



## SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF NURSING

4305 S. Louise Ave., Suite 201 | Sioux Falls, SD 57106-3115  
605-362-2760 | <https://www.sdbon.org>

# MEMO

**Date:** September 5, 2025  
**From:** South Dakota Board of Nursing, Linda Young, Executive Director  
**To:** SD Licensed Nursing Facility Administrators and Nurse Aide Training Program Coordinator  
**RE:** Changes to Regulation of Certified Nurse Aides in ARSD 20:48

Please be advised, changes to rules on the regulation of certified nurse aides (CNA) were adopted by the Board of Nursing on August 5, 2025; the new and amended rules become effective September 8, 2025. The changes move the regulation of CNAs from the Department Health to the Board of Nursing. The new or amended rules will be located in ARSD chapters 20:48:16 and 20:48:18. Find the full set of adopted rules at: <https://rules.sd.gov/detail.aspx?Id=887>.

A description of the changes and actions that may be needed by your facility to transition to the new CNA processes are outlined in the attached table. Changes are outlined in the areas of:

**A) Nurse Aide Training Programs; B) CNA Competency Evaluation; C) CNA Registry; and D) CNA Complaints and Discipline.**

The Board's website, <https://www.sdbon.org/>, will reflect the changes after September 8<sup>th</sup> and will be updated often as the new rules and processes are implemented.

If you have questions, please email [sduap@state.sd.us](mailto:sduap@state.sd.us).

Kind regards,

Linda Young, MS, RN, FRE; Executive Director  
South Dakota Board of Nursing

Cc Jennifer Maeschen, Administrator, Licensure & Certification, SD Department of Health



## SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF NURSING

4305 S. Louise Ave., Suite 201 | Sioux Falls, SD 57106-3115  
605-362-2760 | <https://www.sdbon.org>

### New CNA Rules Implementation

New Rules Requirement / Process	Action / Transition
<b>A. Nurse Aide Training Programs</b>	
<p><b>1. Program Director:</b> The administrator of a facility must select a Program Director for approval by the board. The Program Director must be licensed as an RN and have one year of licensed clinical RN experience.</p> <p>The administrator must notify the Board within 60 days when the Program Director position is vacated; a new Program Director must be approved by the Board before new students are enrolled.</p> <p>The Program Director must agree to complete the duties listed below.</p>	<p><b>No change if your currently approved NATP 'Program Coordinator' will serve as the 'Program Director'.</b> The Board will update the NATP Approved Program list to reflect new title.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> If a different RN will be in the Program Director role, an administrator of the facility/institution should complete the <i>NATP Program Director Request Form</i> and email to <a href="mailto:SDUAP@state.sd.us">SDUAP@state.sd.us</a>. The Board will review for approval and update the NATP Approved Program list.</p>
<b>2. Program Director Duties &amp; Responsibilities</b>	
<p>a. Provides overall supervision of the NATP.</p> <p>b. Ensures curriculum requirements are met in § 20:48:18:09 and 75-hours of theoretical instruction and supervised practical training are provided under direct supervision of licensed nurse.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> See <i>Curriculum Guide</i>.</p>
<p>c. Selects and uses Board-approved resource(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>American Health Care Association's (AHCA) How to be a Nurse Assistant (2022); 8th Ed., Online &amp; Text.</li> <li>Avera Education Staffing Solutions (AESS) Online, (transitioning to Hartman's Text &amp; Workbook)</li> <li>Hartman's Nurse Assistant Care: Long-Term Care (2022); 5th Ed.: Text &amp; Workbook</li> <li>WeCare Online (uses Hartman's Text, Workbook)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b> If not currently using an approved resource, please transition to an approved resource(s). No specific deadline is set.</p> <p>When your NATP renews next, if not using an approved resource, include a plan to transition to approved resource(s).</p>
<p>d. Ensures that <i>Supervised Practical Training</i> (SPT) is taught by a licensed nurse.</p> <p>See <i>Curriculum Guide</i>.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> An in-person skills lab, nursing facility, or comparable nursing practice setting must be used to teach skills and evaluate student performance. All required skills checklists on the <i>Curriculum Guide</i> must be completed by a student.</p> <p><i>The instructor and RN Skills Evaluator are accountable to assess and determine if a skills lab setting or a resident's care setting will work best for each skill.</i></p>
<p>e. The Program Director selects and approves <b>qualified instructors</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Primary nurse instructor(s):</b> Licensed RN or LPN, two years clinical licensed nursing experience, one year licensed nursing experience in a nursing facility. Experience instructing adult students or completed a training course on adult instruction. Cannot be employed as the Director of Nursing (DON) in the nursing facility.</li> <li><b>Supplemental Personnel:</b> optional, assist with teaching. Verify one year of experience in content area of expertise. Cannot be employed as the DON in the nursing facility or as a CNA.</li> <li><b>Skills Lab Instructors:</b> Licensed RN or LPN, assist with skills lab; complete skills demonstration checklists. Instructors cannot be employed as the DON in the nursing facility.</li> </ul>	<p><b>New Process:</b> The Board <i>only</i> approves the Program Director; the Board no longer approves instructors or RN Skills Evaluators.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> The Program Director is responsible to review and approve instructors and RN Skills Evaluators qualifications, verify licensure, and maintain documentation.</p> <p>Verify nurse licensure status at: <a href="https://www.sdbon.org/verify/index.asp">https://www.sdbon.org/verify/index.asp</a>.</p>

New Rules Requirement / Process	Action / Transition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>RN Skills Evaluator(s):</b> Licensed RN, one year clinical experience caring for older adults or chronically ill of any age. Evaluate student performance on 4 randomly selected skills for CNA registration. Cannot be employed as the DON in the nursing facility.</li> </ul>	
f. Uses classrooms, skills labs, and equipment in the number and size to provide a safe and effective learning environment for the number of students enrolled. g. Create and maintain an environment conducive to teaching and learning.	<b>Action:</b> Program Director responsible to ensure appropriate resources and environment conducive to teaching and learning.
h. Prohibits enrollment of students who have findings of and convictions for emotional and psychological abuse, neglect, exploitation, or physical abuse.	<b>Action:</b> Screen students prior to enrolling. Note: Human Resources may assist with requirement.
i. Ensures that a student is competent to perform a nursing task prior to the student performing the task on a client/resident without direct supervision. j. Uses licensed nurses to directly supervise students in the skills lab. k. Ensures a licensed nurse is in the immediate area and available to supervise the student when the student is providing client care.	<b>Action:</b> Program Director responsible to ensure requirements are met.
l. Assists students to register as a CNA by submitting the <i>NATP Completion Verification Form</i> and the student's four <i>Skills Evaluation Checklist Forms</i> to the Board.  <i>The Forms will be located on the board's website.</i>	<b>Action:</b> The new rules require a CNA applicant to be evaluated on 4 skills by an <i>RN Skills Evaluator</i> in an in-person skills lab or nursing facility, depending on the skill and as determined by the RN Evaluator.  <i>See: Competency Evaluation section below.</i>  Until your program has an <b>RN Skills Evaluator</b> , students must take and pass SDHCA/Headmaster's 'Skills Exam' using current process. <b>Programs must transition to an RN Skills Evaluator by May 1, 2026.</b>
m. Maintain documentation, including list of enrolled students; date student completed, failed, or withdrew and reason for withdrawing; and a list of individuals teaching the NATP, including qualifications and experience.	<b>Action:</b> Maintain documentation; make available to Board upon request.
n. The Program Director must be available for the renewal site visit.	Anticipate scheduling renewal visits beginning January 2026; visits may be in person or teleconference.
<b>3. Clinical Affiliation Agreement:</b> NATPs <i>not affiliated</i> with a Nursing Facility, or comparable nursing practice setting, must have a signed agreement in place with a facility, the agreement must describe how the NATP will provide supervised practical training in the facility and how students will be directly supervised by a licensed nurse when performing resident care.	<b>Action:</b> If applicable, a NATP must have a signed agreement on file and available to the Board upon request.
<b>4. Multiple NATP locations:</b> Institution with multiple affiliated facilities shall submit one NATP application for all locations.	<b>Action:</b> As applicable, must convert to one program. The Board will contact institution to coordinate action plan.

New Rules Requirement / Process	Action / Transition
<p><b>5. Renewal of NATP:</b> Renew NATP every two years; the Board shall conduct an onsite or teleconference visit to determine compliance with requirements.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Renewal date staying the same. A Program Director may provide an action plan with renewal application to describe transition plans. Anticipate scheduling renewal visits beginning January 2026.</p>
<p><b>B. CNA Competency Evaluation</b></p> <p><b>1. Required Skills Evaluation:</b> to ensure the student is able to competently perform common CNA skills.</p> <p><b>New process:</b> The Board developed a pool of tasks and specific CNA registry checklists forms that must be used.</p> <p>The pool of tasks evaluate hand hygiene, use of PPE, transferring, positioning, ambulation, personal care skills, elimination, feeding, and other core skills.</p> <p>The Board will randomly assign four of the skills to be performed by a CNA Applicant and evaluated by the RN Skills Evaluator.</p> <p>The four completed checklist forms must be submitted to the Board for scoring. A student can retake a skills checklist two times.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> The new skills evaluation process will begin September 22<sup>nd</sup>; to implement the new process a NATP must have an <i>RN Skills Evaluator</i>.</p> <p><b>New Skills Evaluation Steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Board will provide the Program Director access to print the randomly selected skills evaluation checklists.</li> <li>2. The Program Director gives the checklists to the <i>RN Skills Evaluator</i> to evaluate the student during the program's skills lab or at end of training program.</li> <li>3. The student can be evaluated in an in-person skills lab or the nursing facility, as determined by the RN Skills Evaluator.</li> <li>4. After forms are completed, the RN Skills Evaluator gives the forms to the Program Director.</li> <li>5. The Program Director has the student complete the Board's <i>Initial CNA Registration Application</i>: <a href="https://www.sduap.org/CNA/apply/CAPN/info.asp">https://www.sduap.org/CNA/apply/CAPN/info.asp</a></li> <li>6. After submission of the application, the Program Director submits <i>all 4 completed Skills Evaluation Checklist</i> forms and the <i>NATP Completion Verification Form</i> to the Board at <a href="mailto:SDUAP@state.sd.us">SDUAP@state.sd.us</a>.</li> <li>7. The Board will attach the forms to the student's application.</li> </ol> <p>A program that <b>does not have an RN Skills Evaluator</b> must have students take and pass the 'Skills Exam' offered by SDHCA/Headmaster. <b>Programs must transition to an RN Skills Evaluator by May 1, 2026.</b></p>
<p><b>2. Required Knowledge Exam:</b> After the student completes the 75-hour training program:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Program Director makes the student eligible to take the CNA Knowledge Exam.</li> <li>b. The student applies on the national test vendor's website and pays the required test vendor fee.</li> <li>c. The test vendor sends the student an authorization to test.</li> <li>d. The student uses a test proctor, selected according to test vendor requirements (as approved by the Board).</li> <li>e. The student must pass with the exam with a score of 75% and may retake exam twice.</li> <li>f. The Board obtains the test score directly from the test vendor.</li> </ol>	<p><b>No change at this time</b> to SDHCA/Headmaster <i>knowledge exam</i> process. The Program Director will register the student/CNA Applicant at <a href="https://www.sdhca.org/cna">https://www.sdhca.org/cna</a>. The Board will continue to import exam scores directly from Headmaster.</p> <p><b>Please know,</b> the Board must issue a request for proposal (RFP) to allow all interested national CNA test vendors the opportunity to apply for the 3-year knowledge exam contract. Therefore, the test vendor may change.</p> <p>As the knowledge exam process evolves, the Board will provide the Program Director more information.</p>
<p><b>C. CNA Registration</b></p> <p><i>A Nursing Facility must ensure Nurse Aides are registered as CNAs within four months of working and performing nurse aide duties.</i></p>	<p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same website to submit application: <a href="https://www.sduap.org/CNA/apply/CAPN/info.asp">https://www.sduap.org/CNA/apply/CAPN/info.asp</a></li> </ul>

New Rules Requirement / Process	Action / Transition
<p><b>1. Initial Registration:</b> the Board shall register an individual upon:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receipt of online CNA application; no act of misconduct prohibiting registration</li> <li>Verification of completion of approved NATP</li> <li>Verification of passing skills evaluation</li> <li>Verification of passing knowledge exam</li> <li>Once registered may use title "Certified Nurse Aide" or "CNA".</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>New:</b> Board reviews application; investigates and acts on reported misconduct. (DOH will no longer do so)</li> <li><b>New:</b> The Program Director submits <i>NATP Completion Verification Form</i> and <i>Skills Evaluation Checklist Forms</i> to Board to verify completion of training and skills.</li> <li>Same website to verify active CNA registration:  <a href="https://www.sduap.org/verify/">https://www.sduap.org/verify/</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>2. CNA Registration by Endorsement:</b> the Board shall register an individual seeking registration by endorsement from another state upon:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receipt of online application, no act of misconduct prohibiting registration</li> <li>Evidence of active registration as a CNA on another state's registry.</li> </ol>	<p><b>New Process:</b> The CNA applicant must identify on the Board's application the U.S. state where the individual holds active CNA registration. <i>Same website to apply:</i>  <a href="https://www.sduap.org/CNA/apply/endorse/info.asp">https://www.sduap.org/CNA/apply/endorse/info.asp</a></p> <p>The Board will verify the applicant's registry status in the U.S. state provided and will add the individual to South Dakota's CNA registry if the individual holds active, unencumbered CNA registration in that other state.</p>
<p><b>3. CNA Registration Renewal:</b> the Board shall renew the registration of an individual upon:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receipt of online application, no act of misconduct prohibiting registration</li> <li>Verification of completion of 12 hours of nursing or nursing-related services for monetary compensation during preceding 2 years</li> <li>Verification of completion of 12 hours of in-service education annually during the preceding 2 years which must include content on dementia management, client abuse, neglect, exploitation, misappropriation.</li> <li>Applicants who do not meet requirements of b. and c. must pass board-approved knowledge exam and skills evaluation.</li> </ol>	<p><b>No change</b> to current process.</p> <p>Same website to renew application:  <a href="https://www.sduap.org/renew/index.asp">https://www.sduap.org/renew/index.asp</a></p>
<p><b>D. CNA Complaints and Discipline</b>  <i>Anyone who believes a nurse or a registered CNA has committed a violation is encouraged to report the situation to the Board.</i></p>	
<p>The Board may take disciplinary or corrective action against a CNA registrant (and a registered medication aide) when there is sufficient evidence and proof to support that the registrant violated one of the grounds listed in <a href="#">ARSD 20:48:16:04</a>.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> the title for registered medication aides, in ARSD 20:48:16:02, was amended. Previous title was "unlicensed medication aide"; an individual registered by the Board as a medication aide may now use the title: <b>"Registered Medication Aide" or "RMA"</b>.</p>	<p><b>New Process:</b> anticipate in mid-October the Board will begin taking and investigating complaints against CNAs. (DOH will no longer do so.)</p> <p>The Board's process will be the same as that used for complaints against medication aides and nurses; and will be in accordance with SDCL chapters 36-1C and 1-26.</p> <p>The Board's Complaint/Discipline website will be updated to include CNAs. The complaint form, discipline process, and future list of individuals who receive discipline will be located at: <a href="https://www.sdbon.org/complaint-discipline/index.asp">https://www.sdbon.org/complaint-discipline/index.asp</a></p> <p><b>Note:</b> The Board will also accept the Dept. of Health's facility reporting form.</p>