

Attachment A

Memo from the Department of Public Health

Dear Colleagues,

The American Red Cross (ARC) has informed the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) that it will end its provision of nurse aide testing and Nurse Aide Registry support services (e.g. renewals, reciprocity, etc.) effective October 31, 2021.

DPH has entered into a contract with Prometric LLC to assume provision of these services. Prometric works with many other states, including New York, Florida, and Michigan, and has considerable experience in onboarding and supporting nurse aide testing and registry support operations. DPH is working closely with Prometric and the ARC to ensure a smooth transition with minimal disruption.

Prometric will host a webinar for facilities and nurse aide training programs on the following dates:

- Tuesday, November 2, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.
- Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
- Friday, November 5, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

Invitations for the webinar will be emailed to nurse aide training programs. You can also register through the following link:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/5870869143131285262>. This webinar will provide information on new procedures for registering to take the exam, changes in the exam, and more. If you are unable to participate in one of these sessions, a recording of the webinar will be available at: www.prometric.com/nurseaide/ma.

Please keep in mind that the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) has been extended and will last another 90 days from October 18, 2021 through mid-January 2022. CMS 1135 waivers (QSO-21-17-NH) issued in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 PHE have also been extended through the end of the PHE. CMS has waived the requirements prohibiting nursing homes from using individuals working as nurse aides for more than four months unless they complete certain requirements per 42 CFR sec. 483.35(d)(1). Under the waiver, nurse aides have been able to work longer than four months to support facilities' staffing needs. The four-month regulatory timeframe will be reinstated when the blanket waiver ends and will start at that time. Nurse aides will then have a four-month period, starting from the end of the blanket waiver, to successfully complete the required training and certification, regardless of the amount of time worked during the time the waiver was in effect. DPH hopes this reassures employers in the event that nurse aide testing appointments take longer than anticipated to schedule during the transition from the ARC to Prometric.

If you have questions regarding this matter, please direct them to NARS@Mass.gov.

Thank you,
The Massachusetts Department of Public Health