



LPN Certificate Program Program Participation Checklist 2026-2027

Background

DDS is proud to again sponsor the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Certificate Program for the 26-27 school year. This program is designed to support Direct Support Workers (DSWs), Recreation Therapists and Residential Supervisors to advance in their careers by becoming LPNs.

For DSWs, Recreation Therapists and Residential Supervisors who have worked full time in good-standing (no disciplinary action) with DDS for 2 years, the program provides the opportunity to receive an LPN certificate -- fully funded by DDS up to \$20,000, while receiving paid educational leave. [More information about the DSW to LPN Certificate program is available at this link.](#)

Program Participation Checklist

- Research pre-requisites for application to LPN Certification Program at participating educational institute of choice
- Complete pre-requisites, if necessary
- Apply to LPN Certification Program at participating educational institute of choice
- Receive acceptance into LPN Certification Program at educational institute of choice
- Complete DDS application for LPN Certificate Program with supporting documentation:
 - Attach copy of official Acceptance Letter from educational institute
 - Attach copy of [Verification of Acceptance](#)
- Submit Application and required documentation to your regional Human Resources Manager:
 - Central West: Dan Moriarty Daniel.M.Moriarty@mass.gov
 - Southeast/Wrentham: Lindsey Williamson Lindsey.K.Williamson@mass.gov
 - Northeast/Metro/Hogan:
 - Diane DiGiovanni Diane.M.Digiovanni@mass.gov
- Receive notification from DDS of acceptance/non-acceptance status
- Sign Agreement for participation in the DDS LPN Certificate Program
- Submit tuition and approved program expenses to your Program Director for payment to educational institute¹
- Submit the following documents to your Program Director:
 - Educational Institute's academic calendar
 - Class schedule by semester
 - Transcripts by semester

¹ DSWs, Recreation Therapists and Residential Supervisors should not pay the initial deposit or registration fee. DDS will pay the school directly if the DSW, Recreation Therapist or Residential Supervisor has been accepted into the DDS LPN Certificate program.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

1. **What is this DDS LPN Certificate Program?**

The DDS LPN Certificate Program is being offered to DSWs, Recreation Therapists and Residential Supervisors who are interested in becoming a licensed practical nurse (LPN). DSWs, Recreation Therapists and Residential Supervisors who apply to and are accepted into one of 19 full-time (10-12 month long) LPN certificate programs will be able to apply for the DDS LPN Certificate Program. If accepted, DDS will pay full salary and benefits and up to \$20,000 in tuition, fees and certain required educational expenses. In return, the DSW and Recreation Therapist will work one 8-hour shift per week, work a full work week when the LPN program is not in session, and commit to working full-time for a minimum of 2 years with DDS as a licensed LPN. The Residential Supervisor will work one weekend shift and two four-hour shifts scheduled per week.

2. **Who is eligible for the Program?**

DSWs, Recreation Therapists and Residential Supervisors currently working full-time with at least 2 years of full-time experience in the position. Additionally, applicants must have ratings of “Meets” or above on their EPRS for the previous 2 years and in good-standing (no disciplinary action) over the same period.

3. **What is considered a full-time DSW, Recreation Therapist or Residential Supervisor?**

A full-time DSW, Recreation Therapist or Residential Supervisor is someone who works 40 hours per week.

4. **How do I apply for the Program?**

You must apply to and be accepted into one of 19 full-time LPN certificate programs at community colleges and technical schools in the Commonwealth. You must then show verification of acceptance into a program and complete the application for the DDS LPN Certificate Program.

5. **Where can I find more information about the Program?**

Go to [The DSW to LPN Certificate Program](#) to find all the information you need to apply for the program.

6. **Why is DDS offering this program?**

DDS’s mission is to serve individuals in the community. Many of DDS’s community programs are in demand for licensed LPNs, which support our mission to be in the community. The most valuable LPN for DDS is someone who knows our system and is committed to the care of those whom we support – and that is you. As a DSW, Recreation Therapist, or Residential Supervisor you are already part of our workforce and understand the individuals and their needs. You have demonstrated a commitment to the individuals, and we want to return that commitment to you with this opportunity.

7. **Where am I able to go to school?**

We have created a list of [19 Community Colleges and Technical Schools](#) that offer a full-time 10-12-month long LPN certification program.

8. **How long are you going to offer this program?**

This program has been in place in the past and we were excited to bring it back in 2023-24. We have since offered the program in 2024-25, 2025-26 and are happy to offer it again in the 2026-

27 school year. We would like to enroll up to 30 staff this year and we anticipate having the need for this program into the near future. We will continue to evaluate our workforce and make this program available as long as there is a need and funding to support it.

9. How many people can get admitted to the program?

For the 2026-2027 school year, a total of 30 staff among the four regions shall be admitted. The need is great for LPNs, but it is also great for direct care workers. Thus, we expect to take a balanced approach.

10. How will I continue working in my position while attending the LPN Certification Program?

You will be provided 32 hours of paid Educational Leave to attend the Program. You will be expected to work 8-hours in your DSW or Recreation Therapist capacity and 40 hours per week when your educational program is not in session. You will be exempt from mandatory overtime while your classes are **in session**. Accepted RSs will be placed on 60% paid educational leave with one weekend shift and two four-hour shifts scheduled per week.

11. How will you make decisions on who gets into the program?

Each region has a selection team that reviews the applications. These selection teams will prioritize interested candidates based on operational need (i.e. where the greatest need for LPNs is) and seniority.

12. How is this going to be paid for?

DDS is making a significant contribution to you, because of your contribution to us. To that end, we have created a system of paying the community college or technical school directly. All you have to worry about is applying, getting in, being accepted by us into the program and then focusing on your program. If you are accepted into one of the community college programs, we will ask you to complete a FAFSA (Free application for Federal Student Aid) and accept any non-loan financial aid you are provided. We will ask you to communicate to DDS any financial aid offered and DDS will pay the balance of the tuition and fees that are due, if any.

13. What will I have to pay?

You are responsible for costs for prerequisites (see tuition remission benefits) and application costs. Once you are admitted to a program AND selected by us, we expect to pay most reasonable and expected costs of the program, such as books, uniforms, lab fees, etc. We will not pay for your transportation to and from college or any boarding costs.

14. What is my post-program obligation to DDS?

After completion of the LPN Certification Program and securing licensure, you will be obliged to work as an LPN for DDS for 2 years of full-time service.