# Hiring Guidelines for VA Nurse Managers

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#### **Overview**

This document outlines hiring guidelines and documentation requirements Veterans Affairs (VA) Nurse Managers must follow when hiring a Registered Nurse (RN), Registered Nurse Practitioner (RNP) or Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) for positions at the Palo Alto VA hospital. Complete candidate packages must include all of the documentation and completed forms listed in this document and must be submitted 36 hours before a Nurse Professional Standards Board (NPSB) Meeting. NPSB Meetings are scheduled on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays and 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month. Packages should be delivered to the Nurse Recruiter's Office. Completed candidate packages will be submitted to the NPSB after the candidate has completed the VetPro process.

#### **Applying for a Nursing Job Online**

VA Nurse Managers should refer external candidates to the Palo Alto VA web site for competition of an on-line job application.

To apply for a Nursing job online:

- Navigate to: <a href="http://www.palo-alto.med.va.gov">http://www.palo-alto.med.va.gov</a>
- 2. Click the **Careers** link at the left of the page. The Careers page appears.



3. Click the Nursing Jobs link.



4. Click the **Post Resume** link to upload a general resume or click a specific job listing link under the **Title** column to upload a resume that matches the specific position.



#### Please note the following:

 Internal candidates wishing to transfer into another position should send an email (via Outlook) to: <u>V21PALNurseRecruiter@va.gov</u> and copy their current supervisor on the email.

- External candidates should not come directly to the Nurse Manager or Supervisor with an application. They must first go through the HR or Nurse Recruiter's office to submit an application.
- External candidates should indicate the positions they are interested in. This is
  necessary to ensure that basic requirements are met such as citizenship and to better
  expedite the VetPro process. It is also helpful for applicant tracking.

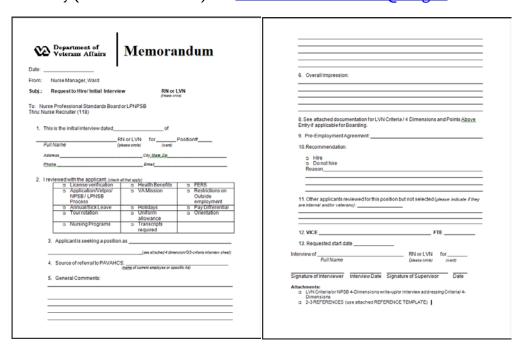
#### The VetPro Process

The VetPro process is a mandatory requirement to verify the credentials of a potential employee prior to extending an offer of employment. This process can be expedited by requesting official transcripts, proof of any required training, or certifications from the external candidate applying for a position. This information should be delivered immediately to the Nurse Recruiter's office in a sealed envelope with the mail code: 118NR.

**Note:** VA transfers, Registry, or LVN to RN new hires must re-enter their education and licensure. They must also supply at least one professional reference and must update their personal history and re-answer all supplemental questions.

# The Legible Written Request to Hire

The legible written request to hire requires the completion of the **Request to Hire Memo.doc** form (shown below) with date and signature. The form can be delivered in paper form or sent electronically (via Outlook e-mail) to: <u>V21PALNurseRecruiter@va.gov</u>.



# The Legible Written Interview

The legible written interview is used to address the four dimensions for RN/RNPs and the criteria for LVNs. If you require RN/LVNs to receive additional steps (points above entry), then all written documentation must be submitted to the Nurse Recruiter three days prior to the Board Meeting. American Nurses Association (ANA) certification is required for RNPs. For RN/RNP/LVN interviewing questions, qualification standards can be used as a template or guide and can also be modified to address your specific interviewing situation. Remember to make each of the four dimensions easy to review by Board members including specific examples with specific outcomes. Qualification standards can be located using the VA Nursing web page at: <a href="http://caww.palo-alto.med.va.gov/intranet/show.asp?durki=183">http://caww.palo-alto.med.va.gov/intranet/show.asp?durki=183</a>.

#### **Licensed Vocational Nurses**

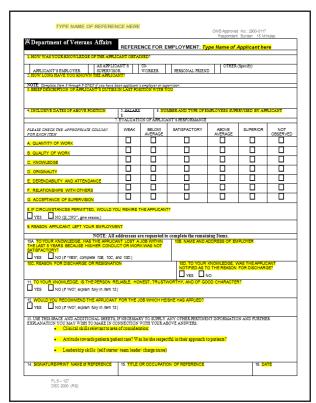
Make sure you address each of the LVN criteria as specified on the VA Nursing web page (listed above) for GS-5 and GS-6 grade levels.

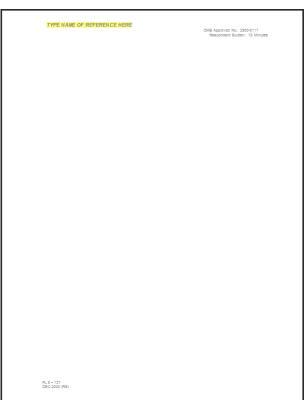
#### **Telephone Reference Checks**

A minimum of two telephone reference checks are required to be considered for employment. Please use the **Reference Template.doc** form (shown at the top of page 7) to collect this information from the candidate. At least one reference should be from a previous supervisor. Written references along with a recent evaluation are also very useful tools for Board members to make decisions.

When making reference calls, please consider the following:

- During the call, please identify the relationship of the reference to the applicant.
- For RNs, having a total of three references will earn the candidate one additional point for Board consideration.
- Having an excellent evaluation within the last two years will earn the candidate several additional points for Board consideration.





#### **School Transcripts**

Once you have submitted the Request to Hire Memo.doc form, The Written Interview/Dimension form, and completed a minimum of two telephone reference checks, please ask the candidate to request their original school transcripts. The transcripts then need to be placed in a sealed envelope and sent to the Nurse Recruiter's office using the mail code: 118NR. Transcripts must indicate proof of graduation and list any additional nursing related degrees or certifications the candidate has earned. This information will be used by Board members to consider appropriate salary ranges for the candidate and expedite the hiring process. Inform the candidate that the Nurse Recruiter will contact them by telephone or e-mail to explain the next steps in the hiring process. Also explain that HR will contact them to arrange a physical exam. Salary should not be discussed at this point. All salary questions should be directed to the Nurse Recruiter using the e-mail: V21PALNurseRecruiter@va.gov

After the NPSB meets, results are kept confidential until the Board Director signs the Board Action. After the Board Director signs the Board Action and the physical is cleared with the candidate's EOD date, the HR Staffing Specialist will notify all nursing managers on the next steps to take.

Please be aware that foreign school transcripts are difficult to verify and can take up to two months to process. Original transcripts (not copies) are a requirement for VetPro and HR processes. Foreign transcripts with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN) or higher must have a third party education evaluation if the candidate expects a higher grade level within the BSN qual standards stated on the VA Nursing web site (listed above).

#### Dialogue with the Candidate

Remember to choose your words carefully. Only the HR Staffing Specialist can extend an offer of employment to the candidate and only the HR Staffing Specialist or the Nurse Recruiter can discuss salary and grade level expectations with a candidate.

#### **Physical Examination**

HR will schedule a physical examination with the candidate if the position has been approved, the job application is completed, licensure is verified, and the **Request to Hire Memo.doc** form is completed. Check with the Service Chief and/or HR Staffing Specialist if you have any questions regarding approval of the position. The candidate must pass the physical examination before an offer of employment can be extended.

## **Board Meetings**

All of the required documentation listed above must be collected before a candidate can be submitted for consideration in NPSB Meetings. All documentation packages must arrive in the Nurse Recruiter's office 36 hours before the NPSB Meeting begins (for example: deadline for a Friday Board meeting would be Tuesday at noon). If a deadline is missed, the package is submitted to the next scheduled meeting. It is considered unethical for the Nurse Manager or Supervisor to contact the NPSB Chair to inquire about application status or collect inside information on the points above entry for any candidate being considered for employment. Please direct all questions to the Nurse Recruiter's Office. All Board actions become final only after the Director has signed off. The HR Staffing Specialist will notify all Nurse Managers (via Outlook e-mail) when a decision has been signed off. This will usually occur the following week. If you are not notified about a decision within two weeks, please send an e-mail (via Outlook) to the HR Staffing Specialist at: V21PALNurseRecruiter@va.gov.

#### **Non-Select Applicants**

If you interviewed a candidate for a position but did not consider them suitable for an offer of employment, please compile a list of candidates you interviewed along with reasons for non-consideration. The candidate may be referred to another department if a more appropriate position is available. Please remember to share your candidate interview summary information with other Nurse Managers so that they might assist with a referral if their department needs better match the qualifications of the candidate. Interview summary information is kept on file for three years after an interview is conducted. If a candidate is not considered for employment, the Nurse Manager will contact the candidate by telephone or in writing. E-mail notifications to non selected candidates are not permitted.

#### **Non-Citizen Applicants**

Non-US citizen candidates will not be considered unless there are no qualified US citizens available. If you extend an offer of employment to a non-US citizen, you will need to provide the following information:

- A list of all applicants that were referred to you.
- The dates of the referral and interview.
- Their citizenship status (US or non-US).
- The reasons they declined an offer of employment.
- A reason for not considering other US citizen candidates.

#### **Contacts**

The following extensions should be used during the hiring process:

Carol Valdon	x66863
Jodi Bisely	x61991
Luckana Roecker	x67125
Marie White (Boards)	x65796
VetPro and Internal Customers	x64508
External Applicants	x64530

**Note:** Please send all requests and questions to the group email list so that all can respond at: <u>V21PALNurseRecruiter@va.gov</u>.

# **Hiring Process Summary**

The following is a summary of the Palo Alto VA Nurse hiring process:

- Applicant and resume are reviewed and screened by Nurse Recruiter. Referrals are aided by Smart Search Applicant Tracking software programs.
- Nurse Manager reviews the candidate information and schedules the interview.
- Nurse Manager makes selection after getting two to three references and completion of the interview and write-up (including four dimensions criteria). Nurse Manager asks candidate to request original school transcripts. Transcripts are delivered to Nurse Recruiter's office using mail code: NR118.
- Hiring decisions are made 30 days before offer of employment is extended to a candidate. This is contingent upon delivery of a complete documentation package.
- Update the candidate on current status of the process. Inform HR of any candidate issues that might interrupt or impede the hiring process.
- Nurse Recruiter receives the request to hire packet and begins the NPSB/LVN Board and VetPro processes. Request to hire packet is given to HR. HR schedules physical exam with the candidate.
- VetPro, Board Reviews, and physical exams must all be completed and passed. HR composes the job offer and extends it to the candidate.
- Candidate gives two to four weeks notice before EOD. New employee begins job at start of a scheduled pay period.