



# VHS Grows its Workforce with Apprenticeship Program

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## VHS Grows its Workforce with Apprenticeship Program

Virginia Health Services (VHS) is looking to grow its workforce and develop a pipeline of team members for its independent, assisted living and nursing home facilities, as well as home health care, rehabilitation and hospice services.

VHS has launched its participation in the Healthcare Apprenticeship Expansion Program (HAEP), which is funded with a Department of Labor Closing the Skills Gap Grant and has an emphasis on careers in senior living.

VHS is investing in its employees from the start. The apprenticeship offers paid, on-the-job training. VHS's program is starting with providing paid training to Care Assistants (CAs) as they elevate to Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs).

HAEP reports 94% of apprentices continue employment following the completion of the apprenticeship.

"Employees are earning as they're learning," said Rebecca Boyd, VHS Vice President of Nursing. "It's not common for training to be paid. We're giving employees the opportunity to launch and grow meaningful careers."

HAEP will provide educational and training resources for participants. VHS aims to grow the program to include apprenticeships for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), Registered Nurses

(RNs), pharmacy technicians, and housekeeping and culinary positions.

VHS's first class of apprentices graduated Thursday, April 22. The ceremony marked the completion of their CA training, and they will continue their education as Nursing Assistants until taking the exam to certify them as CNAs. The apprenticeship program covers the cost of the exam, administered by the Virginia Board of Nursing.

The next apprenticeship class starts May 3. Apprenticeship classes will also be offered throughout the year. To learn more, visit [www.vaahs.com](http://www.vaahs.com).

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects employment in health care to grow 15% from 2019 to 2029, adding about 2.4 million new jobs. The Bureau attributes the projected growth to an aging population and increased need for health care services.

"It's a group effort," said Bryanna Rhodes, VHS Director of Education. "We have two days of orientation before CAs begin on-the-job training. They are working with CNAs and other nursing professionals who serve as their mentors and support system in our facilities."

Those in the apprenticeship program have access to Family Scholar House, a financial assistance program meant to alleviate barriers to starting a career. Family Scholar House can offer resources and funds to help cover academic coaching, affordable housing, transportation, child care, emergencies, and more. It is offered to those in the HAEP grant program at no additional charge.

#### About VHS

Locally owned and headquartered in Newport News, Virginia since 1963, Virginia Health Services offers exceptional senior living and health care services. We specialize in the continuum of care from active lifestyle independent and assisted senior living communities, to skilled nursing and rehabilitation services. Our 1,200+ employees are passionate and committed to the well-being and quality care of our residents. Beyond our thoughtfully maintained communities located throughout the Virginia Peninsula, we offer a full range of personalized skilled health care, outpatient therapy, home care and hospice services by specially trained staff in the comfort and privacy of your home. To learn more, please visit our website at [www.vaahs.com](http://www.vaahs.com).

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