



Westmoreland County Community College
Healthcare Professions Program Guidelines
2022-2023 STUDENT NURSING HANDBOOK

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Common Guidelines

Purpose: The Health Profession Programs at Westmoreland County Community College (college) educates students to be workforce ready upon completion. To provide a safe teaching and learning environment, the health profession student is held to additional standards not common to the college population in general. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide the framework for establishing a safe, professional teaching/learning environment.

The individual Health Profession Program may have additional guidelines or expand upon the guidelines within this section. The differences are directly related to state or federal law, the program's state or national regulatory body, clinical affiliation agreements and/or accreditation agencies.

Admissions and Acceptance Guidelines

Background Clearances Guideline

Code of Conduct Guideline

Due Process Guideline Urine

Drug Screen Guideline

Admissions and Selection Guideline

Guideline: Admission to a Health Profession Program is selective and enrollment in each program is limited by the clinical placement necessary to complete the program's requirements. All applicants must meet specific criteria before being considered for admission to any of the selective Health Professions Programs. It is within the role and responsibility of each Health Professions Program director to review each qualified applicant's submissions and select appropriate candidates for admission.

Purpose: Students selected for admission into a Health Professions Program must meet certain criteria established by each program. Each Health Professions Program follows admission guidelines that are based upon the profession's state and national regulatory and/or accreditation bodies.

Students interested in a Health Professions Program should review each program's individual requirements in the current year's college catalog. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment with an advisor or counselor to assist in the application process.

Glossary of terms:

- **Applicant:** Current Westmoreland County Community College (college) student who has submitted an application to at least one Health Professions Program.
- **Qualified Applicant:** An applicant who has met the application requirements, including but not limited to GPA and completed high school or college coursework
- **Conditional Acceptance:** Offered to qualified applicants who have met all of the Health Profession Program specific academic admission requirements.
- **Final Acceptance:** Offered to conditionally accepted students who have also met the medical and background clearances required including a urine drug screen.

Common Application Process for Health Professions Program

- ❖ Complete and submit an Application for Admission to the college through the college website: westmoreland.edu
 - Select Health Professions as your major
 - Applicant will receive a college email (my.westmoreland.edu) and college ID number
- ❖ Review program specific requirements in the current year's college catalog and complete any prerequisites coursework.
 - Utilize the Program Application checklist available on the college website
 - Utilize the current year's college catalog for program prerequisites.

- ❖ Submit official transcripts to the college from all secondary schools (high schools) attended, GED programs and any other formal education programs beyond high school
- ❖ Submit any required proof of professional license
- ❖ Complete and submit an application for the specific Health Profession Program, available on the College website: westmoreland.edu
 - All communications related to the applications and admission process will be completed through student's password protected, College email. (my.westmoreland.edu)
 - Submit the application by the due date specified, late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
 - An applicant is considered qualified when they have met all of the application requirements and submitted the required documents by the application deadline date.
- ❖ Qualified applicants will be notified of conditional acceptance **or** the additional steps required to complete the pre-admission examination(s), if applicable to that program.
 - These Health Professions Program require additional pre-admission examination(s) to aid in determining conditional acceptance:
 - Nursing
 - Dental Assisting
 - Dental Hygiene
 - Diagnostic Medical Sonography

The college currently utilizes the standardized admission examination offered through National League for Nursing (NLN). These examinations assess students in the areas of mathematics, science and reading.

- ❖ Qualified Applicants who are offered conditional acceptance must also meet additional medical and background clearances to be assigned status of full acceptance.

Guidelines for Criminal Background Screening

Purpose: Individuals who have committed or are charged with certain crimes cannot be placed in the position of caring for older adults, children and/or work in a health care environment in order to protect the safety of the client and ethics of the Westmoreland County Community College (college) Health Professions Programs.

Guideline: Students conditionally accepted into the School of Health Professions including Nursing, Dental Programs, Radiology, Sonography, Medical Assisting, Phlebotomy and Specimen Processing are required to have a criminal background check that includes FBI Fingerprinting and Criminal Record Background report through the Pennsylvania State police and a PA Child Abuse Clearances.

Final admission is pending receipt and evaluation of these background clearances to determine if there are any convictions that may bar the applicant from entering the Health Professions Program.

Procedure: The Program Director of each Health Professions Program provides the student with directions for purchasing and setting up a password-secure document tracker account on Castle Branch™. Castle Branch™ is the background screening and compliance tracking company, which provides the college Health Professions Programs with student screening services.

Through a password-protected account on Castle Branch™, each student applies for, purchases and provides the necessary information to obtain Child Abuse Clearances, FBI Background check utilizing fingerprints and PA Criminal Record background check.

The results of the background checks are reviewed by employees of Castle Branch™ and are posted to the student's results or tracker compliance page.

Each Program Director has a unique password to access the results page of each student's Castle Branch™ account and is responsible to review the background clearances for compliance.

Criminal Background Clearances may be required to be repeated on an annual basis or when separated from the Program of Study for longer than 90 days. Please see each Health Profession Program Handbook.

Students are obligated to notify the Program Director of any new, potential or outstanding charges prior to or during the course of the Health Professions Program.

Guideline for Review of Criminal Background Clearances

Purpose: To ensure the equitable review of all offenses and provide the appropriate action when needed to protect the safety of the clients and community where Health Professions Students learn.

Guideline: The following information outlines the process to be followed by all Health Professions Program Directors or Dean in all cases where criminal findings are found in the PA Child Abuse Clearances, PA Criminal Record Background check and/or the FBI Fingerprinting results.

Definitions of Terms:

- Criminal record: Any history of conviction or a misdemeanor or felony crime.
- Pending charges: Any criminal charges as yet unresolved by the courts
- Court Documents: Original source documents identifying the outcome of any criminal charge and/or conviction
- Background Check: The process required by the College for admission into any clinical component of any Health Professions Program of study, to include PA State Police Criminal Record check, FBI Background Check and PA Child Abuse Clearances.
- Conviction: Being convicted, pleading guilty or entering a plea of nolo contendere, or receiving probation without verdict, accelerated rehabilitative disposition (ARD) or receiving any other disposition (excluding acquittal or dismissal) for any criminal offense.
- Prohibitive Offense list: List of offenses which indicates a student may not be qualified to enter a Health Professions Program at the College.

Child Abuse History Clearances:

Any Health Profession's applicant with a finding on the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance and/or FBI fingerprinting Clearance which states the applicant may not work with children will be ineligible for participation in any College Health Professions Program

PA Criminal background History/FBI Fingerprinting:

A Health Profession's applicant with any conviction or pending charges on the following list may not eligible for entry into a Health Professions Program. Please note this is a list of Pennsylvania crimes and is not an all-inclusive list. Any felony or misdemeanor conviction or equivalent from another jurisdiction will also be considered.

PROHIBITIVE OFFENSES		
Offense Code	Prohibitive Offense	Type of Conviction
CC2500	Criminal Homicide	Any
CC2502A	Murder I	Any
CC2502B	Murder II	Any
CC2502C	Murder III	Any
CC2503	Voluntary Manslaughter	Any
CC2504	Involuntary Manslaughter	Any
CC2505	Causing or Aiding Suicide	Any
CC2506	Drug Delivery Resulting in Death	Any
CC2702	Aggravated Assault	Any
CC2901	Kidnapping	Any
CC2902	Unlawful Restraint	Any
CC3121	Rape	Any
CC3122.1	Statutory Sexual Assault	Any
CC3123	Involuntary Deviate Sexual Intercourse	Any
CC3124.1	Sexual Assault	Any
CC3125	Aggravated Indecent Assault	Any
CC3126	Indecent Assault	Any
CC3127	Indecent Exposure	Any
CC3301	Arson and Related Offenses	Any

CC3502	Burglary	Any
PROHIBITIVE OFFENSES		
Offense Code	Prohibitive Offense	Type of Conviction

CC3701	Robbery	Any
CC3901*	Theft	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3921*	Theft by Unlawful Taking	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3992*	Theft by Deception	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3923*	Theft by Extortion	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3924*	Theft by Property Loss	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3925*	Receiving Stolen Property	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3926*	Theft of Services	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3927*	Theft by Failure to Deposit	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3928*	Unauthorized use of a Motor Vehicle	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3929*	Retail Theft	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC292.1	Library Theft	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC292.2	Unlawful Possession of Retail or Library Theft Instruments	2 Misdemeanors
CC3930	Theft of Trade Secrets	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3931	Theft of Unpublished Dramas or Musicals	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3932	Theft of Leased Properties	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3933	Unlawful use of a Computer	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
CC3934	Theft from a Motor Vehicle	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors

CC4101	Forgery	Any
CC4114	Securing Execution of Documents by Deception	Any
CC4302	Incest	Any
CC4303	Concealing Death of a Child	Any
CC4304	Endangering Welfare of a Child	Any
PROHIBITIVE OFFENSES		
Offense Code	Prohibitive Offense	Type of Conviction
CC4305	Dealing in Infant Children	Any
CC4952	Intimidation of Witness or Victims	Any
CC4953	Retaliation Against Witness or Victim	Any
CC5902B	Promoting Prostitution	Felony
CC5903C	Obscene and other Sexual material to Minors	Any
CC5903D	Obscene and other Sexual Materials	Any
CC6301	Corruption of Minors	Any
CC6312	Sexual Abuse of Children	Any
CS13A12	Acquisition of Controlled Substance by Fraud	Felony
CS13A14	Delivery by Practitioner	Felony
CS13A30	Possession with Intent to Deliver	Felony
CS13A35 (i) CS13A35 (ii) CS13A35 (iii)	Illegal Sale or Non-Controlled Substance	Felony
CS13A36 CS13A37	Designer Drugs	Felony

CS13Axx	Ano other Felony Drug Conviction Appearing on a PA RAP sheet	Felony
DUI	2 Or more Driving Under the Influence of Drugs or Alcohol - Driving while intoxicated convictions within the last 10 years may disqualify a candidate. This includes ARD. A DUI that is pending may also disqualify a candidate for consideration to a Health Professions Program.	1 Felony or 2 Misdemeanors
* Any felony conviction or two misdemeanor convictions within the CC3900 series may also prohibit applicants from admission. The CC3900 series is any offense that starts with CC39. The two misdemeanor offenses do not need to be the same offense.		

Other Offenses not on the Prohibitive Offense list which will be considered in final admission decision

OTHER OFFENSES		
Shoplifting	Weapons possession	Bribery
Harassment	Terrorism/Terroristic Threats	Extortion
Abuse or neglect in any form	Falsification of any legal document or record	Prostitution
Fraud	Violation of Protection from Abuse Order	Possession of drug Paraphernalia
Stalking	Hate Crimes	ANY Felony conviction
Simple Assault		Possession and/or distribution of a controlled substance to include any ARD

Review Process and Notification of Applicant:

Each Health Professions Program Director will review individual student applicant Background Clearance result once posted to the password-protected Castle Branch site™

Findings other than NO RECORD EXISTS or HAS NO CRIMINAL RECORD IN PENNSYLVANIA will be individually reviewed and offenses compared to the provided Prohibitive Offenses table and Other Offenses table. An admission determination will be made based upon the Protection of

Older Adults Act, the Child Protection Laws, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the standards and law governing each Health Professions Program, consideration of PA Act 53 of 2020 and the standards of the individual clinical practice setting.

The Program Director will notify the Dean of the findings

If the Criminal History or FBI fingerprinting results lists a conviction matching one on the Prohibitive List or the Other Offenses List, the applicant may not be admitted to the Health Professions Program. The applicant will be asked to meet with the Program Director and/or Dean and provide documentation of the events and any rehabilitation completed.

- Refusal of the student to meet or inability to provide documentation may result in denial of admission
 - The Program Director or Dean will notify the student of a decision to deny acceptance to the chosen Health Profession Program based upon finding on the Criminal Background clearances.
- If the conviction or convictions are not on the Prohibitive Offense List or Other Offenses List, the applicant will be asked to meet with the Program Director and/or Dean and provide documentation of the events and any rehabilitation completed.
 - Refusal of the student to meet or inability to provide documentation may result in denial of admission
- With regard to conviction(s) not on the Prohibitive Offense List or Other Offenses List or Pending charges, The Program Director or Dean will refer their findings to the office of the Vice President of Enrollment Management for final decision.
 - Factors to be considered include the nature of the crime(s)
 - How recently the crime(s) occurred
 - The number of crime(s) committed by the applicant
 - The truthfulness of the applicant
 - The interests of the College

A decision by the College to admit a student to a Health professions Program despite criminal convictions does not guarantee that if the student completes the program and obtains the appropriate certificate or degree, the student will be eligible for licensing or credentialing by a professional or governmental body or will be eligible to work for a particular employer. Licensure and credentialing authorities apply their own standards for evaluating whether criminal convictions are disqualifying as do employers.

Potential applicants to the Health Professions program who know that they have a Criminal Record are encouraged to obtain a preliminary determination from the applicable licensure authority in Pennsylvania prior to applying for admission. Such a determination can be obtained at <https://www.dos.pa.gov/ProfessionalLicensing/Documents/Preliminary-DeterminationInstructions.pdf>

In addition, a decision by the college to admit a student to the Health Profession Program despite criminal convictions does not guarantee that a student will be able to participate in any experiences at any clinical practice site. Clinical practice sites apply their own standards for evaluating whether or not students are eligible to undergo a clinical education experience at their facility, and the College accepts no liability for a

student's rejection by a clinical practice facility which may result in separation of the student from the Health Profession Program.

The College accepts no liability in cases where a third party deems criminal convictions sufficiently serious to cause denial of the applicable license or credential, or to refuse employment opportunities. A student with conviction(s) is responsible for investigating the appropriate licensure or credentialing board to gauge eligibility and employability prior to entering a Health Professions Program.

Professional Conduct Guideline

Purpose: Westmoreland County Community College (College) is a public institution that advances scholarly and creative endeavors through academic instruction. Westmoreland serves the region through its health professions programs. The College fosters a culture of diversity, and engages and impacts its communities through partnerships and services. The purpose of this Professional Conduct Guideline is to provide all individuals included within the scope of this Guideline with expected standards of conduct and behavior in their relationship with the College Health Professions Programs, its students, donors, and general public.

Guideline: Students accepted into any of the Health Professions Program at the College are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner that honors the acceptable health professions' industry standard.

This includes conduct while in class, in laboratories, on clinical education experiences and at all other times, including personal time.

A code of ethics clarifies roles and responsibilities within a profession and provides guidance to the professional for addressing common ethical questions.

Health Professions Program student will:

- Abide by the individual program's professional code of ethics or Professional Practice Standards.
- Practice the profession with honesty, integrity, and accountability to maintain the confidence of stakeholders as defined in the individual program's professional code of ethics/conduct.
- Refrain from expressing sentiments or engaging in conduct that casts the College or the Health Professions Program, the staff, the profession, or its students in an untruthful, unlawful or defamatory light.
- State truthfully and accurately one's credentials, professional education, and experience.
- Honor the College's intellectual-property rights.
- Disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the context of any specific Health Profession's clinical education or volunteer opportunity.
- Maintain confidentiality about relevant client information obtained directly or indirectly while participating in clinical educational experiences.

Failure to conduct oneself in accordance with this Professional Practice Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action that may include dismissal from the Health Professions Program and/or the College.

The follow are the Professional Practice Standards enforced in each Health Professions Program:

Dental Assisting:

Dental Hygiene:

Expanded Function Dental Assisting:

Diagnostic Medical Sonography: Code of Ethics for the Profession of Diagnostic Medical Sonography
Approved by SDMS Board of Directors, December 6, 2006

Nursing: American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses 2015 Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing PA Nurse Law
International Nurse Regulatory Collaborative (INRC) Social Media Use: Common Expectations for Nurses 2014

Phlebotomy: The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science Code of Ethics; 2021
<https://www.ascls.org/about-us/code-of-ethics>

Specimen Processing: The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science Code of Ethics; 2021
<https://www.ascls.org/about-us/code-of-ethics>

Medical Assisting: American Association for Medical Assistants Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Standards; 08/2019
<https://www.aama-ntl.org/docs/default-source/cma-exam/code-of-conduct-and-disciplinary-standards.pdf>

Radiology Technology:

American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) STANDARDS OF ETHICS SEPTEMBER 2020
American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) Practice Standards for Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy

Due Process Guideline for Health Profession Programs

Purpose: To ensure Westmoreland County Community College (College) due process is followed for all Health Profession program students recommended for dismissal from their respective program(s) of study.

Guideline: Health Professions Program directors, while retaining their authority to administer their respective programs, will refer students recommended for dismissal to the Office of the Vice President of Enrollment Management.

1. Actively enrolled Health Profession students who violate a program policy or guideline that could lead to dismissal from the program, will be referred, by the program's director, to the Office of the Vice President of Enrollment Management.
2. Acts that may lead to recommendation for dismissal include but are not limited to:
 - a. Violation of patient/client privacy (HIPAA violation)
 - b. Violation of safety protocol
 - c. Positive urine Drug Screen
 - d. Violation of Professional Code of Conduct
 - e. Criminal charges appearing on background checks that would prohibit clinical placement or potential licensure.
 - f. Serious violations of the College Code of Student Conduct
3. Health profession students recommended for dismissal will be suspended from actively participating in lecture classes, laboratory or clinical experiences pending final dispensation of the matter.
4. If the dismissal recommendation is upheld, the student will be removed from any currently enrolled Health Profession program classes, laboratories or clinical experiences. Potential for the student to remain at the College will be decided by the Office of the VP of Enrollment Management.
5. If the dismissal recommendation is overturned, the student will return to lecture classes, laboratory and clinical experiences and be provided opportunity to make up any missed course work.
6. The decision of the VP of Enrollment Management is final and cannot be appealed by the Program or its Director.

Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA protects a student's educational information. In short, it prevents Westmoreland County Community College employees from discussing or providing educational information, including grades, without the expressed written consent of the student. This includes discussing protected information with your parents or family members. Please refer to the following link for more information on FERPA: <https://www2.ed.gov/ferpa>

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Just as FERPA protects a student's privacy, HIPAA protects a patient's privacy. HIPAA has two components. The first component is the privacy rule, which establishes who and what information can be shared. The security rule details how patient records must be protected. As a general rule, students are not permitted to share specific patient information outside of the clinical setting.

Guideline for Urine Drug Screen

Purpose: Health Profession students care for individuals in a variety of health care settings. Preliminary (prior to enrollment) and continued (throughout enrollment) urine drug screen requirements have been established to validate the satisfactory health status of students in Westmoreland's Health Professions programs.

Guideline: A urine drug screen must be obtained as part of the preliminary health requirements of a Health Profession program. As required by the specific program, a urine drug screen may be repeated annually and after an absence of three months or longer. A random urine drug screen may be required **for cause** at any time during the student's enrollment. Urine Drug Screens are ordered, paid for, collected and resulted through **Castle Branch™**.

- The Urine Drug Screen is ordered and paid for through the student's personal **Castle Branch™** account. The specific program code will be provided by the individual program's director or designee.
- Collection sites for urine specimen collection will be assigned by **Castle Branch™**
- The Health Professions Program director or designee will provide collection dates during program specific New Student Orientation and at additional times specified by each program director or designee. The urine drug screen must be dated within these dates.
- Failure to meet the due date for the submission of the urine drug screen report may result in cancellation of health professions program specific classes, or delayed enrollment.
- The report of the Urine Drug Screen is reported in the students Castle Branch account.
- A positive urine drug screen test, either prior to admission to the program or in connection with the annual or other required drug screens, may result in the student not being permitted to begin or continue in the program.
- A positive test for marijuana (THC) will be deemed a positive test that will serve to disqualify a student from entry into and/or continuation in the program, even if the student has been lawfully certified to use medical marijuana and/or possesses a valid medical marijuana identification card issued in accordance with applicable state law.
- As a recipient of federal funds, Westmoreland County Community College is subject to and complies with the federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, pursuant to which all forms of marijuana, including medical marijuana, are classified as prohibited controlled substances.
- Medical Reviewers at Castle Branch will evaluate all positive Urine drug screen results and make the final decision on the Urine Drug screen status.
- All urine drug screens are at the student's expense.

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