

TENNESSEE BOARD OF NURSING  
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Guidelines for Submitting a Letter of Intent  
to Establish a Professional Nursing Program

Tenn. Code Ann. § 63-7-117 references the requirement that an institution desiring to conduct a school of nursing in Tennessee must apply to the Board for approval and submit evidence that it is prepared to carry out the prescribed basic professional nursing curriculum and meet other standards established by the Board. Tenn. Code Ann. § 63-7-118 addresses the requirement for a survey of the institution(s) and affiliated agencies and the requirement for the school to submit a report to the Board. Administrative Rules 1000-01-.05(2) speak to the Policies for Approval. These guidelines may be used for submitting a request to the Tennessee Board of Nursing for the initial development of the nursing program.

The first step in the approval process is to submit a letter of intention describing the reasons for establishing the school and the predicted timetable of development.

- I. Legal name and address of institution making application
- II. Type of nursing education program to be established - 1000-01-.11(8)
- III. Controlling agency or institution - 1000-01-.06(2)
- IV. Financial resources for program (specific) - 1000-01-.06(7) - Budget
- V. Needs assessment and ability of the community to support this program may include:
  1. Rationale for the program and the need for nursing graduates of the type requested, job placement opportunities and impact on other schools in area. The rationale should include documented evidence of need for the program.
  2. Support letters from employers of registered nurses, nursing organizations/associations and other nursing educational programs in the area.
- VI. Source of potential students, faculty and clinical and educational facilities for the program.

This is the feasibility cluster of the letter of intention. This feasibility study should validate that there are potential students and faculty to sustain a program and that clinical facilities can support the students. Statistics should be valid and documented.

- VII. Philosophy, purposes and accreditation status of the controlling agency - 1000-01-.06.

VIII. Curriculum Content.

Document the ability of the institution to successfully provide the behavioral sciences and the biological and physical sciences foundational for application of scientific principles necessary for effective nursing care at the level offered. [See Administrative Rule 1000-01-.09 (2)(a) & (b)]. Nursing curriculum is addressed in the initial approval application.

IX. Educational facilities - classrooms, laboratory, audiovisual and library resources.

X. Clinical facilities

This section should speak to the ability of the each facility to accommodate nursing students with additional data such as number of beds, number of schools and students currently using facility and proximity of facility to institution. If information and data are included in VI, it does not have to be addressed again.

XI. Tentative timetables for initiating the program

Date for:

1. appointment of a nurse dean/director
2. application for initial approval
3. faculty appointments
4. acceptance of student applications
5. admission of students
6. progression and graduation

XII. Qualifications for dean/director and faculty.

1. Qualifications of the dean or director to address years and type of nursing education experience, other qualifications.
2. Plan for the director to hire a nucleus of qualified faculty to develop curriculum and prepare the Initial Approval application.
3. Professional Positions – provide a table to include each planned faculty position and faculty qualification to hold the position.

XIII. Tenn. Code Ann. § 63-7-118 specifies that a survey of the institution or institutions and agencies with which the school is to be affiliated shall be made by the executive director or a designee. The Board requests to visit and review the educational and major clinical facilities before the letter of intent is presented to the full Board. A minimum of four weeks notification prior to the visit is needed to schedule visit. The survey is usually conducted eight to ten weeks prior to the board meeting.

- XIV. Initial Approval - Following approval of the Letter of Intent, the program may proceed with preparation of the application for Initial Approval, which includes development of the program of study.
- XV. Publicity for program and recruitment of students may not take place until the Board grants the school Initial Approval.