

WisCaregiver Careers

Certified Nurse Aide
WisCaregiverCNA.com

A public-private partnership addressing
the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
shortage in Wisconsin nursing homes.



Employer's Guide

Version 8, Published April 2026

Program information in this guide reflects current WisCaregiver Careers CNA policy guidelines based on Wisconsin DHS guidance at the time of publication. All prior versions are no longer valid for policy or program guidance.

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Welcome to WisCaregiver Careers!

Thank you for your participation as a WisCaregiver Careers Employer. We appreciate your partnership in addressing the Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) workforce shortage across Wisconsin nursing homes.

This Employer Guide includes:

- An overview of the WisCaregiver Careers program.
- A summary of employer roles and responsibilities.
- Resources to support participation and program implementation.

We'd like to thank Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and the Wisconsin State Legislature for their continued support of WisCaregiver Careers.

WisCaregiver Careers is a free program offered by **Wisconsin's Department of Health Services** in partnership with the **University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Wisconsin Health Care Association, and LeadingAge Wisconsin.**

Program Introduction

WisCaregiver Careers is a workforce development program designed to address the Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) shortage in Wisconsin nursing homes. The program is funded by the State of Wisconsin and supports Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) in recruiting, training, and retaining CNAs.

This program is available only to:

- Medicaid-certified (Title 19) Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) located in Wisconsin.

The program works to:

- Support employers in developing their CNA workforce through an employment-first model.
- Reduce barriers to entering the CNA profession by supporting training and certification pathways.
- Expand access to CNA training through employer-coordinated training programs.
- Provide Medicaid maximum reimbursement rates for CNA training and testing that better aligns with market costs.
- Provide a \$500 retention bonus to the participant, upon successful CNA certification and six months of continued employment.

WisCaregiver Careers features an employment-first program design in which participants are first hired by an employer, then trained under an in-house training program or third-party provider under an arrangement coordinated by the employer. This is a recruitment strategy which empowers employers to grow their own talent. It enables employers to recruit from a larger pool of applicants by engaging individuals who are interested in starting a health care career to begin as a CNA.

After CNA certification is completed, WisCaregiver Careers provides:

- Training and testing reimbursement must be requested through the ForwardHealth Medicaid reimbursement process (Form F-01013) at the most current DHS reimbursement rates.
- A \$500 WisCaregiver Careers retention bonus is paid by the employer after the participant completes six months of employment following CNA certification; the employer is then reimbursed from WisCaregiver Careers' monthly payment cycle.

*** Disclosure:**

Reimbursement amounts are based on each facility's Medicaid utilization rate and may not cover the full cost of CNA training and testing. Employers should communicate this in advance and establish any necessary arrangements with the participant regarding any remaining training and testing costs.

Policy Note:

For participants who become certified on or after January 1, 2026, training reimbursement is processed through the ForwardHealth Medicaid reimbursement process (Form F-01013) in accordance with WisCaregiver Careers' policy update, established September 2025. These updates are reflected throughout this Employer Guide (Version 8, Published May 2026).

Employer Commitments

WisCaregiver Careers Employers play a critical role in supporting participants through employment, training, and certification. The following commitments outline employer responsibilities while participating in the program and receiving reimbursement.

As a WisCaregiver Careers Employer, the following requirements apply:

- Hire individuals into entry-level roles who will participate in the WisCaregiver Careers CNA training pathway.
- Coordinate and pay CNA training and testing costs upfront through an in-house program or approved training provider, or reimburse these costs upon successful CNA certification through a written agreement with the participant.
- Ensure timely and accurate entry of required participant information in the TMU portal.
- Complete and submit the ForwardHealth reimbursement form (F-01013) via USPS to request training and testing reimbursement.
- Provide a \$500 retention bonus after the participant completes CNA certification and six months of employment.

Policy Note:

Retention bonus payments are made by the employer after the participant completes six months of employment following CNA certification; reimbursement is issued through WisCaregiver Careers' monthly payment cycle.

Program Overview

The WisCaregiver Careers program follows an employment-first model. The steps below provide a high-level overview of the participant and employer experience from initial application through training, certification, and retention.

How the program works:



Step 1

**Register
& Find Participating
SNF Employer**

Participants complete CNA training and become certified. Employers must request training and testing reimbursement through the ForwardHealth Medicaid reimbursement process (Form F-01013).

Once hired, participants complete CNA training through an in-house or approved training program. Employers coordinate and pay training and testing costs upfront or reimburse these costs through a written agreement upon successful CNA certification.



Step 2

Start CNA Training



Step 3

**Complete CNA
Training & Testing**

Participants enter the program by selecting a participating employer and submitting an application for employment.

After six months of employment following CNA certification, the employer provides a \$500 retention bonus to the participant and is reimbursed by WisCaregiver Careers through the monthly payment cycle.



Step 4

**Receive
Reimbursements
& 6-month
Retention Bonus**

Employer Workflow

The steps below outline the employer workflow within WisCaregiver Careers, detailing the process from receiving applications through training coordination, reimbursement, and retention.

How the program works for employers:

Step 1 Participants identify participating facilities through the WisCaregiver Careers map and submit applications to employers.



All participating skilled nursing facility locations can be found at <https://wiscaregivercna.com/find/>.

Step 2 Employers hire participants according to standard hiring procedures.

Step 3 Employers ensure the participant's TMU profile is accurate and complete within 90 days of CNA certification to maintain retention bonus eligibility.

Step 4 Participants complete CNA training and become certified.



Step 5 Employers ensure the participant's TMU profile is accurate and complete within 90 days of CNA certification to maintain eligibility for the retention bonus.

Step 6 Employers request training and testing reimbursement through the ForwardHealth Medicaid reimbursement process (Form F-01013).

Step 7 Employers provide a \$500 retention bonus after the participant completes six months of employment following CNA certification.



Step 8 WisCaregiver Careers reimburses the retention bonus to the employer through the monthly payment cycle.

Reimbursement and Participant Tracking

WisCaregiver Careers requires employers to utilize ForwardHealth for reimbursement and TMU for participant tracking. The information below outlines the processes and employer responsibilities for both.

Reimbursement and Tracking Overview

For participants who become certified on or after January 1, 2026, employers request training and testing reimbursement through the ForwardHealth Medicaid reimbursement process.

WisCaregiver Careers coordinates program administration in partnership with Headmaster, Wisconsin's Nurse Aide Registry vendor and provider of TestMaster Universe (TMU).

TMU is used to manage CNA certification testing, verify certification status, and determine eligibility for the retention bonus. Participant TMU profiles must be set up accurately within 90 days of CNA certification, and this is the responsibility of both the participant and the employer.

To receive training reimbursement, employers must follow the instructions outlined in **Appendix C** of this guide.

Participant Tracking Requirements:

- Ensure each participant has an active and accurate TMU profile within the first 90-days of becoming certified.
- Resolve any TMU profile errors within 90 days of CNA certification to maintain eligibility for the retention bonus.

* Disclosure:

Reimbursement amounts are based on each facility's Medicaid utilization rate and may not cover the full cost of CNA training and testing. Employers should communicate this in advance and establish any necessary arrangements with the participant regarding any remaining training and testing costs.

Reimbursement and participant Tracking (cont'd)

Recruitment Resources

WisCaregiver Careers supports employer recruitment efforts through partnerships that connect facilities with potential candidates.

Build FSET community sourcing relationships:

- FSET is a free Wisconsin Department of Health Services program available to anyone age 16 or older who qualifies for FoodShare benefits. It helps participants gain new job skills, access education and training, and find meaningful employment.
- FSET can assist candidates with resume writing, job searching, interview preparation, and connecting with local employers who have available entry-level positions in skilled nursing facilities participating in the WisCaregiver Careers program.
- FSET participants work with a case manager who provides one-on-one support, encouragement, and referrals to local job and training opportunities, including WisCaregiver Careers.
- Employers can contact their local FSET agency to build community partnerships that support CNA participant recruitment through the WisCaregiver Careers program.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/fset/index.htm>

7 Tools

WisCaregiver Careers provides sample job announcements and recruitment tools to support employer outreach efforts. These resources are designed to align with the program's statewide marketing campaign and help attract potential participants. All WisCaregiver Careers marketing tools are available in the Employer Portal on the program website.

Employer Portal

The WisCaregiver Careers Employer Portal provides centralized access to program resources and updates to support ongoing participation.

- Access to the most recent program updates and announcements.
- Recorded webinars and training resources.
- Marketing materials to support recruitment efforts.
- 24/7 access to the Employer Guide and Participant Guide.

Portal Link: <https://wiscaregivercna.com/employers01/>

Password: 4WCGCtoolbox!

Appendix A

How to Update Employer Registration Information

For questions or updates related to employer registration information, please contact the WisCaregiver Careers support team. Updates may include changes to facility contact information, program participation status, or preferences related to the interactive map, including whether a facility is actively recruiting participants.

Employers should notify the program team of any updates as soon as changes occur to ensure accurate records and continued participation.

Email: info@wiscaregivercna.com

Employers may also submit updates by completing a new registration form if preferred: <https://uwgreenbay.tfaforms.net/forms/view/423>

Appendix B

Resources for Starting an In-House Training Program

The Wisconsin Division of Quality Assurance must approve each CNA training program and must be approved before you can offer instruction.

Employers interested in offering a nurse aide training program should begin by contacting the Wisconsin Nurse Aide Training staff at dhswidqa_natcep@dhs.wisconsin.gov and reviewing the application requirements available at: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/caregiver/nurse-aide/natd-application.htm>.

If your facility is under a Nurse Aide Training Prohibition, we encourage you to reach out to your membership organization (WHCA or LeadingAge WI) for assistance. These membership organizations can provide support and resources for applying for a prohibition waiver.

Reimbursement Instructions

ForwardHealth Reimbursement Process

For CNA certifications completed on or after January 1, 2026, employers request reimbursement for CNA training and testing through the ForwardHealth Medicaid reimbursement process using Form F-01013 at current Medicaid reimbursement rates.

- Submit CNA training and testing reimbursement using the ForwardHealth reimbursement form (F-01013).
- Ensure all required participant information is accurate and matches TMU records.
- Maintain documentation to support reimbursement requests as required.
- Complete all required TMU processing to support retention bonus eligibility.

Policy Note:

To remain eligible for reimbursement and retention bonus payments, all required TMU processing must be completed by both the employer and the participant within 90 days of the participant's CNA certification date.

ForwardHealth Reimbursement Rates

Reimbursement rates for CNA training and testing are determined by ForwardHealth and are based on each facility's Medicaid utilization rate.

* Disclosure:

Reimbursement amounts are based on each facility's Medicaid utilization rate and may not cover the full cost of CNA training and testing. Employers should communicate this in advance and establish any necessary arrangements with the participant regarding any remaining training and testing costs.



TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Effective January 1, 2026

MEDICAID UTILIZATION	PERCENTAGE OF MAX	OLD RATE	NEW RATE
90.0% - 100%	100%	\$225	\$700
80.0% - 89.9%	90%	\$202.50	\$630
70.0% - 79.9%	80%	\$180	\$560
60.0% - 69.9%	70%	\$157.50	\$490
50.0% - 59.9%	60%	\$135	\$420
0.0% - 49.9%	50%	\$112.50	\$350

ForwardHealth Reimbursement Rates (cont'd)

**TESTING REIMBURSEMENT RATES***Effective January 1, 2026*

MEDICAID UTILIZATION	PERCENTAGE OF MAX	OLD RATE	NEW RATE
90.0% - 100%	100%	\$61.50	\$135
90.0% - 100%	90%	\$55.35	\$121.50
90.0% - 100%	80%	\$49.20	\$108
90.0% - 100%	70%	\$43.05	\$94.50
90.0% - 100%	60%	\$36.90	\$67.50
90.0% - 100%	50%	\$30.75	\$36.90

ForwardHealth Reimbursement Form and Instructions

- Nurse Aide Training and Testing Reimbursement Request (F-01013):

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/f0/f01013.pdf>

- ForwardHealth portal instructions and FAQs:

To access the most current instructions and FAQs, search on Google for "ForwardHealth Portal Nursing Aide Training" and click the first result that appears.

The link will appear as such:



ForwardHealth Portal (.gov)
<https://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov> › Subsystem › Print

Nurse Aide Training and Testing

Complete information on the training and testing of new aides, and those aides currently listed on the registry is available from the DQA. Wisconsin Medicaid ...

TMU Setup Requirements

Required TMU Setup

TMU setup must be completed within 90 days of the participant's CNA certification date to maintain eligibility for the retention bonus, which is issued after six months of employment.

Failure to complete this setup within the required timeframe will result in the employer being ineligible for retention bonus reimbursement.

To complete the required TMU setup, both the employer and the participant have responsibilities that must be completed accurately and within the required timeframe.

Participant and Employer Responsibilities

The TMU setup process includes two parts: actions completed by the participant and actions completed by the employer. These steps must be completed in order to ensure the participant's information is accurate and eligible for retention bonus processing.

Employers should communicate expectations to the participant in advance and ensure any required steps are clearly understood prior to certification.

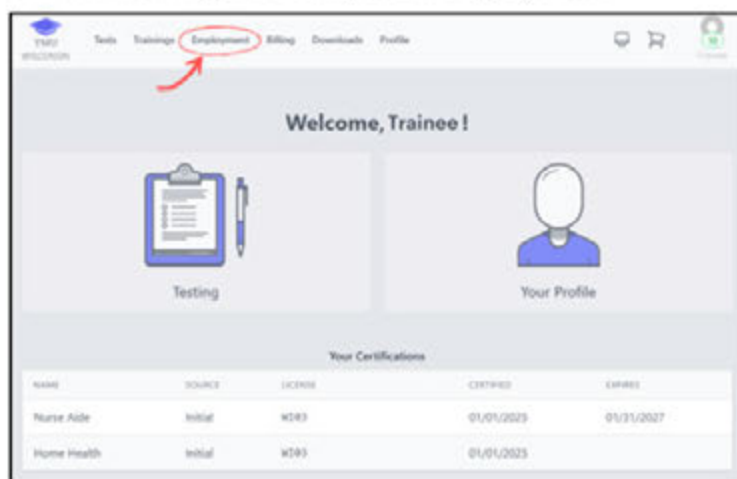
PART ONE: Participant's Responsibility

The employer should direct the participant to complete the steps outlined in the participant section of this guide.

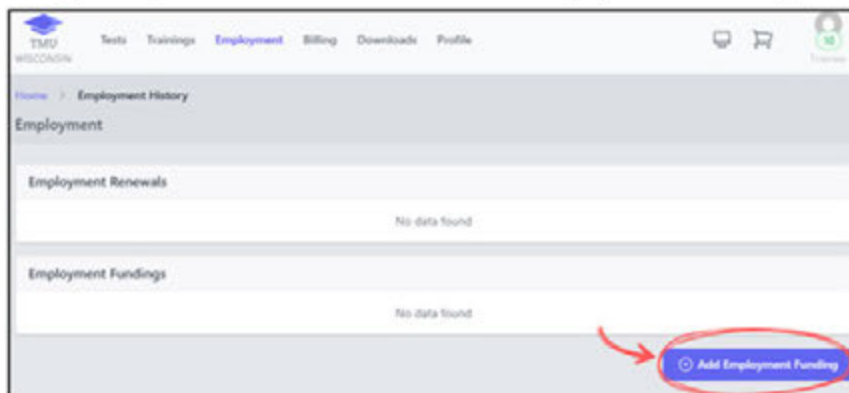
Employers cannot complete their portion of the TMU setup until the participant has completed their required steps.

Step 1 Have the **participant** log into their TMU account.

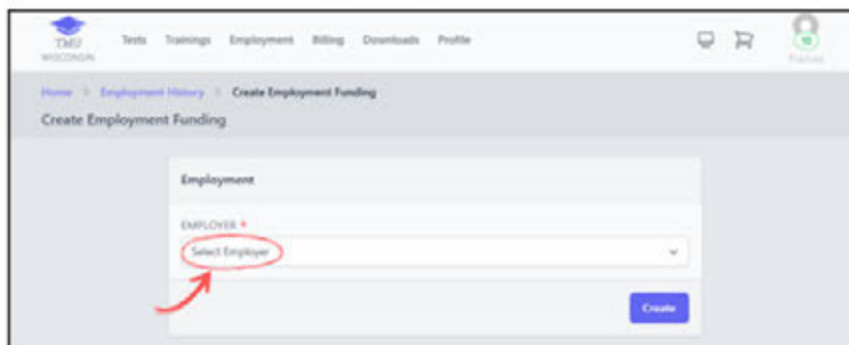
Step 2 On the main login screen, select 'Employment'.



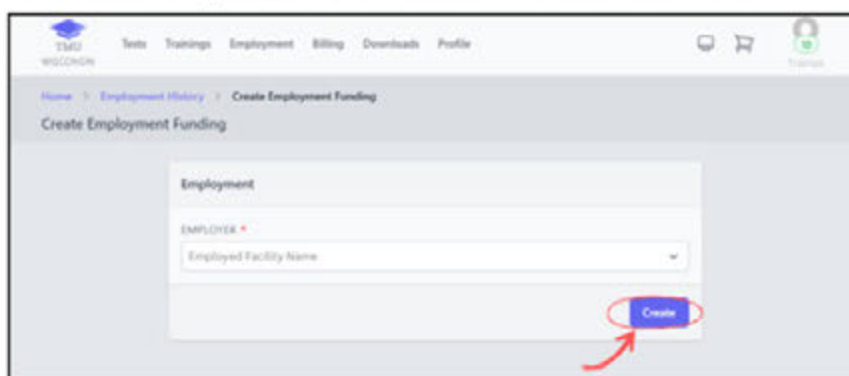
Step 3 The participant should then select 'Add Employment Funding'.



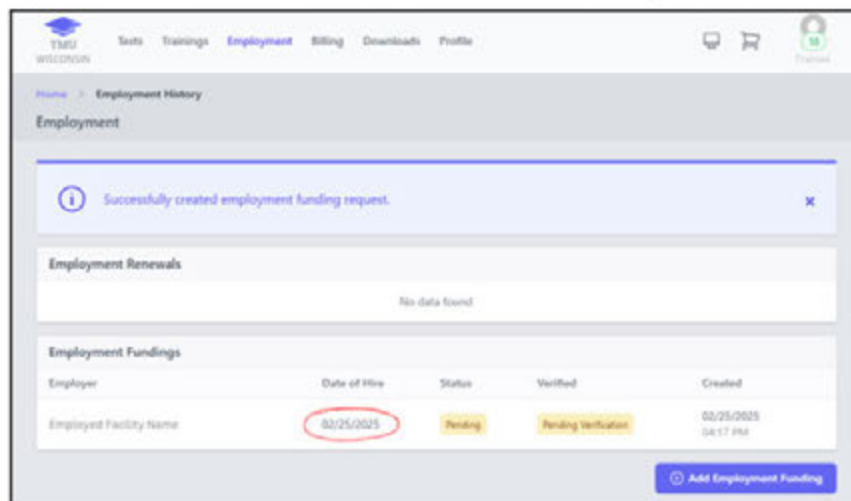
Step 4 Select the Skilled Nursing Facility's name.



Step 5 Once the facility's name has been selected, click 'Create'.



Step 6 TMU will display a screen with an automatically generated Date of Hire (DoH), which is not the accurate date. This is expected and not a problem, at this time. The employer will need update the DoH with the correct hire date during **Part Two** of these instructions.



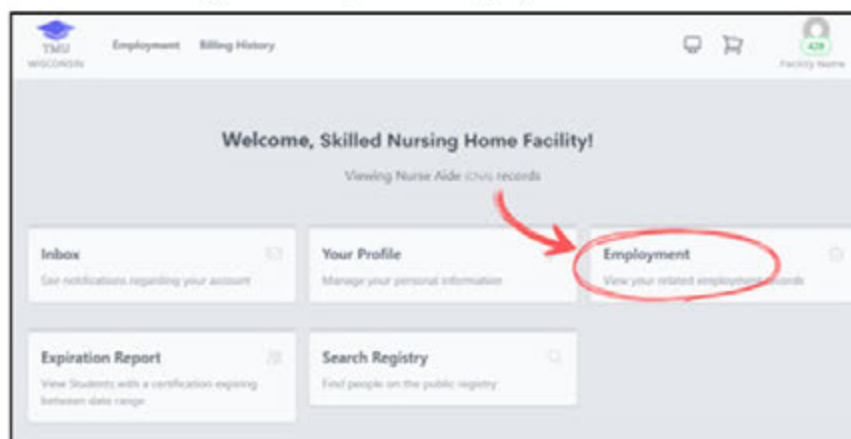
PART TWO: Employer's Responsibility

Once the participant has completed their required steps, the employer must complete their portion of the TMU setup to ensure the participant's record is accurate and eligible for retention bonus reimbursement.

Employers are responsible for verifying employment details, confirming required information, and ensuring all entries are completed correctly within the 90-day timeframe following the participant's CNA certification date.

Step 1 The employer will log into the facility's TMU account.

Step 2 On the main login screen, select 'Employment'.



Step 3 Under **Employment Funding**, the employer will see any participants awaiting verification. The listed DoH will be incorrect, which is expected at this stage. The employer should still proceed by selecting 'Verify'.

Person	Date of Hire	Status	Verified	Created
Rebecca Trainee Name 1	06/22/2021	Approved	5 months ago	06/26/2024 06:54 PM
Trainee	02/25/2025	Pending	Verify	02/25/2025 04:17 PM
Trainee 2	12/19/2024	Approved	2 months ago	12/19/2024 10:45 AM
Trainee 3	10/07/2024	Approved	4 months ago	10/07/2024 09:47 AM
Trainee 4	06/04/2024	Approved	8 months ago	06/04/2024 11:14 AM

Step 4 A pop-up box will appear for the employer. Click on the date shown in the 'Date of Hire' field to open a pop-up calendar, then select and enter the correct hire date. The correct Date of Hire should always reflect the participant's first day of CNA training.

Verify Employment

STUDENT: Trainee

EMPLOYER: Employed Facility Name

DATE OF HIRE: 02/25/2025

FUNDING TYPE: Select Funding Type

☐ I verify that Trainee is currently employed at this Employer

Complete Verification

Step 5 The updated Date of Hire will now be visible. In the 'Funding Type' section, select 'WCP Funding' and check the box to confirm the participant is employed at the correct facility. Review all information for accuracy, then click the 'Complete Verification' button to finalize the process.

Step 6 A blue 'Approved Employment' message will appear at the top of the screen, confirming that the participant's employment funding status has been successfully updated to 'Approved.' For CNA certifications completed on or after January 1, 2026, testing fees will not be marked as 'Paid' in TMU. Employers must request Medicaid reimbursement for any testing costs incurred.

And You're Done!

Once the participant has completed their required steps, the employer must complete their portion of the TMU setup to ensure the participant's record is accurate and eligible for retention bonus reimbursement.

Policy Note:

To remain eligible for retention bonus reimbursement, all required TMU setup must be completed by both the employer and the participant within 90 days of the participant's certification date.

To Schedule into a Test Event:

Follow the instructions on how to schedule into a test in the Wisconsin Candidate Handbook, available at www.hdmaster.com, (click 'Wisconsin'), or available in the Downloads section of your TMU record.

In the Tests tab of your TMU record, next to the Exam type, 'Eligible' indicates that the participant has met the requirements to schedule the exam in TMU. 'Eligible' **does not** indicate that testing fees have been paid.

Employers determine whether testing costs are paid by the facility or by the participant at the time of scheduling. Regardless of who pays upfront, eligible testing costs will be reimbursed through the ForwardHealth reimbursement process once all required steps are completed.

The top screenshot shows the TMU Wisconsin portal's 'Downloads' section. The 'Downloads' tab is selected in the top navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, there are several download links for various documents, each with a 'Download' button. The 'Wisconsin Candidate Handbook V.73' is circled in red, and its 'Download' button is also circled in red. A red arrow points from the 'Downloads' tab in the navigation bar to the 'Downloads' section.

The bottom screenshot shows the TMU Wisconsin portal's 'Tests' section. The 'Tests' tab is selected in the top navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, there is a 'Your Tests' section with a table of exams. The table has columns for 'Exam', 'Status', and 'Reason'. Two exams are listed: 'Certified Nurse Aide Knowledge' and 'Certified Nurse Aide Skill'. Both exams have a status of 'Eligible', which is circled in red. To the right of each 'Eligible' status is a 'Schedule' button, also circled in red. A red arrow points from the 'Tests' tab in the navigation bar to the 'Tests' section.

Exam	Status	Reason
Certified Nurse Aide Knowledge	Eligible	Schedule
Certified Nurse Aide Skill	Eligible	Schedule

Retention Bonus Reimbursement

Retention Bonus Eligibility

Retention bonus eligibility requires completion of all required TMU setup within 90 days of the participant's CNA certification date. This includes all actions completed by both the employer and the participant to ensure the TMU profile is accurate.

In addition, once the six-month employment milestone is reached, the employer must complete the employment verification in TMU within 90 days of receiving the TMU employment verification email.

Failure to complete either requirement within the specified timeframes will result in the employer being ineligible for retention bonus reimbursement, unless an exception is approved by WisCaregiver Careers in coordination with the DHS.

Retention Bonus Process

Once the participant completes six months of employment following CNA certification, the employer provides the \$500 retention bonus.

WisCaregiver Careers will reimburse the employer through the monthly payment cycle after employment is verified and all requirements have been met.

No invoices or separate reimbursement requests are required if all steps are completed correctly. DHS will contact the employer using the information on file in TMU to complete a W-9 for payment processing.

Payment Processing

Payments are issued using the information on record within the participant's TMU profile.

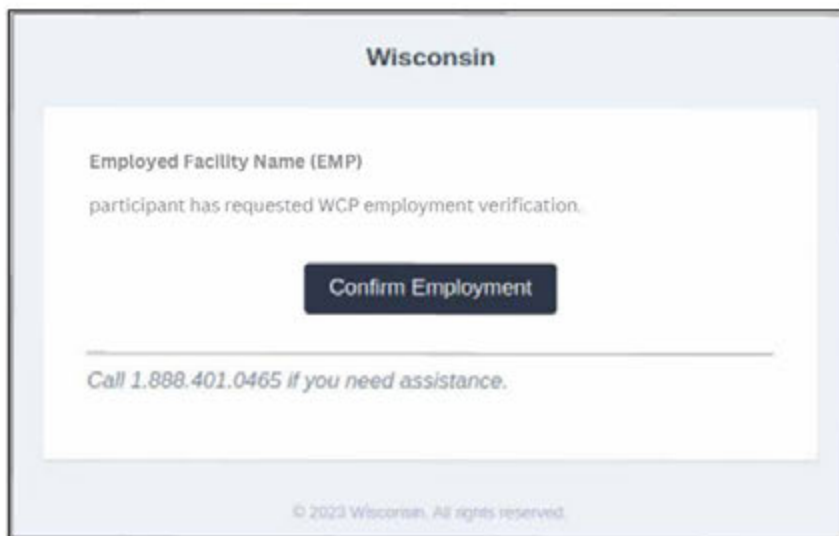
If updates to payment information are needed, or if payment should be directed to a different account, employers should contact info@wiscaregivercna.com for assistance.

Policy Note:

All required TMU setup must be completed within 90 days of the participant's CNA certification date, and employment verification must be completed within 90 days of receiving the TMU employment verification email to maintain eligibility for retention bonus reimbursement. Exceptions may apply if approved by WisCaregiver Careers in coordination with DHS.

Payment Processing (cont'd)

- Step 1** Employers will receive a reminder email from TMU as the participant approaches six months of employment following CNA certification. To be eligible for the \$500 retention bonus reimbursement, the participant must remain employed at the facility at the six-month mark.



- Step 2** Click the 'Confirm Employment' button in the email notification, or sign in to the employer's TMU account at <https://wi.tmuniverse.com>.

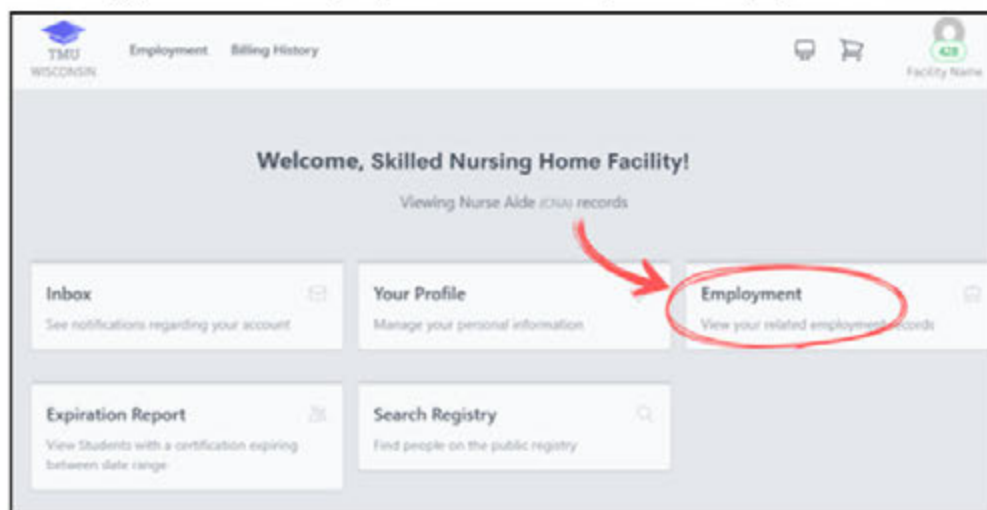
Important Note:

If login information is not available, the facility must reset its password using the email address on file.

- Go to <https://wi.tmuniverse.com> and click 'Sign In,' then select 'Forgot Password'.
- Enter the email address on file to begin the account recovery process.
- A password reset link will be sent to that email address.

Payment Processing (cont'd)

Step 3 Once logged into the employer TMU account, select 'Employment'.



Step 4 A window will display either 'Employment Verification' or 'Employment Funding'. Locate the participant under 'Employment Funding' and select 'Verify'.

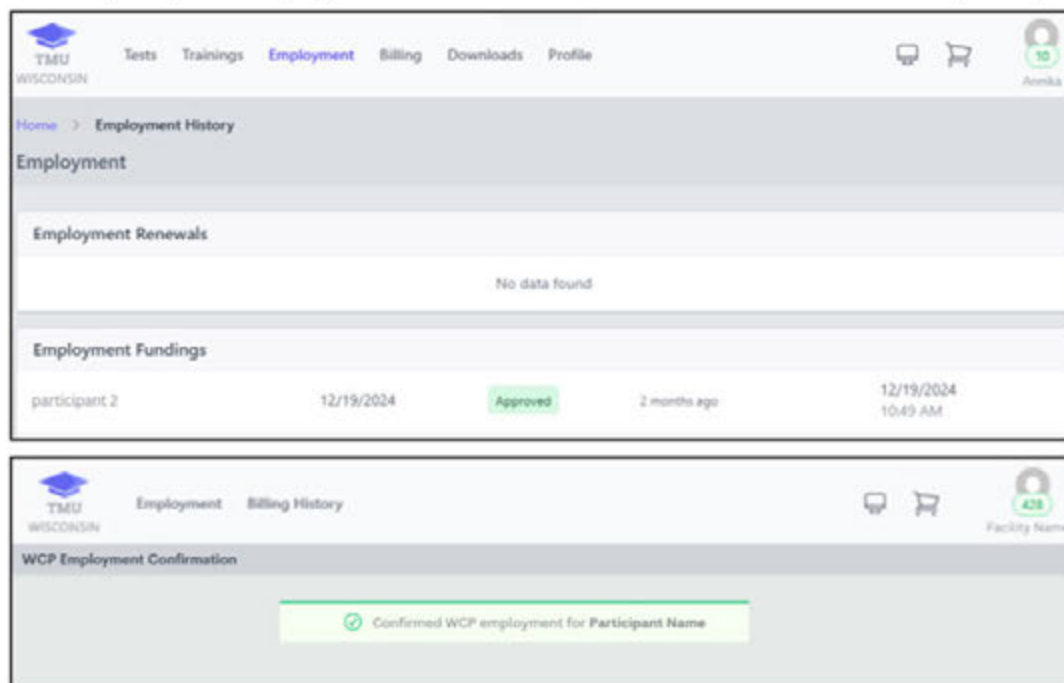
Step 5 A screen will display the Employer and Employee sections auto-filled. If the participant has achieved six months of employment following CNA certification, select the 'Yes' option to confirm employment.

The screenshot shows the 'WCP Employment Confirmation' form. It has two main sections: 'EMPLOYER' and 'EMPLOYEE'. The 'EMPLOYER' section has a field for 'Employed Facility Name'. The 'EMPLOYEE' section has a field for 'participant's Name'. Below these is the 'EMPLOYMENT ATTESTATION' section, which includes a checkbox and a text box for the employer to confirm the participant's employment for at least 6 months. At the bottom, there are two radio buttons: 'No, this person does not work here' and 'Yes, this person is a current employee'.

By clicking the 'YES' box, the employer is confirming that the participant maintained employment for six months after becoming certified and is eligible for the \$500 retention bonus. This confirmation authorizes WisCaregiver Careers to issue reimbursement for that amount to the employer. If you did not receive the retention bonus reimbursement, please contact program staff at info@wiscaregivercna.com

Payment Processing (cont'd)

- Step 6** A message will appear confirming 'Confirmed WCP employment for [participant name]'. The participant's Employment Funding status will update to 'Approved'. At this point, the employer must issue the \$500 retention bonus to the participant.

**Success!**

Once employment has been verified in TMU and the participant has completed six months of employment following CNA certification, the employer must issue the \$500 retention bonus.

The participant will then appear on the WisCaregiver Careers monthly payment report, and the employer will receive reimbursement through the monthly payment cycle.

Appendix F

Recertification

Policy:

Effective January 1, 2026, WisCaregiver Careers does not provide funding for CNA recertification. This policy aligns with the program's focus on supporting individuals who are newly entering the healthcare field as CNAs. Employers should ensure participants are aware of this policy prior to beginning any training.

Appendix G

Retroactive Reimbursements

Policy:

Effective January 1, 2026, WisCaregiver Careers does not provide retroactive reimbursement for CNA training, testing, or retention bonuses.

Participants who exceed the required program timelines for completing certification, or employment verification will not be eligible for reimbursement through the program. Employers must follow the ForwardHealth Medicaid reimbursement process for any applicable costs.

Exceptions may apply if approved by WisCaregiver Careers in coordination with DHS.

Appendix H

Program Timelines and Policy Guidelines

Certification Timeline

Following completion of CNA training, participants must complete CNA certification within 365 days.

Testing Attempts

Testing attempts must be completed within the applicable certification timeframe. WisCaregiver Careers does not establish a set limit on the number of testing attempts within this Employer Guide.

If a participant is unsuccessful after multiple attempts, it is recommended that the employer reevaluate readiness for testing and provide additional support or training as needed before proceeding with further attempts.

Program Timelines and Policy Guidelines (cont'd)**Initial TMU Employment Setup**

After CNA certification is achieved, all required TMU setup must be completed within 90 days of the participant's certification date. This includes all actions completed by both the employer and the participant to ensure the TMU profile is accurate and eligible for program participation.

This also includes completion of the initial employment verification in TMU. The employer must verify the participant's employment within this 90-day timeframe to confirm program participation and maintain eligibility for future retention bonus reimbursement.

ForwardHealth Reimbursement Timeline

Employers may request reimbursement for CNA training and testing through ForwardHealth within 365 days, in accordance with ForwardHealth requirements.

Retention Bonus Timeline and Employment Verification

After the participant completes six months of employment following CNA certification, the employer must complete employment verification in TMU within 90 days of receiving the TMU employment verification email.

The participant must remain employed at the facility at the six-month mark to be eligible for the retention bonus.

Failure to complete verification within this timeframe will result in the employer being ineligible for retention bonus reimbursement, unless an exception is approved by WisCaregiver Careers in coordination with DHS.