



**Community College: Associate Degree Nursing Programs  
Merit-Based Admission Policy  
An act to add and repeal Section 78261.5 of the Education Code**

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**Legislation enacted 2007-2008 Session**

Effective January 1, 2008 Assembly Bill No. 1559. Chapter 712 (Berryhill) Public postsecondary education: community colleges registered nursing program.

This new law requires a community college registered nursing program that elects to use a multicriteria screening process on or after January 1, 2008, to evaluate applicants for admission to a nursing programs to include specified criteria relating to the academic performance, work or volunteer experience, foreign language skills, life experiences, and special circumstances of the applicant. The new law would authorize a community college registered nursing program using a multicriteria screening process to use an approved diagnostic assessment tool before, during, or after the multicriteria screening process. The law would require a district that uses multicriteria screening measures to report its nursing program admissions policies to the chancellor annually, in writing.

The bill would repeal these provisions on January 1, 2016

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 78261.5 is added to the Education Code, to read:  
78261.5. (a) A community college registered nursing program that determines that the number of applicants to that program exceeds its capacity may admit students in accordance with any of the following procedures:

(1) Administration of a multicriteria screening process, as authorized by Section 78261.3, in a manner that is consistent with the standards set forth in subdivision (b).

(2) A random selection process.

(3) A blended combination of random selection and a multicriteria screening process.

(b) A community college registered nursing program that elects, on or after January 1, 2008, to use a multicriteria screening process to evaluate applicants pursuant to this article shall apply those measures in accordance with all of the following:

(1) The criteria applied in a multicriteria screening process under this article shall include, but shall not necessarily be limited to, all of the following:

(A) Academic degrees or diplomas, or relevant certificates, held by an applicant.

(B) Grade-point average in relevant coursework.

- (C) Any relevant work or volunteer experience.
- (D) Life experiences or special circumstances of an applicant, including, but not necessarily limited to, the following experiences or circumstances:
- (i) Disabilities.
  - (ii) Low family income.
  - (iii) First generation of family to attend college.
  - (iv) Need to work.
  - (v) Disadvantaged social or educational environment.
  - (vi) Difficult personal and family situations or circumstances.
  - (vii) Refugee or veteran status.
- (E) Proficiency or advanced level coursework in languages other than English. Credit for languages other than English shall be received for languages that are identified by the chancellor as high-frequency languages, as based on census data. These languages may include, but are not necessarily limited to, any of the following:
- (i) American Sign Language.
  - (ii) Arabic.
  - (iii) Chinese, including its various dialects.
  - (iv) Farsi.
  - (v) Russian.
  - (vi) Spanish.
  - (vii) Tagalog.
  - (viii) The various languages of the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.
- (2) Additional criteria, such as a personal interview, a personal statement, letter of recommendation, or the number of repetitions of prerequisite classes, or other criteria, as approved by the chancellor, may be used, but are not required.
- (3) A community college registered nursing program using a multicriteria screening process under this article may use an approved diagnostic assessment tool, in accordance with Section 78261.3, before, during, or after the multicriteria screening process.
- (4) As used in this section:
- (A) "Disabilities" has the same meaning as used in Section 2626 of the Unemployment Insurance Code.
  - (B) "Disadvantaged social or educational environment" includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the status of a student who has participated in Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS).
  - (C) "Grade-point average" refers to the same fixed set of required prerequisite courses that all applicants to the nursing program administering the multicriteria screening process are required to complete.
  - (D) "Low family income" shall be measured by a community college registered nursing program in terms of a student's eligibility for, or receipt of, financial aid under a program that may include, but is not necessarily limited to, a fee waiver from the board of governors under Section 76300, the Cal Grant Program under Chapter 1.7 (commencing with Section 69430) of Part 42 of Division 5, the federal Pell Grant program, or CalWORKs.
  - (E) "Need to work" means that the student is working at least part time while completing academic work that is a prerequisite for admission to the nursing program.

(5) A community college registered nursing program that uses a multicriteria screening process pursuant to this article shall report its nursing program admissions policies to the chancellor annually, in writing. The admissions policies reported under this paragraph shall include the weight given to any criteria used by the program, and shall include demographic information relating to both the persons admitted to the program and the persons of that group who successfully completed that program.

(c) The chancellor is encouraged to develop, and make available to community college registered nursing programs by July 1, 2008, a model admissions process based on this section.

(d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2016, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2016, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 2. The Legislative Analyst's Office shall evaluate the use and efficacy of the admissions process for community college registered nursing programs. The Legislative Analyst's Office shall report its findings and any related recommendations to the Legislature as part of its annual analysis of the Budget Bill, commencing with its analysis of the Budget Bill for the 2009–10 fiscal year.