



## Long-Term Care Regulatory Provider Letter

**Number:** PL 2023-14

**Title:** Web-based Licensure System for Nurse Aides and Medication Aides

**Provider Types:** Assisted Living Facilities (ALF); Day Activity and Health Services Facilities (DAHS); Home and Community Support Services Agencies (HCSSA), Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability or Related Conditions (ICF/IID); Nursing Facilities (NF); Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care Centers (PPECC); Nurse Aide Training and Competency Evaluation Programs (NATCEPs); Medication Aide Schools; Nurse Aides (NA); Medication Aides (MA)

**Date Issued:** July 5, 2023

### 1.0 Subject and Purpose

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is issuing this letter to announce Long-term Care Regulation (LTCR) Credentialing Unit enhancements to the Texas Unified License Information Portal (TULIP), a web-based licensure system designed specifically for licensed long-term care providers and licensees listed above. These enhancements will allow nurse aides (NA), medication aides (MA), medication aide schools, nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs (NATCEP) and Providers to complete all licensing and application functions online. This letter also provides important dates and information related to TULIP's benefits and features, as well as instructions for making a successful transition to TULIP.

### 2.0 Policy Details & Provider Responsibilities

TULIP will make the LTCR Credentialing licensure process more efficient and convenient for licensees, MA schools and NATCEPs. NA and MA (licensees), MA schools, NATCEPs and Providers will be able to electronically conduct all licensure activities for licensees and approval activities for MA schools and NATCEPs, including payment of licensure fees. TULIP will also provide immediate access to licensure and approval information, including updates

and notifications from HHSC, allowing for faster communication between providers, licensees and HHSC.

### **2.1 Who Will Use the Enhancements to TULIP?**

NA, MA, MA schools NATCEPs and Providers will use the TULIP enhancements to complete all licensure and credentialing activities.

As discussed in [provider letter 2018-15](#), all licensed LTC providers will continue to use TULIP for all licensure activities.

### **2.2 What Licensure Activities Will Be Completed in TULIP?**

Licensees, MA schools, NATCEPs and Providers will conduct all licensure activities in TULIP, including:

- submitting initial applications, renewal applications, change or update applications;
- printing a license, certificate, or permit;
- making electronic payments;
- accessing the status of licensure applications;
- updating personal contact information;
- sending and receiving application documents and updates to HHSC related to the licensure process; and
- sending and tracking enforcement activities of licensees.

### **2.3 Next Steps for TULIP Users**

New users should refer to the TULIP user manual for LTCR Credentialing for a step-by-step process on accessing and using TULIP. All users must have a valid email address. A link to the user manual and the TULIP system will be posted on each program's home webpage:

- [Medication aide and MA schools](#)
- [Nurse aide](#)
- [NATCEP](#)

**NA applicants** will use TULIP for the following activities:

- Submitting initial, reciprocity or waiver applications.
- HHSC approving initial NA applicants to sit for the examinations and notifying Prometric of the applicant's eligibility.
- NAs submitting employment verification or verification renewals.

- Receiving a 90-day renewal notice to remind all NA licensees of an upcoming expiration date.

**NATCEPs** will use TULIP for the following activities:

- Submitting initial, renewal or change applications.
- Receiving a 90-day renewal notice to remind NATCEPs of an upcoming expiration date.
- Approving students to sit for the examinations.

**MA applicants** will use TULIP for the following activities:

- Submitting initial or renewal applications, forms, and fees.
- Registering and scheduling the state exam and receiving confirmation of exam date and time.
- HHSC approving initial MA applicants to sit for the examinations.
- Receiving a 90-day renewal notice to remind MA licensees of an upcoming expiration date.

**MA schools** will use TULIP for the following activities:

Submitting documentation of completion of training, continuing education units (CEUs), or rosters.

**Providers** will use TULIP for submitting nurse aide employment verification.

## **2.4 What Happens to Information in the Current System?**

TULIP will replace the current NA and MA registries (SMT-Schroder Measurement Technology), physical payments, and all paper application and form processes. Read section 2.6 of this document for more information on the transfers of information to TULIP. **SMT will be shut down, June 16, 2023 @ 5:00pm, and will no longer be available for use as a registry. Scheduling and exam services will continue at: <https://www.iqtesting.com/>.**

## **2.5 Will TULIP Training or a User Manual be Offered?**

HHSC will publish the TULIP user manual on each program's home webpage. Read section 2.3 of this document for links to the webpages.

HHSC is developing training on TULIP for licensees and will notify licensees when it's available via email address on file.

## **2.6 What is the Schedule for the Transition to TULIP?**

The changes to TULIP are scheduled to be effective and users will begin all application activities in TULIP on **July 5, 2023 @ 8:00am.**

NA Applicants

**Effective July 5, 2023, HHSC will not accept or process paper forms that are emailed, mailed or faxed to HHSC. These forms will be returned to the nurse aide/employer with instructions on how to submit via TULIP.**

- For initial, reciprocity or waiver, NA applicants will submit applications via TULIP starting on the effective date.
- HHSC will approve initial applicants to test and notify Prometric of eligibility.
- Applications in SMT not approved prior to the effective date will be electronically transitioned to TULIP and will be processed via TULIP.
- NAs and providers will submit employment verification forms online via TULIP on and after the effective date.
- All NA forms, such as employment verification and reciprocity, received prior to the effective date will be entered into TULIP by LTCR Credentialing staff.
- Moving forward all forms must be submitted via TULIP on or after the effective date.

NATCEPs

**Effective July 5, 2023, HHSC will not accept or process paper applications that are emailed, mailed or faxed to HHSC. These forms will be returned to the NATCEP with instructions on how to submit via TULIP.**

- NATCEPs will approve students to test via TULIP on or after the effective date.
- Students that already have a scheduled test date prior to the effective date, will follow the same process that was in place prior to the transition to TULIP.
- Students that pass the examinations will be added to TULIP.
- Students that fail the examinations will follow the initial application process that starts after the effective date.

- NATCEP applications not approved prior to the effective date will be processed and entered into TULIP by LTCR Credentialing staff.
- Moving forward all applications must be submitted via TULIP on or after the scheduled effective date.

#### MA Schools

**Effective July 5, 2023, HHSC will not accept or process rosters that are emailed, mailed or faxed to HHSC. Rosters will be returned to the school with instructions on how to submit via TULIP.**

- All MA rosters for initial training and CEUs that were received before the effective date will be processed and entered into TULIP by LTCR Credentialing staff.
- Moving forward all rosters must be submitted via TULIP on or after the scheduled effective date.

#### MA Applicants

**Effective July 5, 2023, HHSC will not accept or process paper applications that are emailed, mailed or faxed to HHSC. Applications will be returned to the applicant with instructions on how to submit via TULIP.**

- All MA students that scheduled an exam prior to the effective date will be allowed to test and results will be processed via TULIP.
- Moving forward all students will register and be scheduled for the exam via TULIP on or after the scheduled effective date.
- HHSC will approve initial applicants to test via TULIP.
- MA applicants for initial permit that are not approved prior to the effective date will be processed and entered into TULIP by LTCR Credentialing staff.
- Moving forward all applications must be submitted via TULIP on or after the scheduled effective date.

### **3.0 Background/History**

TULIP is part of an HHSC modernization project intended to make agency systems more user-friendly, efficient, accessible, consistent, and to reduce paper consumption.

## 4.0 Resources

- [TULIP Online Licensure Application System](#)
- TULIP User Guide and link to training options:
  - [Medication aide and MA schools](#)
  - [Nurse aide](#)
  - [NATCEP](#)

## 5.0 Contact Information

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the Licensing and Credentialing Section by email or phone:

- MA Unit: [Medication\\_Aide\\_Program@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:Medication_Aide_Program@hhs.texas.gov); 512-438-2025
- NAR: [NurseAideRegistry@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:NurseAideRegistry@hhs.texas.gov); 512-438-2050
- NATCEP: [regulatory\\_natcep@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:regulatory_natcep@hhs.texas.gov); 512-438-2017