



STEP-BY-STEP ROADMAP:

How to Become a U.S. Registered Nurse (RN)

A Complete Guide for International Nurses



Introduction

Becoming a U.S. Registered Nurse opens the door to a rewarding global career, competitive salary, advanced healthcare system exposure, and personal growth.

This guide walks you through the entire journey – from education to arriving in the U.S.



Step 1:

Education Requirement

Required:

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or *equivalent accredited nursing degree*

Additional:

- Completed core nursing curriculum
- Active home-country nursing license

Diploma nurses may qualify in some states, but BSN increases approval rate.

Step 2:

Clinical Experience

Required:

2 years of recent bedside experience in an acute/tertiary hospital

Additional:

- Medical-Surgical
- ICU / ER
- Telemetry
- Pediatrics / NICU / L&D (optional)

Hands-on hospital experience increases employability.

Step 3:

CGFNS Credential Evaluation

CGFNS will verify:

- Nursing education transcripts
- Nursing license authenticity
- Clinical training hours

You must submit:

- Academic records
- Licensing documents
- Personal identification

Approval enables you to apply for a U.S. Board of Nursing.

Step 4:

Apply to U.S. State Board of Nursing (BON)

Steps:

- Select state nursing board
- Submit required documents
- Pay registration fee

Timeline varies by state.

Each state has unique requirements — research before applying.

Step 5:

Receive ATT (Authorization to Test)

Once BON approves your eligibility:

- You receive ATT (Authorization to Test)
- ATT allows you to book your NCLEX-RN exam

Step 6:

Register & Prepare for NCLEX

Steps:

- Create Pearson Vue account
- Pay NCLEX exam fee
- Study 2-3 months using NCLEX prep materials
- Practice case-based clinical questions

Consistent daily practice = success.

Step 7:

Take NCLEX Exam

- Schedule exam using your ATT code
- Choose international testing center
- Take NCLEX-RN exam

Passing NCLEX = qualifying as an RN in the U.S.

Step 8:

Take English Proficiency Test

You must pass one:

Accepted Tests	Requirement
IELTS	Nursing band score requirement
TOEFL	Minimum score per CGFNS policy
OET	Nursing-specific score required
PTE	Score accepted in many states

English test is required for VisaScreen.

Step 9:

CGFNS VisaScreen Certificate

VisaScreen verifies:

- Education equivalency
- License validity
- English language proficiency

Mandatory for U.S. work visa approval.

Step 10:

Interview & Get Job Offer

- Interview with U.S. hospital or approved recruitment agency
- Receive employment offer
- Sign nursing contract

This step triggers U.S. visa filing.

Step 11:

Start Visa Process

Employer files for work visa (common: EB-3 for nurses)

Steps:

- Submit immigration documents
- Embassy interview (case-dependent)
- Visa approval

Final Step:

Move to the U.S. & Start Your RN Career

- Relocate to the U.S.
- Complete hospital orientation
- Begin working as a U.S. Registered Nurse

Welcome to your American nursing journey