

MA Career Ladder Program (CLP): Employer Frequently Asked Questions

I. MA Career Ladder Program (CLP) MA Career Ladder Program Prep (CLPrep) - General

1. What is the benefit / why should an employer participate in CLP or CLPrep?

CLP is intended to help current direct care workers advance to Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) roles. The program supports direct care workers at any point in their journey to becoming an LPN. For those already accepted into an LPN program, CLP reduces their work hours to 20 per week and provides an advance wage payment of \$440, enabling them to focus on their studies without experiencing a loss of income. After graduating from the program, participants must commit to working for their employer for two years, during which time the employer repays the advanced wages. CLPrep is designed for individuals who have not yet been accepted into an LPN program, offering support through prerequisite courses or entrance exam preparation to help them pass the TEAS exam and enroll in a program.

2. Which employers are eligible to participate in CLP and CLPrep?

Eligible employers include skilled nursing facilities (SNF) and home and community-based services (HCBS) providers.

3. Which employee roles are eligible to participate in CLP or CLPrep?

Incumbent full-time Certified Nursing Assistants and other direct-care workers are eligible to participate in CLP or CLPrep. These employees must be employed by a participating employer, have their employer's endorsement to participate, and meet the other eligibility criteria. This endorsement includes, but is not limited to, a commitment to offer the employee a standard, full-time Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) role upon successful licensure. We may consider expanding participation on a case-by-case basis for individuals in similar roles with employer support. Please [click here](#) to see the full eligibility criteria.

4. What constitutes "full-time" employment?

"Full-time" is typically considered 30-40 hours per week. Ultimately, it is determined by the employer's specific policies and standards.

5. Is financial assistance for prerequisite courses available?

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Yes, financial assistance is available. CLP participants must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form to access any applicable federal aid. Completing the FAFSA also makes an individual eligible for MassEducate (see eligibility requirements [here](#)), which may cover tuition and fees for eligible participants and includes an allowance for books and supplies.

CLP participants must take at least six (6) credits to ensure prerequisites can be covered by MassEducate, if possible. If a participant cannot secure funding to cover their prerequisites, CLP may provide financial assistance, subject to individual maximums and the availability of funds. *See the complete prerequisite policy [here](#).*

6. What is the difference between CLP and CLPrep?

CLP is for employees that have been accepted to at least one eligible LPN program for the current admissions cycle. Eligible programs are defined as all accredited Massachusetts LPN programs.

CLPrep is for individuals who have not yet been accepted to an LPN program and may need additional academic and/or admissions support to become competitive LPN applicants.

When an employer endorses an employee's participation in CLPrep or CLP, the employer commits to promoting the employee to a full-time LPN role upon successful licensure.

7. Who should employers contact with any additional questions not covered here?

Please contact Susan Misiorski, Vice President of Workforce Development at Massachusetts Senior Care Association, at smisiorski@maseniorcare.org

II. LPN Program: Prerequisites and Other Entrance Requirements

8. Are the LPN program's prerequisites and admissions requirements modified for CLP participants?

No, CLP participants must still complete each school's specific admissions requirements, including prerequisite courses and the TEAS exam, to be considered for LPN program admission. Refer to the [Participant Guide to LPN Admissions](#) for additional information.

9. Can prerequisites be taken online?

This depends on the individual prerequisites of each LPN program. If an LPN program requires a lab as a prerequisite, the lab is typically offered only in person.

10. If an employee has already taken the TEAS exam and passed, will this be acceptable and transferable?

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Each LPN program has its own policies about what a passing score is for the TEAS and how recent the score should be. Please check the specific policies of each school.

11. What does the screening process by Massachusetts Senior Care Association (MSCA) involve?

All eligible employees, whether participating in CLP or CLPrep, will complete a screening and assessment with MSCA to determine whether the eligible employee is a good fit for either CLP or CLPrep.

MSCA assesses two main components: 1) academic skill level (based on a set of sample TEAS exam questions), and 2) capacity to commit the required time to CLP given personal circumstances.

III. LPN Program: Enrollment

12. Are LPN programs holding seats for CLP participants?

No, LPN programs are not holding seats specifically for CLP participants.

13. Is the COVID-19 vaccine required for admissions into CLP?

CLP does not have requirements regarding COVID-19 vaccination. Candidates should refer to the LPN programs and their employers' vaccine requirements for any specific requirements.

14. What is the CLP Advance Payment?

The CLP Advance Payment is designed to help offset living costs during the CLP participant's LPN studies, at \$440 per week (pre-tax) throughout the standard duration of the LPN program (typically approximately 10 months) and allows the CLP participant to reduce their working hours to part-time.

CLP participants will receive the CLP Advance Payment in equal installments from the employer according to the employer's payroll schedule, minus withholdings (including federal/state taxes), during their CLP participation.

The CLP Advance Payment will be considered "fully earned" only when they have worked with the employer as a full-time LPN for at least two (2) years. If the employee leaves the employer voluntarily or is terminated for cause by the employer before the end of the two (2) years, their CLP Advance Payment will not be considered fully earned. The employee must then repay the unearned portion of the total CLP Advance Payment disbursed to them.

15. Does CLP provide funding to employers to cover the cost of replacing the CNA for 20 hours per week while they attend school?

No, backfilling the employees' 20 hours per week is the employer's responsibility.

16. Can CLP participants work more than part-time hours while in the program?

No, CLP participants are expected to work part-time while in their LPN program. LPN programs are intended to be completed in under a year and thus are demanding programs. CLP is designed to provide participants with the flexibility and support needed to succeed in their studies.

IV. Employee's Return Post-LPN Licensure

17. What is the timeline for the employer's Success Payments?

Once a CLP participant graduates, passes the NCLEX-PN, and obtains their LPN license, the employer is expected to make the following "Success Payments", as long as the individual remains employed with the employer. The maximum aggregate amount of Success Payments for each Sponsored Employee is \$20,000 (the "Maximum Payment Amount"), payable in five (5) equal installments. Success payments terminate when an employee leaves.

Success Payment	Sponsored Employee Milestone	Amount Due
1	LPN Start Date	\$4,000
2	First anniversary of LPN Start Date	\$4,000
3	Second anniversary of LPN Start Date	\$4,000
4	Third anniversary of LPN Start Date	\$4,000
5	Fourth anniversary of LPN Start Date	\$4,000

18. What are the employer's obligations if a CLP participant does not complete the LPN program, or completes and does not pass the NCLEX-PN?

An employer has no financial obligations to CLP unless an individual successfully completes the program and passes the NCLEX-PN exam.

19. What are an employer's obligations if a CLP participant graduates and passes the NCLEX-PN exam but does not accept a standard, full-time LPN offer of employment from their employer?

If the CLP participant declines the employer's LPN offer, the employer has no financial obligation to CLP.

20. What are an employer's obligations if an employee works as an LPN but does not remain employed for the full 2-year commitment?

- If the employee leaves voluntarily, the employer has no further obligation once the individual departs.
- If the employee is terminated for cause, the employer has no further obligation once the individual departs, provided the employer provides sufficient documentation for the termination reason.
- If the employee is terminated due to a layoff or reduction in force, the employer will be obligated to pay the Maximum Payment Amount.

21. What are the employer's obligations if the employer does not have an open LPN role available after the employee has successfully attained their LPN license?

When an employer endorses an employee's participation in CLP or CLPrep, the employer commits to promoting the employee to a full-time LPN role upon successful licensure. If the employer fails to make a standard, full-time LPN offer to a participating employee in CLP for any reason, the employer is obligated to pay the Maximum Payment Amount.

22. What are an employer's obligations if the employer's open LPN role(s) do not work for the employee?

The employer is expected to make a standard, full-time LPN offer of employment. We recommend that the employer confirm the specific terms of the role (location, hours, etc.) they intend to offer before the employee commits to being a CLP participant, to ensure both parties are aligned.

23. After obtaining an LPN license, does an employee have the option to work part-time (for a longer period of time), rather than full-time, for 2 years?

No, CLP requires that the employee work full-time for at least two years.