



June 7, 2022

Subject: Temporary Nurse Aide Testing Waiver Ending

Dear Nursing Home Operator,

In April of 2020, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) posted blanket waivers which allowed facilities to use nurse aides who are not yet listed on the Ohio Nurse Aide Registry beyond four months if the facility found the nurse aide minimally competent to care for their residents. This allowed the use of temporary nurse aides in Ohio's skilled nursing facilities during significant staffing shortages created by COVID-19.

In response to the April 2020 CMS waiver, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) posted the Temporary Nurse Aide Testing Waiver. This waiver allowed nurse aides who worked a minimum of 75 hours in a long-term care facility (including on-site observation) and worked as a nurse aide under a COVID-19 pandemic waiver issued by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services during the COVID-19 public health emergency may take the Ohio State Tested Nursing Assistant (STNA) exam to become an STNA.

On April 7, 2022, CMS released Quality Survey and Oversight (QSO) memo 22-15-NH-NLTC-LSC. This memo announced the end to emergency blanket waiver of training and certification of nurse aides for SNF/NFs, effective June 6, 2022.

Per the Temporary Nurse Aide Testing Waiver, posted on September 21, 2021, the opportunity for temporary nurse aide testing will end four months past the posting of the end of the CMS waiver. Therefore, temporary nurse aides testing under the emergency blanket waiver will end on October 6, 2022.

Beginning June 7, 2022, any temporary nurse aide who was hired prior to June 7, 2022, and has not completed the 75 hours required by 42 CFR §483.152 (a) and (b) will be required to complete nurse aide training either through training in the LTC facility or via a State Approved Nurse Aide Training Competency Evaluation Program (NATCEP) and take the state test within four months. Any individual hired after June 7, 2022 will be required to complete training through a State Approved NATCEP and complete the state test within four months. This was the process prior to COVID-19 and the STNA waiver provided by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid.

If an individual is unable to take the test prior to October 6, 2022, due to testing availability, they must have documentation from the testing location indicating they have attempted to register. This documentation can be in the form of an email or notification from the testing registration system. This documentation should be maintained in the TNAs file. Consistent attempts to schedule should be every 2 weeks, and that documentation is maintained until the individual is able to take the test. This information will be reviewed on survey after October 6, 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact the NATCEP Unit at (614)752-8285.