



OHIO STNA

ACTOR TRAINING GUIDELINES

This is an instructional handout designed to quickly answer RN Test Observer questions regarding training Actors for participation during the administration of the Ohio STNA Skill Test.

BECOMING AN ACTOR:

To become an Actor, an individual must receive these instructions from a certified Ohio RN Test Observer, sign Form 1511OH (Actor/KTP Training Affidavit) certifying that they received and understand these instructions. The Actor would have/should have filled out and signed an RN Test Observer generated application and must sign Form 1501OH-Confidentiality/Nondisclosure Agreement which will be submitted to D&SDT-HEADMASTER and must be trained with the Ohio approved materials that are included in this manual. The individual must also meet the criteria listed below. After accomplishing these tasks, the person may then be used as an Actor. This manual will be given to Actors for their continued review.

RN Test Observers or Actors: Please do not hesitate to contact D&SDT-HEADMASTER at (877)851-2355 with any question at any time.

This manual may also serve as the framework for an Actor Job Description, though RN Test Observers may design the Job Description as they require.

WHO CAN BE AN NA SKILL TEST ACTOR?

Note: It is not necessary to be a professional actor or have acting experience to be successful as a STNA Skill test actor. *If you have acting experience, you may find this much more difficult than working from a script or within dramatic improvisational outlines, and you may find this frustrating. This work has nothing to do with finding dramatic moments or playing to an audience. It has everything to do with **disciplining** yourself, within the needs of the skill exam. It can be very repetitive, **exactly the same simulation must be done for every candidate.***

To qualify as an Actor, the Actor must meet the following criteria:

1. **Actors need to understand that they are not able to sit for the Ohio NA competency test for six (6) months from the date that they last worked as an Actor.**
2. Actors must be of legal working age in Ohio. Minors must also have a work permit.
3. Actors must be trained and certified with these approved materials.
4. Actors must fill out and sign a Confidentiality/Nondisclosure Agreement-Form 1501OH and an Actor Training Affidavit-Form 1511OH.
5. After completion, the original 1501OH and 1511OH must be mailed to our Findlay, OH office or imaged and sent to hdmastereast@hdmaster.com, or faxed to (419)422-8367, for inclusion into the Actor database.
6. An Actor may **NOT** be a STNA Test Candidate who has not tested.
7. An Actor may **NOT** be a student in any STNA Training Program.
8. Actors CAN BE registry active STNAs, RN Test Observer family members, volunteers, etc.

COMPENSATION FOR BEING A STNA SKILL TEST ACTOR:

Actors may be volunteers. For non-volunteer Actors, the RN Test Observer should pay Actors a negotiated remuneration when they assist during the administration of an STNA Skill test, at a rate agreed upon by both parties. RN Test Observers must be sure to include the Actor's name for the test events the actor participates in, so D&SDT-HEADMASTER staff can contact them for test dispute investigations.

SKILL TASKS REQUIRING AN ACTOR:

Actors must be comfortable acting as a health care resident. If the Actor has any hesitation in participating in the demonstration of any of the skill tasks, they should not become certified as an Actor.

- Ambulation using a gait belt or walker– Actor will be assisted to take at least ten steps from the bed to the wheelchair.
- Bed bath – (partial) Face, arm, hand and underarm only are washed-no soap is used on the face. (Actor should be comfortable with no make-up.)
- Bedpan and output—Actor remains clothed and is simply positioned on bedpan.
- Denture care – Actor does not provide. Sample dentures will be at the test site.
- Dressing resident – Actor will have an affected/weak side and will act not use that side during the demonstration. Actor can lift hips with unaffected/strong leg only or roll to side with assistance from the candidate. Actor will remain fully clothed, with large oversized clothing used to demonstrate dressing technique being put over clothes.
- Feeding a dependent resident – Actor will eat small amounts of solid food and drink small amounts of fluid from two separate glasses. The RN Test Observer will cue you when to stop – you will never drink all of the fluids or eat all of the food gone. You also will not refuse to eat or drink.
- Emptying a urinary drainage bag – Actor will hold drainage bag tubing under covers while lying in bed.
- Making an occupied bed – Bedding will be removed and new bedding put on bed with Actor in the bed.
- Mouth care – Actor's teeth will be brushed. Must not have any teeth/mouth issues that would prevent you from having your teeth brushed (recent dental work or loose teeth).



- Nail care – Actor will have the nails on one hand filed and cuticles pushed back.
- Stand and pivot-transfer from bed to wheelchair or wheelchair to bed, using a gait belt – Actor will be weight bearing (able to stand on own) and will be assisted to wheelchair from bed, or from bed to wheelchair.
- Position resident in bed – Actor will be weak and only able to offer minimal assistance (holding the covers up if requested by candidate) positioned on one side.
- Range of motion exercises—upper (one shoulder) and lower (one hip and knee) extremities. Actor must not have any limitations so that the ROM can be performed (no shoulder/hip injury or recent surgery).
- Vital signs: pulse and respirations – Actor must have a pulse that is not difficult to recognize.

SCHEDULING:

Actors will be contacted by RN Test Observers to be scheduled for testing dates.

TEST SECURITY:

Actors will be required to maintain, and never violate, the security of the tests or compromise any testing information. If Actors violate test security, they will be held legally accountable and prosecuted to full extent of the law. **Actors MUST NOT release any test content or information about any NA candidate's performance to ANYONE other than the RN Test Observer, D&SDT-HEADMASTER staff or the Ohio Department of Health Services (DHS) upon request.**

INSURANCE:

Actors will maintain any and all of their own insurance, if they so choose.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE:

Actors should wear comfortable clothes that do not restrict their motion in any way. Actors should wear sweat pants or comfortable appropriate length (not revealing) shorts, tank top (not too revealing) or tee shirt, or similar non-restrictive clothing. Short sleeves that are easy to push up or no sleeves on shirts are recommended.

SAFETY:

Actors should voice their concern to the RN Test Observer, if at any time they believe that they are in danger. This would include concerns of falling, being bruised, or hurt in any manner. In addition, the Actor may speak up, if the STNA candidate puts a gait belt on them too tightly. In some cases, these situations can be handled within the test experience. In other situations, a time out (testing stopped) is necessary.

COMMUNICATION WITH STNA CANDIDATES:

In non-test situations good care involves cooperative communication between the resident and the STNA. The resident might tell the STNA what is comfortable or ask for what they want. In the test situation the STNA must rely on learned knowledge and training to give proper care and the actor/resident responses must be SKILL TEST OUTCOME NEUTRAL. (Impact on the outcome of the skill task must be test neutral, “whatever you think is best” answer to questions the candidates asked puts the decision back on the candidate.) **Do not lead the candidate toward any conclusion about providing further care or care they may not have provided.** The actor may be compelled to “help” a candidate during the exam. This is natural, but must be avoided.

Actors may interact with STNA candidates as though they were a typical health care resident. There is no need to act particularly sick. You are having a good day and unless specified have good bed and total room mobility. If the scenario indicates that you are weak in general or on a specific side, your movements will be slightly slowed and heavy, but remember at no time are you to be “dead weight.” Let the candidate help you up or maintain contact during ambulation. In general, candidates are just assisting you and should not be put into a position where they are bearing all your weight to any great degree.

1. **Actors MAY NOT initiate communication with the STNA candidate.**
2. Actors must not show any body language that may indicate that the STNA candidate did something correctly or incorrectly.
3. Actors cannot prompt the STNA candidate, such as asking them to provide privacy, or to place the call light within reach.
4. Many skill tasks include some communication between the Actor and the STNA Candidate. A few examples of appropriate communication follow. The actor NEVER initiates any communication with the STNA candidate or the RN Test Observer during a skills exam in process, except for a personal safety concern.
5. Actors do not move to set up for the next task until the RN Test Observer has received a verbal closure from the candidate that they are finished with the task they just demonstrated.



These examples are relevant for nearly any skill task and are listed to give a general idea of expectations for an Actor's general mind set, behavior, and the range of communication allowable.

ENTERING A ROOM: If the STNA candidate knocks on the door the Actor should say, "Come in." The actor's communication as health care resident can put the candidate at ease and help the candidate perform better, while still remaining test neutral. Convey non-verbal acceptance with a smile and a relaxed, accepting, positive, tone of voice.

DRESSING: If the STNA candidate asks, "Do you want to get dressed?" the Actor should say "YES." The Actor should not help, or resist, the STNA candidate with any portion of getting dressed. For left or right side weakness, the Actor would let the weak side be 'limp'.

AMBULATION WITH A GAIT BELT OR WALKER: If the STNA candidate asks, "Do you want to go for a walk?" the Actor should say "YES." Actors will not prompt the STNA Candidate to put on their non-skid footwear, but should say "YES" if they are asked if they want them put on. If the candidate asks "Is it too tight?" say "Whatever you think is best". Always put the decision back with the candidate.

POSITIONING ON THE SIDE: If the TNA candidate asks "Do you want a pillow?" say "Whatever you think is best." This puts the decision making back on the candidate, to place the correct number of pillows during the positioning task.

MOUTH CARE: If the STNA candidate asks, "Can you brush your teeth?" the Actor should say "NO." If the STNA candidate asks, "Do you want your teeth brushed?" the Actor should say, "YES."

VITAL SIGNS – PULSE and RESPIRATIONS: The Actor should not tell the STNA candidate his/her pulse or respirations. If the STNA candidate asks, the Actor would respond, "I don't know."

BED PAN AND OUTPUT: If the STNA candidate asks, "Are you comfortable?" when they have placed the bedpan a "Yes" or "No" response to this question is NOT SKILL TEST NEUTRAL and therefore, not appropriate. The actor's answer must be vague to remain SKILL TEST NEUTRAL. In this case the actor should answer "I don't know" or "Whatever you think is best."

FEEDING DEPENDENT RESIDENT: "Can you wipe your own hands?" Answer: "NO." Be hungry and positive about eating. You should never refuse to eat or drink. The RN Test Observer will cue you when to stop eating and drinking, which will be before all of the food and fluids are gone.

RANGE OF MOTION EXERCISES: The candidate must ask sometime during the ROM procedure if there was any pain or discomfort. When asked, you will say "No". If the candidate is performing ROM to an extent that it is really hurting an Actor, the RN Test Observer will be aware and stop the candidate.

OTHER COMMUNICATION:

If the STNA candidate asks:

- "Do you want your call light?" Say, "Whatever you think is best" or "I don't know". If a step calls for the STNA candidate to place the call light or signaling device within easy reach of the actor, then the decision needs to be placed back on the candidate.
- "Do you need anything?" Answer: "Whatever you think is best" or "I don't know".
- If candidate asks "Are you okay?" "Are you comfortable?" Answer: "Whatever you think is best" or "I don't know". All usually asked at the end of a skill as the candidate is preparing to exit the skill test. Remember all decisions must be placed back with the candidate, for the Actor to remain a test neutral participant.
- If you are in the wheelchair at the end of a skill and far from the call light and the candidate says "Do you want to stay here?" or "Are you okay here?" Say, "I don't know" or "Whatever you think is best."
- Infrequently a nervous candidate's reaction may be to become giggly and tempt the actor/resident into the silliness. You will not be helping the candidate if you engage in this overcompensating behavior and it will further distract the candidate. You must remain professional and act out your role as a resident and, at all times remain test neutral throughout every candidate's test. Be sure every candidate has the exact same opportunity to perform their best without you impacting the outcome of the candidate's test.

Questions?

Please call D&SDT-HEADMASTER toll free at (877)851-2355.