

Step 1: ASSESS YOUR GOALS & OPTIONS

Explore & Research

- **Areas of Interest:** Identify and learn more about units of interest to you (i.e. med/surg, critical care, pediatrics, labor & delivery). Consider what you most enjoyed from your clinical rotations, externships, past experiences, etc.
- **Geography:** Do you have specific geographic locations or environments that you do/don't want to work in?
- **Specific Institutions:** Are there particular hospitals and other healthcare systems you would like to target?
- **Culture fit:** Assess your values and see how they align with the hospital/health system's mission, values and goals.
- **Seek Advice & Input:** Talk to professionals, faculty and clinical instructors to assist in clarifying your goals and identifying opportunities and organizations.

Step 2: PREPARE YOUR MATERIALS & BUILD YOUR NETWORK

Prepare Your Application Materials

- Update your **resume** and know how to write an impactful **cover letter**. Tailor your materials for each role.
- Establish a **Credentials File** with the Career Center.
 - Enables you to compile all letters of recommendation to support applications in one centralized location.

Build Your Professional Network

- **Did you know?** 70% of career opportunities are found through networking (making connections with professionals and peers who can help you along your career journey).
- **Informational Interviews:** Connect with people you know - directly or indirectly - in healthcare-related fields (alumni, family, friends, faculty, clinical instructors, past employers or anyone you can identify to have career conversations).
- **In-Person & Virtual Events:** Attend employer and alumni events hosted by Villanova and/or healthcare organizations to network with recruiters, nurse managers and former Villanovans eager to meet you.
- **Career Center:** Schedule an appointment with a **Career Development Counselor** or an **Industry Advisor** in Nursing to discuss your job search plan.
- **Nova Network:** Build a profile and connect with members of the Nova Nation (join the *Villanova Nurses* group).
- **LinkedIn:** Build a profile, follow organizations of interest and connect with recruiters, alumni & other nursing professionals (join the *Official Villanova University Network* & *Villanovans in Nursing* groups).

Events to Attend for Networking & Recruiting

- Villanova Nursing Career Fair (fall)
- LEAD & Society Events: i.e. SNAP Convention (fall)
- Employer On-Campus & Virtual Recruiting Events: information sessions, coffee chats, information tables
- Many employers host nursing-specific events (career fairs, open houses, etc) on-site at their hospital/health system

Step 3: ACTION PHASE – PUTTING YOUR PLAN INTO ACTION

Tips to Search & Apply

- Customize your application materials and submit for positions of interest.
- Common entry-level nursing job titles include: *New Grad RN, Nurse Residency Program*.
- Application timelines vary for full-time roles. Some organizations have 2-3 hiring cohorts based on graduation date. Others recruit on a rolling basis.

Tips to Search & Apply (continued)

- Don't wait for postings! Leverage the network you've built and contact potential employers regarding your interest in working for their organization and inquiring about current or upcoming positions.
- **Specialized vs. General:** You may get advice to choose a specialty unit (i.e. Pediatrics, Labor & Delivery) over a more generalized area (i.e. Med-Surg, General Medicine) for your first role because you won't be able to switch later. Recruiters & Nurse Managers tell us this isn't the case and often recommend a more generalized unit to start – you'll get a wider range of transferable experiences and there are often more entry-level roles available than specialty units. Go after your passion if you have a unit area of interest, but also be open-minded to starting out on a more generalized unit to gain a strong nursing foundation which will open many doors as you progress throughout your nursing career!
- **Pre-Recorded Interviews:** It is common for first-round interviews of full-time opportunities to have a pre-recorded interview component, where you will record yourself answering questions and submit to the hospital or healthcare system. [Big Interview](#) is a really useful tool to practice for these and any other type of virtual or in-person interview.

Top Resources to Search & Apply

- **Hospital and Health System Websites** (Go right to the source of your target organizations!)
- **LiquidCompass** (specifically for Nursing & Healthcare jobs; access from connections.villanova.edu)
- **Handshake** (Villanova's job, employer and event portal)

CAREER CENTER SERVICES & RESOURCES

At every point in your job search journey, the Career Center is available to help!

- **Career Connections** (Nursing & Healthcare) - <https://connections.villanova.edu/channels/nursing-healthcare/>
 - Find jobs, events, alumni connections, Nursing Industry Guides, and resources all in one place.
- **Handshake** - <http://villanova.joinhandshake.com>
- **NovaNetwork** - <https://novanetwork.villanova.edu>
- **Credentials** - <https://bit.ly/vucredentials>
- **Big Interview** - <https://villanova.biginterview.com>
 - Practice your interview skills and get virtual resume feedback through Resume AI feature.
- **Career Center Appointments** - <https://villanova.joinhandshake.com/edu/appointments/new>
 - **Industry Advising** – Discuss nursing trends, timelines and potential Villanova recruiting contacts.
 - **Career Development** – Help with resumes, cover letters, networking, interview prep, offer/salary negotiation.
 - **Wildcat Wardrobe** – Shop our free professional attire closet for your next big professional event.
 - **Headshot Photobooth** – Reserve a time to take a professional photo for your LinkedIn profile and more.
- **Drop-in Hours** (no appt. necessary) – Meet with counselor or student ambassador with your materials/questions.
 - Monday-Thursday 12-2pm in Career Center, Garey Hall 117
 - Friday 12-2pm on Zoom (search “drop-ins” under Events in Handshake for link)