



## CA RN LICENSURE QUALIFICATIONS FOR PERSONS SERVING IN MEDICAL CORPS OF ARMED SERVICES

---

### **Background:**

The BRN has occasionally received applications from persons who have obtained training in providing medical services while in military service and are seeking RN licensure per BPC 2736.5. These applicants often are found not eligible for RN license after an evaluation.

This guideline provides information for veterans with military medical training seeking RN licensure.

### **California RN Licensure Eligibility:**

RN licensure regulations do not allow for challenge of licensure requirements. Based in part on the 2013 report of a study conducted by the NCSBN with consultation from leading experts in the areas of nursing and military education (see excerpt below in this document), and with regard to California requirements, **the educational training of corpsmen and airmen is not equivalent to RN prelicensure nursing curriculum, and therefore, does not meet the minimum educational requirements for RN licensure** described in CCR 1426.

### **RN Prelicensure Nursing Education Requirements:**

**BP 2786** Approval of schools...course of instruction "covering not less than two academic years"

**CCR 1426** requires the following to be included in the curriculum:

- A. Prelicensure content: not less than **58 semester** units (87 quarter units)
  - Nursing: Theory – **18 semester** units (27 quarter units)  
Clinical – **18 semester** units (27 quarter units)
  - Communications: Written and Oral **6 semester units** (9 quarter units)
  - Behavioral and Natural Sciences: **16 semester units** (24 quarter units). Usual courses include: Anatomy, Physiology, Microbiology, and courses in sociology, psychology, cultural diversity.
- B. Courses include five content areas: **Med-Surg, OB, Peds, Geri, Psy-MH.**
  - Instructional outcomes will focus on delivering safe, therapeutic, effective, patient-centered care; practicing evidence-based practice; working as part of interdisciplinary teams; focusing on quality improvement; and using information technology. Instructional content shall include, but is not limited to, the following: critical thinking, personal hygiene, patient protection and safety, pain management, human sexuality, client abuse, cultural diversity, nutrition (including therapeutic aspects), pharmacology, patient advocacy, legal, social and ethical aspects of nursing, and nursing leadership and management.

- Content to integrate: Nursing process; Basic intervention skills, Human development (birth to aged); Communication and interpersonal skills; Cultural patterns and diversity issues; Health and Illness concepts.
- C. Hours of instruction: Minimum hours for nursing curriculum:  
 (CCR 1426(g) The course of instruction shall be presented in semester or quarter units or the equivalent under the following formula:  
 (1) One (1) hour of instruction in theory each week throughout a semester or quarter equals one (1) unit.  
 (2) Three (3) hours of clinical practice each week throughout a semester or quarter equals one (1) unit.
- Nursing Theory (For example 18 semester units – 16 wk semester) = 288 hrs.
  - Nursing Clinical (For example 18 semester units – 16 wk semester) = 864 hrs.

**National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) - Excerpt from: NCSBN (2013) NCSBN Analysis: A Comparison of Selected Military Occupations Curricula with a Standard Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Curriculum (2013) p13:**

*Talking Points: Military Training Exception*

*NCSBN supports veterans entering the nursing profession. We would like these hard working individuals to succeed and experience long and rewarding careers in the field of nursing.*

*The roles and responsibilities of registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical/vocational nurses (LPN/VNs) are different from that of health care specialists (medics), corpsmen and airmen. Thus, the training for these military occupations is different from that of nursing education programs.*

*Even within the military, RNs and LPNs have separate roles and responsibilities from health care specialists (medics), corpsmen or airmen. The military requires RNs working in military facilities to hold a bachelor's degree in nursing and meet all the requirements of a civilian nursing program approved by a board of nursing (BON). A health care specialist (medic) or corpsman can only become an RN in the military by completing an RN program. Educational exemptions are not offered based on experience or another type/level of training.*

*Currently, the Army is the only service with an LPN occupational specialty. Certain MOS 68W soldiers (Army combat medics) can attend a course to become an entry level LPN. Students are required to sit for the NCLEX-PN® Examination and obtain licensure as an LVN. Thus, LPNs in the Army receive a substantial amount of additional education above and beyond training as a health care specialist (medic), corpsman or airman.*

**California BRN Recommendations:**

1. Schedule an appointment with an advisor at a nursing program to obtain evaluation of previous education or other acquired knowledge in the field of nursing. The school will determine whether course credit can be awarded and which nursing program and other required college courses will be required for program completion and college graduation.
2. Because of their training and experience, veterans may qualify for LVN licensure. Information on LVN License Application and LVN curriculum are available at [www.bvnpt.ca.gov](http://www.bvnpt.ca.gov). LVN licensure may allow advanced placement entry into an RN education program at the discretion of the nursing program.