

Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses

SOC: 29-2061 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$62,340

Median Salary

651,400

Employment

+3.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Postsecondary

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 8.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■■ Work-Life Balance

6.1/10 - Good work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.4/10	Investigative	8.6/10
Artistic	4.8/10	Social	9.0/10
Enterprising	5.4/10	Conventional	6.2/10

■ Top Skills Required

Compassion, Communication skills, Detail oriented, Interpersonal skills, Multitasking skills, Physical stamina

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) are frontline healthcare professionals who provide **basic nursing care and patient support under the supervision of registered nurses and physicians**. They play a vital role in delivering hands-on care, monitoring patient conditions, and ensuring comfort and safety across a variety of healthcare settings. While their scope of practice is more limited than that of registered nurses, LPNs and LVNs are essential to day-to-day patient care and clinical operations.

This career is well suited for individuals who want direct patient interaction, prefer practical clinical work, and are seeking a faster pathway into the nursing profession.

What Do Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses Do?

LPNs and LVNs provide routine nursing care and assist with patient needs as part of a healthcare team. Their specific duties vary by state regulations and work setting, but they consistently focus on patient monitoring and comfort.

Common responsibilities include:

- Monitoring vital signs such as blood pressure, temperature, and pulse
- Assisting patients with daily activities like bathing, dressing, and mobility
- Administering medications and injections as permitted by state law
- Collecting samples for laboratory testing
- Dressing wounds and changing bandages
- Reporting changes in patient condition to supervising nurses or physicians
- Maintaining accurate patient records and documentation

Where LPNs and LVNs Work

Licensed practical and vocational nurses are employed in a wide range of healthcare environments:

- Hospitals and Medical Centers
- Nursing Homes and Long-Term Care Facilities
- Assisted Living and Residential Care Facilities
- Physicians' Offices and Clinics
- Home Healthcare Services
- Rehabilitation and Specialty Care Centers

Work schedules may include nights, weekends, and holidays, depending on the setting.

Skills and Abilities Needed

LPNs and LVNs must combine clinical skills with compassion and teamwork.

Core Clinical Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Licensure Pathway

Becoming an LPN or LVN requires completion of a state-approved nursing program and licensure:

- Practical or Vocational Nursing Program: Typically a 12–18 month certificate or diploma program
- Clinical Training: Supervised hands-on patient care during the program
- Licensure Examination: Passing the NCLEX-PN exam
- State Licensure: Required to practice legally
- Continuing Education: Ongoing training to maintain licensure

The title **LVN** is primarily used in California and Texas, while **LPN** is used in most other states.

How Much Do Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses Earn?

Earnings vary based on location, experience, and healthcare setting:

- Entry-Level LPNs/LVNs: Typically earn competitive hourly wages in healthcare roles
- Experienced Nurses: Often earn higher pay in specialty or long-term care settings
- Shift Differentials: Additional pay may be available for nights, weekends, or overtime

Compensation often includes benefits such as health insurance, paid time off, and tuition assistance.

Is This Career Difficult?

This role is physically and emotionally demanding. LPNs and LVNs spend long hours on their feet, assist patients with mobility, and work with individuals who may be ill or distressed. The challenge lies in maintaining accuracy, compassion, and stamina in busy healthcare environments.

Who Should Consider Becoming an LPN or LVN?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Want hands-on patient care
- Prefer a shorter training pathway into nursing
- Enjoy working as part of a healthcare team
- Are comfortable with routine clinical tasks
- Want opportunities to advance later into registered nursing

How to Prepare Early

- Take high school courses in Biology and Health Sciences
- Develop strong communication and organizational skills
- Volunteer or work in caregiving or healthcare settings
- Practice attention to detail and time management
- Research state-approved nursing programs early

Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses provide essential bedside care, supporting patients and healthcare teams while serving as a vital entry point into the nursing profession.

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Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/licensed-practical-and-licensed-vocational-nurses.htm>