

RN to BSN: Changes to Education Requirement and Educational Support

Frequently Asked Questions

- **I thought research shows that the BSN level for RNs provides the highest level of quality care? Why is OSF changing the requirement?**

We remain committed to high quality outcomes and achieving the Institute of Medicine's goal for 80% of nurses to be BSN prepared, as we believe that this support OSF in attaining our goals of high reliability in quality care. However, we listened and heard that work-life balance among nurses is often challenging. For OSF to achieve its goal and support you in reaching yours, we need to provide options for timing, as well as enhanced support for BSN programs.
- **I am not clear on what this 'RN to BSN cohort model' is. Can you explain it?**

This model allows students to go through the program with a specific peer group, which we have found to be very helpful to you as a student. You will start the RN to BSN program at a determined semester, have a defined sequence of the classes you take and will do this with your peer group. You will get to know each other and be there to support one another. This model also allows our Colleges of nursing to be as efficient as possible in delivering the program, which leads to a decreased cost.
- **Where are the OSF Colleges of Nursing?**

We have two Colleges of nursing: Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing in Peoria and Saint Anthony College of Nursing in Rockford. Both Colleges will be offering this cohort model.
- **Is the RN to BSN cohort program an online program or in-person?**

Both. The program will be delivered both online OR hybrid which is a combination of online and in-person sessions offered locally. Mission Partners across all of OSF can participate and the Colleges will work with you on what will work best for you.
- **I have signed a commitment form to complete my BSN based on the previous requirement, but this is not a good time for me to be in school. Do I have to keep this commitment timeline for completion of my BSN?**

No, you do not need to complete this timeline and may pursue your BSN further down the road. Please discuss what you would like to do with your leader.
- **If at the time of hire I decline to participate in the OSF RN to BSN cohort program and receive the additional OSF educational assistance dollars, but then later decide I want to sign up for the program, how do I do that?**

If at any time you change your mind, speak with your leader and they will help you complete the form to notify the College of your intent to participate in an RN to BSN cohort. You and your leader will discuss your educational and professional goals on an annual basis during your performance review.
- **I have worked at OSF for many years and do not have my BSN. With this increased financial support I am now interested in this RN to BSN cohort model program. What should I do?**

This is great! Please discuss your interest with your leader. Then complete the RN to BSN Commitment form. Your form will be uploaded to UKG Pro and the applicable College of Nursing will reach out to begin the enrollment process.

- **Is there a cap on the number that can enroll in a cohort so I might not be able to participate in a given cohort?**
Yes, there will be a cap on the number for each cohort to allow for the best educational experience. If a cohort reaches the maximum number, the College will work with you to find another cohort to join (if available) or ensure you are signed up for when the next cohort starts.
- **If I sign the commitment form, does that mean I automatically get in the cohort program?**
Not necessarily – the Colleges will work with you to get into the next available cohort. You may have a class or two to take as a prerequisite, which may impact the cohort timing best for you.
- **Is this RN to BSN cohort model program free to RN Mission Partners seeking to get their BSN?**
With a tuition discount from the Colleges and increased educational assistance from OSF offered at the \$5,000 level, the entire program is basically covered (which is a 14-22 month time commitment). You will have some costs related to books. Add average cost of books here once CON supplies it.
- **Do RNs with a BSN get a higher rate of pay at time of hire? Will I get increased pay when I get my BSN?**
No, RNs with a BSN do not get a higher rate of pay. As with all our jobs and the educational requirements, we look at what the market bears and try to adapt our OSF programs to be market competitive. We continue to look at these requirements annually, and will do so in 2022.
- **If I am already enrolled in a non-OSF BSN program, can I join the OSF program and leave my current program?**
This will depend on what your current program states, how long you have to completion, etc. This will be an individual decision based on what makes most sense for you. College leadership will complete a transcript analysis to see if transferring into one of the OSF Colleges is in your best interest. For example, if you are farther along in your non-OSF BSN completion program it may be less desirable for you to transfer. The Colleges will work with you in order for you to make that decision.
- **Are there any roles that still require a BSN or require a BSN to be obtained within 3 years?**
Yes. Primary Charge positions, Care Management positions, Clinical Educator positions and Leadership roles still require you to have a BSN within 3 years.
- **What if I do not work full time – can I still participate?**
This will be like the current OSF education assistance program, as it will be prorated on your FTE status.

- Will the maximum tuition available for non-OSF programs continue to be \$3,500?**
 Yes, we will follow the current Educational Assistance policy of a maximum of \$3,500 per year.
- What are we doing to enhance the tuition assistance outside of nursing?**
 The Human Resources division has kicked off a project focused on our Tuition Reimbursement Program for our Ministry. The team is currently completing a comprehensive analysis of market trends to align with our benefits.
- If I sign the commitment form and receive the benefit but then I do not stay one year with OSF, what will happen then?**
 We will follow our Educational Assistance policy: OSF requires a work commitment period in exchange for receipt of Educational Assistance. If the Mission Partner does not work one full year before termination of employment, the total amount of Educational Assistance received is due upon termination of employment. Mission Partners work for OSF for one year, which begins the day the Mission Partner receives the reimbursement funds.
- How does the program work from the time I discuss interest with my Leader to enrolling in a cohort?**
 After you discuss interest in obtaining your BSN, you will sign the RN to BSN commitment form. Your commitment form will be uploaded to UKG Pro for our records. OSF will share your name with the OSF Colleges of Nursing who then will reach out to you to discuss details on the next available cohort. When you finalize the begin date of your cohort, you'll start classes. The college will defer tuition expenses to the end of each semester. Following the end of the semester, you will share your final grades with OSF along with the deferred tuition bill. OSF will reimburse you the cost of the tuition which will be paid to you on a paycheck. It is your responsibility then to apply the reimbursement you receive and pay the college directly by the due date.
- Am I taxed on my reimbursement for the RN to BSN Cohort program?**
 No. OSF's maximum benefit amount of \$5,000 is under the IRS's non-taxable limit.
- Can I apply the additional Educational Assistance to pre-requisite courses I am required to take?**
 Yes, as long as we have a signed commitment form on file for you.
- If I receive Educational Assistance for the cohort program can I also receive regular Educational Assistance?**
 No. You cannot receive \$5,000 for the cohort program and \$3,500 for regular educational assistance. You are already receiving educational assistance at an enhanced benefit.
- What fees are covered under the Educational Assistance benefit?**
 All fees required for course enrollment are covered, such as student service fees and technology fees. Fees for tuition deferrals, late payment fees, graduation fees, and registration fees are *not* covered since these fees are not a requirement to enroll in a specific course.
- Are supplies such as calculators and nursing kits reimbursable if they are required for the course?**

No. Only tuition, textbooks, and applicable fees are reimbursable. Other materials and supplies are not covered under the policy.

- **How long does it take to receive my reimbursement after I submit my request?**
Reimbursement will be received within *1 - 2 pay periods* after submitting all required documentation. Requests submitted with insufficient documentation may result in the reimbursement being delayed or denied.
- **If I don't use the full benefit that I'm eligible for, does that reduce the commitment period?**
No. Regardless of the amount of Educational Assistance you receive, your commitment is one year from the date of reimbursement.
- **I have general questions about regular Educational Assistance. Where can I find information?**
Please refer to the regular Educational Assistance FAQs found in the MyHR Knowledge base. You can also contact the HR Service Center regarding questions on regular Educational Assistance (Policy #444).
- **My question is not answered here. Who can I speak with?**
Please direct all questions not listed above to your Leader.