

## National Nursing Education Initiative (NNEI)

NNEI is a scholarship awarded to permanent full- and part-time VA registered nurses seeking baccalaureate and advanced nursing degrees from an authorized, accredited education program. VA requires nurses to have BSN degrees to advance beyond the Nurse Level 1 position. NNEI scholarships may also be used to pursue other advanced degrees in related fields.

*(Note: NNEI is a policy-derived program that stems from the legislative authority of EISP.)*

### Eligibility

NNEI funding is limited to registered nurses in 0610 occupational series

### Applicants:

- Must be in a permanent full-time/part-time appointment at the time of application submission and during participation in program.
- Must have been continuously employed for at least one year with VHA, immediately preceding submission of application.
- Must be enrolled in, or unconditionally accepted for enrollment in, an academic program that prepares the applicant to meet the [VA Qualification Standards](#) for employment in a Title 38 or Hybrid Title 38 Occupation (specific degree program must be accredited and meet VA qualification standard).
- Must attend academic institutions located in the United States or its territories and accredited by the professional accrediting body identified in [VA Qualification Standards](#) as required for the applicable occupational series.
- Must be within credit and funding limits of NNEI.
- Cannot have an obligation under any other Federal program to perform service after completion of the course of education or training.

### Covered Expenses

- NNEI awards cover tuition and related expenses such as registration, fees, and books.
- Scholarship funding limitations:
- The maximum funding that may be awarded to an employee enrolled in a full-time curriculum is \$44,228.56 for the equivalent of 3 years of full-time coursework.
- The maximum credit hours that may be funded are 90 for undergraduate course work or 54 for graduate level course work.
- The maximum funding that may be awarded per credit is \$491.43 per undergraduate credit hour or \$819.05 per graduate credit hour.
- Scholarship awards are not taxable.
- Full-time students have a maximum of 3 years to complete their education.
- Part-time students have a maximum of 6 years to complete their education.

### Service Obligation

- Upon completing their educational program and licensure/certification, participants work as permanent, full-time VA employees in the occupation for which the scholarship was provided.
- Participants agree to a minimum 1-year up to a maximum 3-year service obligation.

## How Are Awards Determined

- VHA facilities recommend employees for scholarships based on local Workforce Succession and Strategic Plans.
- National funding is prioritized based on VA and VHA workforce needs.

## How to Apply

- Determine the scholarship program for which you want to apply (see [Scholarship Program Decision Tree](#)).
- Contact your [local Scholarship Coordinator](#) for local criteria, application instructions, deadlines, and additional assistance.
- Applications are submitted through your local VHA facility.
- Facility Directors recommend employees for scholarship program participation.
- See your local facility intranet for the additional information.

## Application Requirements:

- Complete Scholarship Application Form
- Letter of acceptance from the school
- Tuition, book, and fee costs (Plan of Study)
- Program curriculum and cost per credit hour
- Documentation of any credits previously earned (Transcripts)
- Credit Hour Verification Worksheet
- Copy of resume
- Copy of most recent completed appraisal or proficiency
- References
- Cover Letter

## Student Responsibilities:

- Continue working in full-time/part-time status.
- Maintain an acceptable level of performance and leave usage (confirmed quarterly with supervisor).
- Maintain a C or better in classes.
- Provide coordinator with completed grades and bills in a timely manner.
- Communicate program changes.
- If scheduling accommodations are needed, discuss with your supervisor.
- Within 6 months of graduation provide diploma and transcripts to scholarship coordinator, find and secure a position using the degree for which you went to school.
- Work in a full-time status during service obligation period.
- If breach occurs:
  - Before school starts and payment is made the amount owed is \$1500.00.
  - During your program, payback is all funding you received up to that point.
  - During service obligation period, typically payback is up to 3 times that of the original awarded scholarship funding. In some cases, a waiver from repayment can be requested.