

# Actively Engaged Requirements for Registration

Effective: February 27, 2026

## INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Aides of Alberta (CLHA) has the **authority** under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to carry out its activities and **govern** Health Care Aides (HCAs)\* in a manner that protects and serves the public interest.

The CLHA carries out its responsibility to protect the public by ensuring that HCAs meet the practice requirements under the HPA and the *Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Aides Profession Regulation* (LPN and HCA Profession Regulation).

HCAs are responsible for following the CLHA's policy documents, including their standards of practice and code of **ethics**.

Terms found in the definition section are **bolded** where they appear for the first time in this document.

## PURPOSE

This policy describes how the **actively engaged** requirements can be met under the LPN and HCA Profession Regulation and applies to HCAs or **applicants** seeking initial registration on the **general register** and those wishing to renew a practice permit for the upcoming year with the CLHA.

This policy does not apply to:

- applicants who graduated from an Alberta HCA certificate program less than four years ago; or
- **labour mobility** applicants who hold a current HCA **registration** in another Canadian jurisdiction.

## POLICY

Applicants and current HCAs must be able to demonstrate being actively engaged in the HCA profession as one of the requirements to obtain a **practice permit** for initial registration or to renew a practice permit for the upcoming year.

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\* In this document, "HCA" has the same meaning as "regulated member(s)" in the *Health Professions Act*.

## Application Requirements

Applicants must meet certain requirements to be considered for registration as actively engaged HCAs. The LPN and HCA Profession Regulation sets out the requirements for registration on the general register. It also allows applicants who are not registered in a Canadian jurisdiction to meet the general register requirements through a substantial equivalence competence assessment, which assesses whether their qualifications are deemed substantially equivalent to the competence requirements in the LPN and HCA Profession Regulation.

## Application Assessments

For an applicant to be registered, they are required to have been actively engaged in providing professional services based on the **criteria** approved by the Council. This requirement applies to all **new applications**, except for **labour mobility** applications, who are assessed under the *Labour Mobility Act*. HCAs applying for registration or renewal of their practice permit must also meet the actively engagement requirements, however renewal applications are evaluated according to section 40(1)(b)(i) of the HPA, the *Standards of Practice for Health Care Aides on Continuing Competence*, and all other applicable requirements for registration and renewal.

## Actively Engaged Criteria

“Actively engaged” means the HCA has regularly provided professional services to **clients** and non-family members. The Registrar will use the below **criteria** to decide if the individual qualifies as actively engaged. As outlined in schedule 10, section 3(2) of the HPA, HCAs do one or more of the following in their practice:

- assist and support activities of daily living to provide basic personal care and health services,
- assist in teaching a Health Care Aide certificate program approved by the Council,
- participate in client education and promotion of client wellness across the lifespan,
- teach Health Care Aide techniques and practices to practitioners in the workplace, and
- provide restricted activities provided by the regulations.

When an HCA practices as outlined above, they can count those hours toward their initial application or registration renewal. However, when the HCA is on call and not providing services or is on a leave of absence (including sickness, vacation, or maternity/parental leave), these hours will not be included in the total hours worked during a registration year.

The Council has approved the following criteria to be considered by the Registrar when determining whether an individual has been actively engaged. The applicant has:

- (a) competently provided one or more of the professional services outlined under section 3(2) of schedule 10 in the HPA;

- (b) delivered professional services to clients and non-family members;
- (c) provided professional services for a minimum of 1000 **practice hours** or has “other equivalent practice experience” in the last four registration years, which can be either paid or voluntary.

“Other equivalent practice experience” includes passing a Council-approved examination and/or education relevant to an HCA’s practice. For education to be considered relevant, it must be formal education that can reasonably be linked to HCA practice.

If an applicant does not have a minimum of 1,000 practice hours within the last four registration years but has completed the same number of relevant education hours or a combination of practice and education hours that totals 1,000 hours, they may be considered to be actively engaged in accordance with the LPN and HCA Profession Regulation.

Meeting the above requirement shows the applicant has been actively engaged in providing professional services, but it is only part of the requirements for registration or **reinstatement**. The CLHA will also look at other requirements from the HPA, the LPN and HCA Profession Regulation, and the CLHA’s Bylaws, such as good character and English language abilities, to determine if they are eligible for registration or renewal. If an applicant has applied for and/or is being considered for a provisional or courtesy registration, they must also meet the requirements for those specific registration categories.

Under section 31 of the HPA, if an applicant is denied a practice permit, or a permit is issued subject to conditions, they can request a review of the decision within 30 days of the letter being issued by the CLHA. A fee may be charged for a review of the decision.

## **Exceptions**

**Exceptions** to the practice hour requirement may be considered in some cases. For example, where the applicant or registrant can demonstrate:

- (a) that they have a characteristic protected from **discrimination** under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, and
- (b) that the **protected characteristic** affected their inability to meet the actively engaged requirements.

Where the applicant or HCA can provide evidence of a negative impact connected to a protected characteristic, the CLHA will accommodate the application to the point of undue hardship, which may include approving the application despite the applicant or HCA not meeting the actively engaged criteria or approving the application with conditions. Where a significant gap is present in meeting the actively engaged requirements, this may create a public safety concern. In this case, the applicant may not be eligible for registration or renewal.

The CLHA may request additional information about why an applicant was unable to meet the practice hour requirement. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis to determine whether an accommodation can be made.

## **CONCLUSION**

This document explains the "actively engaged" requirement under the LPN and HCA Profession Regulation and the CLHA Bylaws, as approved by the Council. It outlines what activities are considered providing professional services and the instances when exceptions can be made.

Documents are updated frequently. For the most current version and access to related documents and resources, please visit the Knowledge Hub on [clha.com](http://clha.com).

If after reading this document you have questions, please contact the CLHA's Registration Department at [hcaregistration@clha.com](mailto:hcaregistration@clha.com) or 780-484-8886 or 1-800-661-5877 (toll-free in Alberta).

## DEFINITIONS

**Actively engaged:** a healthcare professional is considered actively engaged when they have provided a minimum number of practice or service hours within a defined period of time (e.g., 1,000 hours over 4 years).

**Applicant:** a person who submits an application to become registered as an HCA, including individuals applying for reinstatement who have an expired or cancelled practice permit.

**Authority:** refers to the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience. It can also mean the appropriate person to give orders or make decisions.

**Client:** an individual who receives a professional service from an HCA. The term client is interchangeable with patient and resident, depending on the work setting.

**Criteria:** the rules or standards used to judge or decide something.

**Discrimination:** an action or decision that has a negative effect on an individual or group based on personal characteristics, including a person's race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, or sexual orientation.

**Ethics:** the principle of something being right or wrong.

**Exception:** a situation or condition that is different from the standard rules, protocols, or guidelines.

**General registration:** a register category for applicants who meet the standard eligibility requirements to practice as an HCA independently, or who are eligible for registration as a result of being registered in another Canadian jurisdiction, or after being assessed as having substantially equivalent competence.

**Govern:** carry out plans, actions, and directions of a province, organization, or people.

**Labour Mobility:** the ability for certified workers in regulated occupations to work in other provinces or territories in Canada without having to undergo additional certification or training.

**New applications:** applications from individuals who have not been previously listed on the HCA Directory or public registry. As a result, they have not held any prior recognition, certification, or affiliation under the HCA framework.

**Practice hours:** a specific duration of time that healthcare professionals, including HCAs, spend providing direct client care or doing other professional activities related to their field.

**Practice permit:** a formal authorization issued by the CLHA that allows an HCA to practice within their profession. A practice permit may have conditions specific to the HCA in addition to conditions for all HCAs on the same register.

**Protected characteristic:** specific attributes or traits of individuals that are legally safeguarded from discrimination in various contexts.

**Registration:** when a regulatory college approves an applicant to use a specific title, like Health Care Aide, and provide professional services.

**Regulation:** the process of establishing and enforcing rules or standards to govern the conduct of HCAs. The *LPN and HCA Profession Regulation* is responsible for setting professional standards, issuing practice permits, and holding registrants accountable for their actions.

**Reinstatement:** allowing someone to work again after their practice permit was cancelled due to failure to renew. Their practice permit becomes active again, and they are authorized to once again practice.