



BEGIN

Student Toolkit

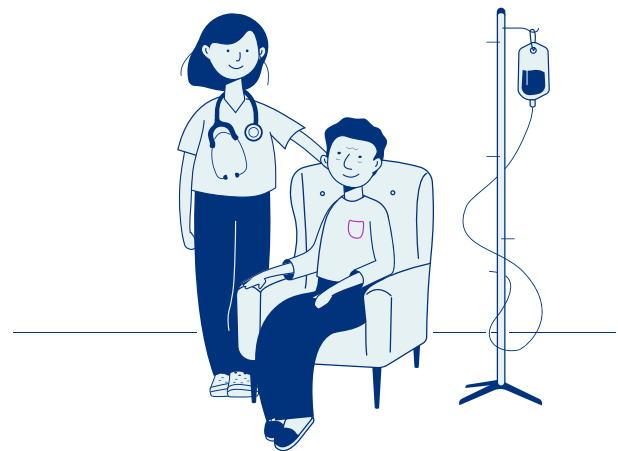
The Bridging Educational Grant in Nursing

The Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario (WeRPN) is the voice of Ontario's 60,000+ Registered Practical Nurses. Since the organization was founded in 1958, WeRPN has championed the critical role of RPNs by unifying their members, listening to their needs and advocating on their behalf with government, community stakeholders and the general public.

The Bridging Educational Grant in Nursing (BEGIN) program was created by WeRPN in partnership with the Ontario Government. As part of a commitment to recruit nurses to Hospitals, Primary Care, Long-Term Care (LTC) and Home and Community Care (HCC) sectors, BEGIN helps Personal Support Workers (PSWs) and Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) grow their careers.

Eligible Ontario PSWs and RPNs studying to become RPNs and RNs can access BEGIN education grants to reimburse their tuition and mandatory ancillary fees¹.

In exchange for education funding, participants in the BEGIN program will commit to a year of employment in Hospitals, Primary Care, Long-Term Care or Home and Community Care in Ontario for every year, or portion of a year, that they receive funding (up to three years) through a Return of Service Agreement.



¹ Up to a yearly maximum amount

The BEGIN Program is a Partnership Between

A Quick Breakdown of the BEGIN Program

Are you enrolled in an Ontario nursing program (PSW-RPN, RPN-RN, or PSW-RN)?

You may be eligible to apply for tuition reimbursement grants through the Bridging Educational Grant in Nursing (BEGIN) program. The program reduces the financial barriers for students to expand their careers and access funding they don't need to pay back.

What's BEGIN?

BEGIN is a tuition reimbursement grant program for students interested in working in Ontario's Hospitals, Primary Care, Long-Term Care (LTC) or Home and Community Care (HCC) sectors after graduation.

Eligible **PSW-RPN** students can receive up to \$6,000 per year (maximum of \$15,000)

Eligible **RPN-RN/PSW-RN** students can receive up to \$10,000 per year (maximum of \$30,000)

Participants may also qualify for an additional \$5,000 per year based on financial need

Post-graduation assistance

Along with the grant, WeRPN will help connect students to meaningful employment opportunities in Hospitals, Primary Care, Long-Term Care and Home and Community Care sectors in Ontario following graduation. BEGIN candidates also get access to free exam preparation resources, dedicated job search support, and an exclusive job board full of rewarding and in-demand opportunities.

To be eligible, you must be:

- A Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or landed immigrant
- Resident of Ontario
- A PSW or RPN studying to be a RPN or RN
- Willing to work in Hospitals, Primary Care, Long-Term Care or Home and Community Care for a period following graduation

Are you ready to BEGIN? Apply today!

begin.werpn.com

BEGIN Tuition Grant Details

How much can students be reimbursed?

Eligible PSW-RPN students

Up to \$6,000 per year in tuition and mandatory ancillary fee reimbursements (maximum of \$15,000)

Eligible RPN-RN/PSW-RN students

Up to \$10,000 per year in tuition and mandatory ancillary fee reimbursements (maximum of \$30,000)

Does BEGIN impact OSAP funding?

BEGIN is a tuition reimbursement grant, which may impact the level of OSAP funding a student receives. Unlike a loan, students do not need to pay back BEGIN tuition reimbursement grants, as long as they graduate and fulfill their Return of Service.

To understand how tuition grants could inform OSAP funding, use the self-directed OSAP aid estimator [here](#). We suggest completing the form without tuition grants listed and then completing a second form with your anticipated BEGIN tuition reimbursement amount for comparison.

What's covered?

BEGIN provides funding for tuition and mandatory ancillary fees up to the maximum amount per year.

Is additional financial assistance available?

Some applicants may also qualify for additional funding of up to \$5,000 per year to help with costs such as tutoring, travel, and caring for dependents. All BEGIN participants are eligible to apply, but only those with demonstrated need will qualify.



BEGIN Application Checklist

Ready to BEGIN? Use this handy checklist to make sure you have everything you need to complete your application.

Step 1:

To be eligible for BEGIN you must be:

- A Canadian citizen or permanent resident/landed immigrant
- Resident of Ontario
- A PSW or RPN studying to be a RPN or RN
- Willing to work in Hospitals, Primary Care, Long-Term Care, or Home and Community Care in Ontario for a period following graduation

Step 2:

Gather your required documents and references:

Documents

- Tuition Fees: A detailed breakdown and/or invoice of your paid fees for the current year
- Transcript: A current or previous transcript
- Proof of Enrollment: A document from your College or University

References

- Academic: A current or previous professor and their academic email
- Employer: A current or previous direct supervisor/manager

Step 3:

Register for an account on the BEGIN website (begin.werpn.com).

You'll receive login information via the email that you used to register.

Step 4:

Once you receive your account information, log in to the BEGIN applicant portal to complete your application. Ensure you have all your documents ready. If you need help at any time, you can contact a case manager by emailing info@begin.werpn.com.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.



How BEGIN Supports Students

Provides funding to help students expand their careers

BEGIN provides Ontario PSWs and RPNs with tuition reimbursement grants to explore new pathways in nursing and expand their careers. Eligible Ontario PSWs and RPNs studying to become RPNs and RNs may be eligible to receive funding they don't need to pay back, reducing financial barriers for students to invest in their futures. Once enrolled, additional funding may be available for participants who demonstrate need or require tutoring support.

Exam preparation resources

Participants also benefit from additional resources and are paired with a dedicated case manager to support them on their program journey, and NCLEX and REx-PN exam preparation resources.

Secure career opportunities

Students who receive BEGIN funding commit to post-graduation employment in Ontario's Hospital, Primary Care, Long-Term Care or Home and Community Care sectors. Upon graduation, participants will work one year for every year they've received BEGIN funding (up to three years)*. BEGIN helps connect graduates with meaningful employment opportunities in a rewarding and in-demand field.

**NOTE: Staffing agencies are not eligible employers.*

Job search support

To aid with their job search, BEGIN participants will have access to a new graduate workshop that includes resume writing tips and interviewing skills, as well as a dedicated job board with career opportunities in Ontario's Hospital, Primary Care, LTC and HCC sectors.

Helpful Links and Resources

Want to know more?

You can find some further Q&As on the BEGIN website [here](#).

Still have questions? Reach out at:

info@begin.werpn.com



Interested in BEGIN, but not yet enrolled?

There is still plenty of time to consider pursuing a nursing program that'll grow your career, and apply for a BEGIN grant to help fund your continuing education.

How BEGIN can help you

If you're a PSW or RPN studying to become an RPN or RN, it's a great time to learn more about how BEGIN can provide you with the funding you need to expand your career and find meaningful work in Ontario's Hospital, Primary Care, Long-Term Care and Home and Community Care sectors.

Eligible PSW-RPN students can receive up to \$6,000 per year in tuition and mandatory ancillary fee reimbursements (maximum of \$15,000).

Eligible RPN-RN/PSW-RN students can receive up to \$10,000 per year in tuition and mandatory ancillary fee reimbursements (maximum of \$30,000).

Some applicants may also qualify for additional funding of up to \$5,000 per year to help with costs such as tutoring, travel, and caring for dependents.

New pathways making it easier than ever

Colleges Ontario has introduced a new accelerated PSW to RPN pathway. The courses offer flexible study options for working PSWs.

Upon completing six pathway courses, PSWs will be eligible for advanced entry into a public college's four-semester Practical Nursing (PN) Program. Graduates of approved PN programs are eligible to apply to the College of Nurses of Ontario to write the registration exam to practice in Ontario as an RPN.

The creation of these courses was funded through the Ontario government's Nursing Program Transformation initiative in Ontario's Colleges. Learn more at: ontariolearn.com/pswtopn/

In 2024, there will also be a new pathway program available to RPNs bridging to RNs.

Get in touch

Interested in learning more about how you could expand your career with the help of BEGIN funding? Visit or reach out at

begin.werpn.com

info@begin.werpn.com