



Welcome to Concordia University Texas' Nursing Program

Congratulations again on your conditional admission to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program! Whether you chose the Accelerated or Traditional track, we know you chose Concordia to be your nursing foundation for the coming semesters. We are excited to witness your adventure to come, and we look forward to having you join us as a CTX Tornado!

Contained within this document are instructions and resources to help you fulfil the clinical components of the conditional admission requirements outlined in your signed Completion Plan and your Letter of Conditional Admission. You will also receive ongoing communications as the start date of your BSN cohort approaches.

It is imperative that you complete all steps communicated before you may begin nursing courses with the cohort. Requirements are subject to change by student term, the Texas Board of Nursing, and our clinical partners' policies. **It is your responsibility to review all materials provided (including the University Student Handbook, Catalog, and Nursing Student Handbook) to ensure compliance with requirements.**

As stated in your completion plan and Letter of Conditional Admission, failure to meet the outlined enrollment requirements may impact your ability to attend classes and may lead to revocation of admission. Work closely with your faculty and admissions counselor to ensure you remain on-track.

Please carefully follow the instructions provided in order they appear in the below Table of Contents, as some items may take more time than others. **All items are time-sensitive. Please observe the deadlines indicated in the email you received alongside this attachment.**

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Step 1: Clearance from the Board of Nursing

Due Date: 30 days from cohort start

Students cannot participate in Concordia's BSN or ABSN without first obtaining TX BON early clearance to participate in the NCLEX-RN®. It is important to note, if a Texas Board of Nursing (BON) reportable event occurs during the time you are enrolled in the program, you will notify the Program Dean within 48 hours of the event. The Dean will determine if you are eligible to continue in the program.

Once the criminal background check has been completed, any infraction will result in BON notification.

Reportable events include any arrest and/or convictions for anything, and mental health issues as required by the Texas Board of Nursing. These must be disclosed to the Board of Nursing to ensure eligibility for licensure. Reporting delays can prevent you from starting classes and impact licensure.

Fingerprinting

- Concordia sends the Texas Board of Nursing (TX BON) a roster with the name, address*, DOB and social security number you supplied in the application process.
- Ask your counselor for your roster processing date. The Board of Nursing will either exempt you from the background check (if they have access to current fingerprints) or provide their fingerprinting partner, IdentoGo, with your personal email address.
- IdentoGo will provide instructions 1-3** weeks after your roster date. Follow their instructions to schedule and complete fingerprinting ASAP. Cost will vary dependent on state of residence.
- **Do not wait.** If you have not received your instructions OR an exemption notification, reach out to the TX BON ASAP.

Background Check

- Once the Texas Board of Nursing receives your fingerprints, it runs a high level background check.
- You will receive 1 of 3 potential results:
 - **Blue Card** - If cleared without any notations on your record, you will receive a Blue Card in the mail. It looks like a small, blue postcard. **Do not lose your Blue Card.** You will need to provide it later.
 - **Letter of Clearance** - If cleared with a previous, resolved notation on your record, you will receive a letter stating your clearance.
 - **Declaratory Letter - If not cleared**, you will receive a letter with details from the Board. **You must work with the Board to resolve the issue.** This process may take 1-6 months.
 - If the declaratory issue is resolved, you will receive a letter from the board. **Do not lose this letter.** You will need to provide it later.
 - If you do not or cannot resolve the issue, you cannot participate in any nursing program in the state of Texas.

Clearance

- Once you have received your documentation of clearance, let your admissions counselor know right away.
- You must make a copy for yourself, and send the original documentation to Concordia Nursing.
- You must have approval from the Board of Nursing **30 days before** starting your program.
- **If you change your address before approval is issued, it is your responsibility to update the Board of Nursing immediately.** Contact the BON via their number on www.bon.texas.gov.

**If your address has changed, notify your admissions counselor immediately. **If you do not receive either communication from TX BON showing you are exempt from fingerprinting OR you do not receive an email from IdentoGo 3 weeks after your roster is processed, reach out to TX BON via the contact information on www.bon.texas.gov.*

Step 2: CastleBranch and Clinical Requirements

Overview

In accordance and compliance with the Health Care Provider Terms of Texas Administrative Code 97.63. Concordia University's clinical partners have identified CastleBranch as the official agent for confidential electronic management of mandatory clinical experience files for each nursing student. To ensure you are able to participate in clinical assignments every semester, you must create and pay for your account with CastleBranch.

Throughout your enrollment (and for, certain hospital employers, beyond), you are responsible for reviewing and updating immunization records through CastleBranch. You may be asked to present physical copies of these documents to nursing administration.

If you are not in compliance, you cannot attend any clinical practicum or precepted experiences. Lack of attendance in practicum, simulation, or precepted experiences may jeopardize your ability to continue in the program.

CastleBranch must show approval of **all vaccination and safety compliance items, excluding your drug test, no later than 30 days prior to the start of your BSN curriculum**. Some requirements may take several weeks up to a month or more to complete, so it is imperative that you begin working on this process immediately. **Drug screening cannot be completed early. Please reference the deadline listed in the email accompanying this attachment, and add this window to your calendar.**

If for any reason a required immunization is contraindicated, the student is required to present a record from a health care provider indicating the circumstances.

1 Set up Castlebranch

Set up your CastleBranch account ASAP. Complete at least 60 days prior to cohort start.

- Go to portal.castlebranch.com/ON71 and bookmark the page.
- Click "Place Order"
- Expand the option that fits your conditional admission type, ABSN for accelerated, or BSN for traditional track students
- Select "Background Check - Drug Test - Compliance Tracker. This package costs \$120.
- Begin uploading all documentation as soon as it's available.
- Students with a non-CTX CastleBranch account must still purchase the CTX compliance package as indicated above.

2 Tuberculosis Test

3 options available. Choose from the below, and upload results. Due 30 days from start.

- 2-Step TB Test: Involves 2 rounds of testing with a minimum of 4 doctor's visits.
 - Round 1, Visit 1: PPD Antigen is applied under the skin
 - Round 1, Visit 2: Results read 2-3 days later. If positive, you will be referred for a chest X-ray. If never vaccinated and you have a positive result, you will need to upload chest X-ray showing no active disease.
 - Round 2, Visit 3: 7-21 days after the first test and a negative result, a second skin test will be reapplied.
 - Round 2, Visit 4: 2-3 days after the second application, results are read. Positive results are referred for chest X-rays.
- TB Gold Test: QuantiFERON-TB Gold In-TUbe (QFT-G) blood test. Result will be available faster than 2-Step testing.
- Chest X-Ray Report: Must show no active disease. This option must be used for anyone with previous TB vaccination or a positive result for any of the above.

3 Immunization Records and Physical Exam

Documentation must include date, lot number, dosing, and signature of person administering the vaccine. Due 30 days from start.

- MMR (Measels, Mumps & Rubella): Documentation of either (1) proof of 2 MMR vaccinations or (2) Positive IgG titer (with a lab report for each of the 3 components) must be provided.
- Varicella (Chicken Pox): Documentation of either (1) two completed vaccinations, (2) Positive antibody titers with lab report, or (3) A letter noting medically documented history of disease from the student, parent, or documenting physician must be provided.
- TDaP (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis) Booster: Must have all three of the components and provide documentation of completion within the past 8 years
- Influenza: Must be updated yearly by October 1st. Students conditionally admitted for the Fall cohort may submit documentation of an updated flu shot when it becomes available after September 1 rather than submit the previous season's documentation.
- Physical Exam: Documentation of a physical exam must be submitted to Castlebranch

Hep-B Vaccine

2 options available. Choose from the below, and upload documentation 30 days from start.

- Hepatitis A&B Twinrix (30 Days) - Recommended for any student admitted less than 6 months from the cohort start date.
- Total of 4 doses delivered individually at 0, 7 and 21-30 days, plus a 12-month booster. *Booster shot may be completed after start of classes. First 3 doses must be complete no more than 30 days prior to the start of classes.
- Hepislab-B - alternative for rapid administration. 2 doses administered 1 month apart.
- Traditional Method (6 Months)
 - 3 doses delivered individually at 4, 8 and 16 weeks, respectively.
- Titer: Positive hepatitis B Surface Antibody test

CPR

Obtain your CPR certification and approval no more than 30 days from start.

- You must be certified for **Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers** through the American Heart Association.
- You must provide a copy of your completion and certification card for the American Heart Association Basic Life Support Health Provider course. The copy of your card uploaded must include the front & back of the card and include signatures of both the instructor and student.
- Red Cross certification will not be accepted.
- To start, visit <https://cpr.heart.org/en/cpr-courses-and-kits/healthcare-professional/basic-life-support-bls-training>, and click "Sign up for a BLS classroom course near you" to search for an instructor
- Your certification must remain valid and cannot expire during enrollment. Make sure to pay attention to reminders sent from CastleBranch as you proceed through the program.

Health Insurance

Students must have insurance in case of accidents during clinicals 30 days from start.

- Upload proof of health insurance enrollment, such as a summary of coverage with your information and policy number, or upload front and back of your insurance card
- We do not have preferred insurance providers. Research thoroughly to find the best coverage and premium for you.
- Plans that renew month-to-month will not be accepted.

Hospital Background Check

Clinical partners require additional screening beyond what is provided by TX BON.

- This screening is specifically outlined and covered within your CastleBranch.
- Hospitals require an additional background screening that includes employment history, professional disciplinary action, and other disciplinary actions that may have occurred.
- This is in addition to the criminal background screening required by the Texas Board of Nursing and is not optional; no other background checking services will be accepted.

Drug Screening

Complete no sooner than 30 days, and no later than 23 days, from your cohort start.

- CastleBranch provides a drug screen order. The dates on the order show how long the order is active, but do not align with the eligible window of accepted results (30-23 days from your cohort start date)
- **Do not take your test while using medication for vaginal yeast infection. This can cause a false positive.**
- Results will be sent directly to CastleBranch for approval when you submit your sample.
- CastleBranch must show results as accepted and completed before you may start clinicals.
- Any student that has an interrupted enrollment will be required to complete a drug screen prior to readmission to the nursing program. An interruption in enrollment is defined as not being continuously enrolled in a nursing course. The cost of drug screening is the responsibility of the student.
- A positive drug screen is any instance in which a drug screen report shows a positive test for one or more of the drugs on the panel. Any student may be required to have additional screening at any time. A student who has a positive drug screen, for which there is not a lawful prescription, will not be given placement in any clinical facility and will be dismissed from the program immediately.

Should any instruction or result within CastleBranch lead to questions, the best first step is to contact CastleBranch directly at 888.723.4263 extension 7196. Should you still have questions after speaking with CastleBranch, please reach out to your admissions counselor or Clinical Clearance point of contact as designated by your admissions counselor or nursing faculty.

Any communicated Due Date for clinical compliance items is the date by which items must show as accepted and "Complete" in CastleBranch.

Step 3: Supplies & Uniforms

Professionalism in appearance and behavior are integral to becoming a Concordia nursing student. You may wish to custom-fit your uniform, so we recommend starting with any items that may require tailoring. Some items are available only at the Concordia bookstore, which carries all supplies except shoes. Other than Concordia-specific items, you may purchase supplies at any vendor you prefer.

You must receive all uniform components in time to attend labs and simulations at the Concordia Nursing site and clinical rotations, when assigned. Please purchase all supplies listed below prior to your start date.

Bookstore hours are traditionally Monday through Thursday 9:00-6:00pm, Friday from 9:00am to 3:30pm, and closed Saturday and Sunday. The bookstore is closed on Fridays during the summer. Due to hour variance by seasons, please call the bookstore, at 512-313-4850, to verify hours prior to your visit, or visit <https://concordia.textbooktech.com/merchandise/nursing>. Payment is due when the order is placed. There may be samples available for you to try on at the Bookstore. For questions, bookstore manager Richard Cash may be reached at 512-313-4851.

Supplies

- Stethoscope: Either a Littman Lightweight II SE or Prestige Lightweight stethoscope may be purchased. The Prestige lightweight is comparable with the Littman but less expensive.
- Kelly Forceps: Colormate Stainless Steel by Prestige Medical.
- Bandage Scissors: 5 ½" Listermate Stainless Steel by Prestige Medical.
- Penlight

Uniform

- Two Sets of Cherokee Workwear or Dickies scrub bottoms and tops (minimum). Only solid "grape" color can be worn.
- Two CTX Nursing Patches. If ordering additional scrub tops, please order additional patches. One CTX Nursing patch must be applied to the left sleeve, centered on the sleeve, or two inches from the shoulder seam. Patches must be sewn in place. Patches are only available at the CTX bookstore in the month prior to your nursing start.
- Shoes: must be white, gray, black or a combination thereof, with closed toe and closed heel. We recommend nonpermeable materials; however, it is acceptable to apply liquid-proofing sprays to athletic shoes to make them liquid nonpermeable. All footwear must be clean and shoelaces must be clean. Students are strongly urged to purchase a shoe that gives adequate support to the feet.

Please refer to the Nursing Student Handbook for details for allowable long-sleeved undershirts, outerwear and accessories. Student appearance during all school activities, unless otherwise pre-designated by faculty, should be consistent with dress code.

Textbooks

Tornado Textbook Program for Nursing

Students are auto-opted into Concordia's convenient Tornado Textbook Program, which splits the total cost of all your nursing textbooks evenly across all four semesters of the track. Textbooks are pre-packaged on your behalf, and the cost of the books is applied to your student account at a flat rate fee per semester. Students who participate in the program keep their books, rather than rent them.

Students may not opt out of the program once the cohort starts. However, you still have the option of opting out in advance. Since the per-semester fee is a portion of the total book list's cost, students must choose to opt out before starting the nursing curriculum if using another book vendor. If shopping other options, make sure to order the correct editions using the appropriate ISBN's, available from the look-up function on the bookstore website.

Students participating in the program you will purchase supplies at cost, which is about a 30% discount compared to those that do not participate in the Tornado Textbook Program.

For more information about the Tornado Textbook program, please visit <http://www.concordia.edu/resources/tornado-textbooks>.

Shopping around for your books?

The cost of your books can be a serious consideration in your pre-nursing process. Our Textbook program is a cost-effective, convenient solution for many students; however, if you wish to shop the prices available for each individual book, please ensure to opt out three weeks prior to your cohort start.

If purchasing books on your own, please follow these steps:

1. Inform Maggie Loar maggie.loar@concordia.edu you wish to opt out no later than 3 weeks prior to the cohort start.
2. Once your opt-out is confirmed, visit <https://concordia.textbooktech.com/textbooks>.
3. Click "Textbooks" to open the Textbook Lookup function.
4. Select your cohort term, "NUR" for the nursing department, and select the courses listed in the curriculum one at a time to view book lists
5. To confirm your book list, or if you have questions about the curriculum, reach out to your Academic Success Coach prior to your start.

Additional Resources & Forms

Prior to Orientation, please review the following information and resources. As mentioned at the opening, you will be receiving various messages with important information as your start date in the BSN approaches. Make sure you are checking your email and staying in touch with your Admissions Counselor and/or our Site Director to stay on track.

Review each item and complete required forms:

- Nursing Student Handbook – Available on the College of Health Sciences website
- [University Student Handbook](#)
- [University Catalog](#)
- [Important Dates](#)
- Technology
 - [Personal Support Center](#)
- [Information for Students Needing Accommodations](#)

Our faculty and staff are delighted to begin nursing courses with such an excellent group of students. We are committed to your success, and we want to create an enriching professional and personal experience for each of you. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions along the way.

Registration and Coursework

Prerequisites

Your admissions counselor and academic success team should have already guided you through registering for any remaining prerequisites. Prerequisites must be completed on-time and with a 3.0 minimum cumulative and science GPA before you may start nursing coursework, per your signed Completion Plan and Letter of Conditional Admission.

Nursing Coursework

Once you have completed all compliance items and have shown you are academically on-track for the nursing curriculum, the nursing faculty will complete your BSN-specific registration.