



**DENVER  
HEALTH™**  
— est. 1860 —



## BEGINNING YOUR NURSING CAREER

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*Nursing Student  
Toolkit*



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# 1. WELCOME

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Dear Nursing Student,

Welcome to Denver Health! I am Natalie Nicholson, DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC and I am honored to serve as the Chief Nursing Officer. As you begin your nursing journey, I want to personally welcome you to our institution—a place where learning, excellence, and compassionate care come together.

At Denver Health, we are proud to have a team of over 3,000 professionals across Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, and Rehabilitation Services. Every day, we are driven by a deep commitment to providing compassionate, respectful, and high-quality care to our patients and their families. We believe in accountability, transparency, and fostering a culture of belonging—values that shape everything we do. With over 1.4 million patient visits and nearly 300,000 individuals cared for last year alone, our impact is both profound and far-reaching.



Our commitment to nursing education is part of our legacy. In 1887, we opened the first nursing training school west of the Mississippi, setting the foundation for a tradition of excellence. Today, many of our nurses hold a bachelor's degree, and our national board certification rates exceed the national average, demonstrating our dedication to professional growth and high standards of care.

This Nursing Student Toolkit is designed to help you make the most of your time at Denver Health. It is a resource to guide your learning, foster your growth, and ignite your passion for healthcare. Here, you will be surrounded by a supportive, interprofessional team dedicated to preparing the next generation of healthcare professionals. Our goal is to create an environment where our employees—and soon, you—are proud to recommend Denver Health to friends, family, and colleagues.

We invite you to be part of our mission to become Colorado's most trusted healthcare provider. At Denver Health, you will have the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive alongside a team that is here for life's journey—offering mentorship, guidance, and unwavering support as you build a meaningful and rewarding career.

I look forward to witnessing your growth and celebrating your successes. Welcome to Denver Health!

With gratitude,

Natalie Nicholson, DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC

Chief Nursing Officer

## 2. WHY DENVER HEALTH

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- **Mission driven**
- **Career growth**
- **Shared leadership**
- **Values in action:**

Respect, Belonging, Accountability, and Transparency.

When you join Denver Health, you join a network of care. We are compassionate, mission-driven and committed to improving our communities.

High-quality care for all is at the heart of Denver Health's mission. As Colorado's primary safety-net institution, we are driven to serve the people of Denver regardless of their social or economic situations.

Denver Health has been serving the people of Denver as an pillar in the community since 1860. We care for the whole person by addressing factors like access to healthy food, housing, employment, transportation, and education.

Denver Health provides several rewarding career paths for nurses from our level one trauma center, to our urgent care centers, inpatient care at our main hospital, and outpatient care at community health centers located throughout the city. We welcome nurses from all career stages, whether you have many years of experience or have just completed your degree; there is a place for you at Denver Health.

Nurses are an essential part of our collaborative care teams. We welcome to you join our team, where you will have a chance to provide care to patients from all walks of life and handle cases at every level of complexity, unlike any other hospital system in the Rocky Mountain Region.

Denver Health Nurse Residency Program at Denver Health is recognized by the ANCC Practice Transition Accreditation Program® (PTAP).

### 3. BELONGING TO DENVER HEALTH

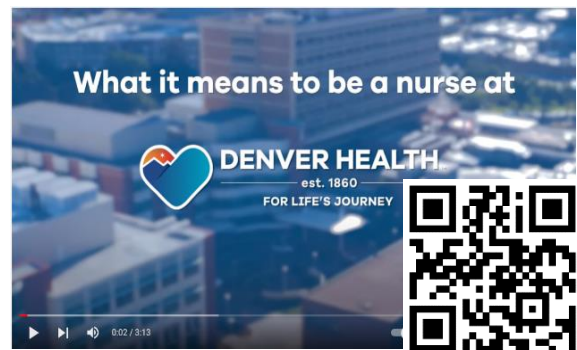
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#### How can I find my career fit?

Denver Health is actively hiring a variety of nurse positions. One of our greatest nursing-related priorities is our nurse-to-patient ratio and focusing on appropriate staffing. To identify all the career opportunities available, visit

[DenverHealth.org/NursingJobs](https://denverhealth.org/NursingJobs):

- Click on "Apply as an External Candidate"
- Type "New Grad" in the Job Title field to see open positions.



#### New grad RN position requirements

- Graduation from an accredited Nursing Education Program with up to one year of RN experience.
- Associate degree in Nursing (ADN) and Bachelor Degree (BSN) candidates may apply.
- Apply and interview up to 120 days before NCLEX date; must be a licensed RN by employment start date.
- BLS Healthcare Provider Certification (American Heart Association or Red Cross).
- Flexibility to work weekends, holidays, and 12-hour day/night shifts.

## 4. DENVER HEALTH EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

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### Denver Health employee benefits include:

- Competitive pay
- 20 days paid time off and seven paid holidays each year for new employees
- On-site, low-cost employee fitness center, inclusive of group fitness classes
- Free virtual wellness platform with live and on-demand fitness classes and workshops
- Support for you and your family members through the Employee Assistance Program and Worklife Partnership
- Competitive health insurance plans and excellent medical and dental benefits
- Education opportunities and tuition reimbursement
- Shared leadership and advancement opportunity
- State-of-the-art facilities
- Retirement plan matching. \*Subject to benefit eligibility and vesting rules
- Professional clinical advancement program
- Participation in evidence-based projects
- Thousands of national and local discounts and perks available through PerkSpot
- Additional Voluntary Life and Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance
- Supplemental Vision Plan
- Critical Illness Insurance
- Group Legal Plan
- Auto/Home/Boat/RV/Renters Insurance Plan
- RTD EcoPass
- Dell PC Employee Purchase Program
- See our full benefits [here](#)

## 5. NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM

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Our Graduate Nurse Residency Program has supported entry into practice since 2011 and is a comprehensive program that builds confidence and competence in the RN role.

- 12-month program consisting of paid 3-hour education classes (7 in-person, 5 asynchronous) attended by graduate nurses across the organization. This format promotes critical thinking and professional development utilizing peer support.
- In your specific department you will also complete
  - 1:1 preceptor-led unit orientation.
  - Separate population-based classes
  - Mentorship

**We hire new graduate RNs on these units. Available vacancies vary, as do lengths of unit orientation.**

- **Acute Care**
  - 3M – ACUTE Center for Eating Disorders & Severe Malnutrition
  - 7A – Cardiac
  - CCMF – Correctional Care
  - Float Pool
  - 6A – (GSU)/Rehab
  - 9A – Med/Onc
  - 8A – Med/Surg
  - 3B – Surgical Ortho
  - 4B – Surgical Trauma
- **Ambulatory Care Clinics**
- **Behavioral Health**
  - Adult and Adolescent Inpatient Psychiatry
  - Denver Sheriffs and Denver CARES
  - Psychiatric Emergency Services
- **Critical Care**
  - PCU – Step down
  - MICU
  - SICU
- **Emergency**
  - Adult
  - AUCC (Adult urgent care)
  - CDU (Short-term stay unit)
  - Pediatric
- **OR and Pre-op/PACU**
- **Woman/Child**
  - L&D
  - Mom/Baby
  - NICU
  - Peds/PICU

## 6. NURSING APPRENTICE

The Nursing Apprentice I and Nursing Apprentice II roles were created as a pathway for nursing students offering on-the-job experience for individuals pursuing a career as a registered nurse.

|                | <b>Nursing Apprentice I</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Nursing Apprentice II</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Qualifications | Enrolled or graduated from ADN or BSN program. Must have completed Med/Surg 1 and current active BLS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Enrolled or graduated from ADN or BSN program.<br>Enrolled or graduated from ADN or BSN program and within six months of passing the NCLEX exam                                                                                                      |
| Approved Tasks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills approved in the Certified Nursing Assistance scope of practice</li> <li>• Wound care and wound care documentation with an RN co-signature</li> <li>• Place and removal of peripheral IVs</li> <li>• Perform phlebotomy</li> <li>• Removal of urinary drainage catheters</li> <li>• Perform central line dressing changes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills approved in the Certified Nursing Assistance scope of practice and all tasks/skills of Nursing Apprentice I</li> <li>• Assessments and reassessment documentation with an RN co-signature</li> </ul> |

# 7. Sample Nursing Student Career Pathway

## HEALTHCARE TECHNICIANS

### ProvidersCertified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

Assists with basic patient care and activities of daily living. Orders & maintains supplies.

Pay Range: \$20.00 - \$25.65/hr

Required Education: n/a

Required Experience: n/a

Required License/Cert: Colorado C.N.A. license, BLS for Healthcare Providers

### Behavioral Health Tech (BHT)

Provides direct patient care and may conduct therapeutic group sessions under supervision. Assists with care plans & admissions.

Pay Range: \$20.15 - \$28.21/hr

Required Education: High school diploma/GED

Required Experience: n/a

Required License/Cert: LS for Healthcare Providers

### Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

Attends to patients being transported to and from the hospital. Responds to 911 field calls and inter-facility transfers.

Pay Range: \$20.00 - \$27.97/hr

Required Education: High school diploma/GED

Required Experience: n/a

Required License/Cert: Colorado EMT-B certificate, IV Certification, Colorado Class R drivers license

### Nursing Apprentice I

Nursing students enhance clinical skills in hospital environment by performing basic patient care activities under RN supervision.

Pay Range: \$26/hr

Required Education: Completed Med/Surg I course

Required Experience: n/a

Required License/Cert: BLS for Healthcare Providers

Qualifications  
Enrolled in an ADN or BSN program. Must have completed Med/Surg 1 and current active BLS

## PRE-NURSING POSITIONS

### Nursing Apprentice II

Nursing students preparing for NCLEX enhance clinical skills in hospital environment by performing basic patient care activities under RN supervision.

Pay Range: \$28/hr

Required Education: Must successfully pass the NCLEX registered nurse exam within 6 months of start date or expiration of Temporary RN license

Required Experience: n/a

Required License/Cert: BLS for Healthcare Providers

Qualification  
Graduated from ADN or BSN program and within six months of passing the NCLEX exam

### Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)

Provides direct patient care. Assists with procedures, medication administration, phlebotomy, and limited laboratory procedures

Pay Range: \$24.69 - \$37.04/hr

Required Education: High school diploma/GED, LPN program completion required

Required Experience: n/a

Required License/Cert: Colorado LPN license, BLS for Healthcare Providers

### Registered Nurse New Graduate

12-month Nurse Residency Program designed to ease the transition from student to practicing professional nurse.

Pay Range:

Out-Patient Pay: \$33.53/hr

In-Patient Pay: \$34.00/hr

Required Education: Completion of an accredited nursing education program

Required Experience: n/a

Required License/Cert: Colorado RN License (by start date; apply up to 120 days before NCLEX date), BLS for Healthcare

### Registered Nurse

Nurse Provide full scope of patient care as an experienced RN.

Pay Range:

In-Patient Pay: \$34.00 - \$56.57

Outpatient Pay: \$33.53 - \$51.97

Required Education: Completion of an accredited associate's for bachelor's nursing education program

Required Experience: 1 year as an RN

Required License/Cert: Colorado RN License, BLS for Healthcare

### Patient Safety Attendant (PSA)

Provides 1:1 or group continual observation of patients at risk for harm to self or others in a single room.

Pay Range: \$20.00 - \$24.68/hr

Required Education: n/a

Required Experience: n/a

Required License/Cert: BLS for Healthcare Providers

## 8. LIVING IN DENVER, COLORADO

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A rapidly growing metropolis located at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, Denver offers all the amenities of urban living surrounded by unparalleled natural beauty. Outdoor lovers need to look no further than their own backyard for some of the country's best hiking, biking, climbing and skiing. However, those with more of an interest in the arts will find a multitude of museums, performing arts centers, music venues and a burgeoning culinary scene.

Denver is one of only two cities in the United States with eight professional sports teams, ranging from baseball, football, basketball, hockey, soccer, and lacrosse.

While Denver proper is composed of an array of diverse neighborhoods, many providers in our group also choose to live in surrounding areas in the foothills and nearby cities such as Golden and Boulder. The central location of Denver Health makes this a feasible and convenient option.

Some of the closest Neighborhood to our main campus are:

**Art District on Santa Fe**



**Downtown Denver**



**Capitol Hill**



The city's location at the base of the Rockies yields overall mild temperatures with average high temperatures of 45 degrees F and 86 degrees in winter and August respectively. The arid climate translates into low levels of precipitation with only 8-15 inches annually. The city also boasts 300 days of sunshine per year more than Miami or San Diego. This makes outdoor activity in one of the city's 200 parks a year-round possibility.

Learn more about living in Denver [here](#).