific ALU or group home can sustain a dedicated position “skilled CNA”, position the facility/ALU/group home must examine multiple variables. This examination includes assessing the facility/ALU/group home patient population to determine what nursing functions are routinely performed multiple times per shift per day; for how many patients and for how many times per day per patient.
- The criteria to be utilized in assessing potential nursing functions for delegation would include but are not limited to:
 - What is the level or risk of potential harm to the client if performed incorrectly?
 - How frequently is the nursing function performed?
 - What is the stability of the resident(s)?
 - What is the level of skill proficiency required to perform the nursing functions?
 - Does the nursing function require the caregiver to alter or modify the sequential steps when performing the function?
 - How complex/complicated is the nursing function to be performed?

- Are these functions performed on the same unit of care (one patient care unit of the NH or one ALU/group home)?
 - What are the available nursing resources in the unit of care?
- Once the assessment has been concluded, the licensed nursing staff on the specific unit of care evaluates all the data and determines which nursing functions the nursing staff would delegate. This decision must be made by the licensed nursing staff on the unit – not nursing administration. The regulations describe all these requirements in greater detail.

Qualification of the Skilled CNA

- For a facility licensed under COMAR 10.07.02, the applicant shall meet the following requirements prior to admission to the facility’s “skilled” CNA program:
 1. Hold a current active CNA/GNA certificate in good standing.
 2. Possess at least one year full time experience as a GNA; and
 3. Be employed by the facility that is offering the Skilled training Program.
- In facilities licensed as developmental disabilities alternative living units, the applicant shall meet the following requirements prior to admission to the facility’s skilled CNA program.
 1. Hold a current CNA certificate in good standing.
 2. Possess at least one year of full time work experience as a CNA; and
 3. Be employed by the facility who is offering the skilled training program.

How Will a Skilled CNA be Certified

- When the CNA has successfully completed the “skilled” CNA Board approved training program, the training program will notify the Board by sending a Letter of Confirmation of the CNA’s successful completion of the program.
- The Board will add “skilled-NH” or “skilled-DDA” for the specific individual to the Board’s data base. A new certificate will not be printed. The individual’s additional skilled CNA certification can be viewed on the Board’s web page at www.mbon.org.
- The individual may obtain a new certificate with the new additional certification of “skilled-NH” or “skilled-DDA” for a processing fee of \$10.00.

Renewal of Skilled CNA

To renew the skilled CNA status the individual must:

- Actively practice as a skilled CNA in approved practice setting for 1000 hours in the two years immediately preceding renewal.
- Successfully complete a Board approved refresher course within the individual’s category of skilled CNA (DDA or HH), taught by an approved Skilled CNA Training Program.

- The current CNA renewal form will be modified to include the new category of “skilled CNA”. The category skilled CNA will be renewed during the usual CNA renewal cycle (which is every two years based on the individual’s birth month and birth year). The renewal fee for the CNA certificate will include the “skilled CNA.”. There will not be an additional renewal fee for the “skilled CNA”.

Can a Skilled CNA Change Employers -

- A Skilled CNA can change employers if the new employer is also a Maryland Board approved skilled CNA training program within the specific category e.g. skilled NH or skilled-DDA.
- The new employer is responsible and accountable for assessing the new employee’s competency as a “skilled CNA”. Any deficient or new activity, is to be taught to the individual prior to the individual functioning in the role of “skilled CNA”.

Can a Staffing Agency Employ/Assign the Skilled CNA –

- The “skilled CNA” is allowed to perform the delegated nursing functions only in the licensed nursing home or DDA-ALU/group home.
- The staffing agency may not assign the “skilled CNA” to work in a licensed nursing home or DDA-ALU/group home.
- The staffing agency may not apply to become as skilled CNA training program.

Can A Skilled CNA be assigned CNA/GNA/CMA Functions -

- In a facility licensed under COMAR 10.07.02 the “skilled CNA” may not be assigned to function simultaneously as a certified medicine aide
- In a facility licensed under COMAR 10.07.02 a “skilled CNA” may not assigned to function simultaneously as a GNA with primary responsibility to provide direct patient care to residents.
- In a facility licensed under COMAR 10.07.02 a “skilled CNA” may not assigned to function on more than two units of care during the assigned shift.
- In a DDA ALUN or group home a “skilled CNA” may function also simultaneously as a medication technician.
- In A DDA ALU or group home a “skilled CNA” may only be assigned to function in one ALU or group home per shift.

Are there Specific Licensed Nursing Supervision Requirements

- There are specific licensed nursing supervision requirements specific to each setting (licensed nursing home versus DDA-ALU/group home). The regulations address these specific requirements.

Are there Specific Requirements to teach in a Skilled CNA Program

- There are specific requirements for nurses who want to teach in a skilled CNA training program. The skilled CNA regulations address the specific requirements.

Endorsement From Out-of-State

- An individual may not be endorsed from out-of-state into a position of a skilled CNA.

Can a Student Nurse be a skilled CNA

The student nurse may be eligible for skilled CNA status by meeting the following criteria:

- Successfully completed all theory and clinical nursing courses required in order to enter the final year of a Board approved nursing education program. An official school Transcript is required. The individual must have been currently enrolled in the nursing program in the last 12 months.
- Holds a Maryland CNA certificate which is active and in good standing.
- Successful completion of a Board approved Skilled CNA Training Program.
- The category “skilled CNA” may be added for the CNA certificate for a \$10.00 processing fee. The applicant must submit a copy of the diploma from their nursing education program.

Can an Individual licensed as a RN or LPN out of the United States be a skilled CNA:

The international nurse may be eligible for skilled CNA status by meeting the following criteria:

- Holds a Maryland CNA certificate that is current and in good standing.
- Successful completion of a Board approved Skilled CNA Training Program
- The category “skilled CNA” may be added to the CNA certificate for a processing fee of \$10.00.