



Long-Term Care Regulation Provider Letter

Number: PL 2024-07

Title: Online Training Guidelines for Nurse Aide Trainees

Provider Types: Nursing Facilities (NF), Nurse Aide Training and Competency Evaluation Programs (NATCEP)

Date Issued: April 1, 2024

1.0 Subject and Purpose

This provider letter informs nurse aide trainees about HHSC's new computer-based training (CBT) for the classroom portion of the training required to qualify to take the Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) exam.

2.0 Policy Details & Provider Responsibilities

To become a CNA in Texas, trainees must complete 60 hours of classroom training, 40 hours of clinical training, and pass a test. HHSC has created a CBT that nurse aide trainees can use to complete the 60-hour classroom training online. It is available for free on a platform called Learning Tree, created by the Blackboard-Anthology learning management system. The CBT gives trainees the opportunity to complete the classroom portion of training anywhere they have access to it, at any time, and at their own pace. Once a trainee finishes the CBT, they must complete the 40-hour clinical portion of the training with an approved NATCEP to qualify to take the CNA exam. Using the CBT is voluntary, and trainees may still choose to complete the 60-hours of classroom training through a NATCEP.

2.1 Requirements Related to Clinical Training

Regardless of how a trainee completes the classroom training, NATCEPs must verify that a trainee:

- is not listed on the Nurse Aide Registry (NAR) in revoked status;

- is not listed as unemployable on the Employee Misconduct Registry (EMR); and
- has not been convicted of a criminal offense listed in Texas Health and Safety Code (THSC) [§250.006\(a\)](#) or convicted of a criminal offense listed in THSC [§250.006\(b\)](#) within the five years immediately before participating in the NATCEP.¹

If a trainee does not meet the above requirements, they are not eligible to take the clinical portion of the training or the CNA exam to earn certification, even if they complete and pass the CBT.

2.2 NATCEP Coordination

HHSC strongly encourages trainees to reach out to an approved NATCEP in their area prior to starting the CBT in order to coordinate completion of the 40-hour clinical requirement. Trainees can locate a NATCEP in their area by going to HHSC's [NATCEP Training Providers Directory](#).

Important: A NATCEP must not deny a trainee admission to their program because the trainee chose to complete HHSC's CBT instead of an in-person classroom training. Other criteria a NATCEP may have for its admission are still applicable. If a trainee completes the CBT and provides their NATCEP with a copy of the completion certificate, the NATCEP must accept the certificate and provide clinical training to the trainee.

2.3 CBT Access

To complete the training, trainees need a computer, tablet or cell phone to access the CBT and the ability to print and save a certificate of completion. Trainees can access the CBT on any browser except Opera, but Google Chrome is the preferred browser.

If a trainee does not have a computer to access the training, they may be able to go to their local library or can reach out to their local [Texas Workforce Commission](#) (TWC) office to locate a computer in their area.

¹ Read 26 TAC [§556.3\(r\)](#) NATCEP Requirements

Important: Trainees must print their certificate of completion immediately upon completing the CBT. **It is not possible to log back into the training to print the certificate at a later time.** Also, **HHSC cannot print certificates for trainees.** For technical assistance with the online training in Learning Tree, please email RSD_LMS@hhs.texas.gov with a subject line of "NATCEP CBT assistance."

2.4 Training Timeframe

HHSC encourages trainees to complete the CBT in a timely manner to maximize their retention of the course material and to allow themselves sufficient time to pass the exam at the conclusion of both portions of the CNA training. A comprehensive understanding of the classroom training material is critical for mastering the clinical portion of the training. Trainees will be held responsible for what they have learned and will be required to use that information when completing clinical training hours.

2.5 Next Steps for Certification

After a trainee completes the CBT and prints their certificate, they must present the certificate to the NATCEP prior to starting the 40-hour clinical portion of the training. The NATCEP will review the certificate presented by the trainee to determine if it is the completion certificate from HHSC's CBT classroom training. The NATCEP will also require each trainee to complete a demonstration of knowledge acquired in the online course prior to beginning the clinical training.

Once the trainee completes clinical training, the trainee must complete a New Nurse Aide Application by Exam in the Texas Unified License Information Portal (TULIP).² The NATCEP will then approve the trainee's training via TULIP. Once HHSC staff review the application and mark the trainee eligible to test, the trainee will receive an email from Prometric within 24 hours with instructions on how to register for the state exam. For assistance with registering for the exam, read Prometric's [Texas Nurse Aide](#) informational website.

² For more information on using TULIP, please read [PL 2023-14](#).

After a trainee successfully completes both the written and skills portions of the CNA exam and HHSC receives the results, the trainee will be issued a Nurse Aide Certificate in TULIP. Read Provider Letter 2024-08, Guidance for Nurse Aide Training and Competency Evaluation Programs About Changes to Nurse Aide Rules, for more information on TULIP. TULIP provides up-to-date information on the status of CNA registrations.

2.6 Troubleshooting

HHSC encourages trainees to review the information related to [Learning Tree](#) before accessing the system or when having trouble.

For technical assistance with the course, email RSD_LMS@hhs.texas.gov and use the subject line "NATCEP CBT assistance." Also read Attachment 1 of this provider letter for technology trouble shooting and FAQs.

Email Regulatory_NATCEP@hhs.texas.gov for assistance with understanding online guidelines.

3.0 Background/History

HHSC developed the online training in order to provide more flexibility for nurse aide trainees to train for certification and serve as CNAs in nursing facilities and other settings.

4.0 Resources

[Texas Workforce Commission Directory of Offices and Services](#)

[NATCEP Training Providers Directory Search | HHS \(texas.gov\)](#)

[Prometric: Texas Nurse Aide Information](#)

[Provider Letter 2023-14 Web-based Licensure System for Nurse Aides and Medication Aides](#)

[Learning Tree Support](#)

Attachment 1: LTCR Learning Tree Resources for Learners

5.0 Contact Information

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the Policy and Rules unit by email at LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov or call (512) 438-3161.



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Attachment 1

Resources for Learners: LTCR Learning Tree

On Demand Videos

Blackboard Learn: For Students: The complete series of short video tutorials to help learners use the various Blackboard Learn tools to be successful online.

Also available:

- [Working in Your Course](#): A playlist to help learners learn how to access course content, take tests, turn in assignments, and other course related activities.
- [Staying Organized and Communicating](#): A playlist to help learners use course tools to communicate and manage course work.
- [Setting Your Preferences and Environment](#): A playlist to help learners customize their Blackboard experience and set their preferences.

Learner How-To's

[Quick Start Guide](#)

[Assignments Overview](#)

[How to Submit an Assignment](#)

[Find or Open an Assignment](#)

[How to Add Files](#) (for assignments)

[How to Take a Test](#)

[How to Check Your Grades](#)

[Navigate Outside a Course](#)

[Navigate Inside a Course](#)

[Find your Courses](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Why do videos say Blackboard, but LTCR calls this training program "Learning Tree"?

Answer: The videos that say "Blackboard" or "Anthology" are created by Anthology, the company who acquired Blackboard and created HHSC's Learning Management System, Learning Tree.

Long-term Care Regulation uses Blackboard and Learning Tree interchangeably and believes that the name Learning Tree reflects our agency by providing a system for structured and organized learning growth. We chose "Learning Tree" because it conveys the idea of learning as an ever-growing process. As our users gain knowledge, they become more and more like a learning tree with an ever-expanding base of knowledge. This concept is at the heart of our mission, and we believe that the name "Learning Tree" reflects this idea much better than "Blackboard."

Question: Are there different types of assignments in Learning Tree?

Answer: Assignments in a Learning Tree course can take many forms. In most cases, they are a way of electronically submitting something you would hand in to your instructor, such as a pre-test or a quiz.

Question: Can I change my username?

Answer: No. Your username cannot be changed.

Question: Can I take a test on a mobile device?

Answer: It is recommended that you take your test on a desktop computer or laptop. You may use a browser on a mobile device. HHS-LTCR will not be using the LMS app at this time.

Question: How can I download or view my certificate?

Answer: To get your certificate, Select the course's title under Completed Courses on your Dashboard and click on the Download Certificate.

Question: How do I access and submit my class Assignments?

Answer:

1. Click the Assignment link on the course menu or the content area where the assignment is posted.
2. Click the name of the assignment.
3. Click Write Submission and type your response.
4. Click Browse My Computer and select a file to attach.
5. Press the Submit button. A success message appears, confirming the submission.

WARNING! When you finish your assignment, you must click Submit. If you press Save as Draft, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

Question: How do I change my email address in Learning Tree?

Answer: From the dashboard, click on your name to edit the account. Update your email address and click "Save".

Question: How do I register for a course?

Answer: Click on Register for Course. Follow the prompts to register for the course you are trying to sign up for.

Question: How do I reply in a Discussion Board?

Answer: If a course includes a Discussion Board, you can reply by following these steps:

1. On the Course Menu, click on the Discussions link.
2. On the Discussion Board page, click on the name of the forum you want to access.
3. On the Forum page, click the name of the Thread in which you want to post.
4. On the Thread Detail page, click on Reply.
5. Enter the Subject and type your reply in the Message text box.
6. Hit Submit.

Question: What happens if I lose my password?

Answer: If you lose your password, you will need to reset your password.

Question: How do I reset my password?

Answer: To reset your password, click on the "Recover your password" link on the login page. Enter your username and email address to reset your password. You do not need to contact the system administrator if you need to reset your password. Simply follow the prompts to reset it. An email will be sent to the email on file so you can reset your password. Follow the prompts on the email to reset your password. Keep track of your passwords.

Question: How do I send an email in Learning Tree?

Answer:

1. Inside the course, select Messages from the Course Navigation pane.
2. Select New Message on the right-hand side below the Course Navigation pane.
3. Enter the recipient's name from the course.
4. Check the box "Send an email copy to the recipients" if you want the email to be forwarded to the Recipient.
5. Check or uncheck the box next to "Allow replies to this message" depending on what your preferences are.
6. Enter your message and hit Send.

Please note: Email messages in Learning Tree are not monitored and may not be answered as quickly as sending a message through Outlook. If you need to get in contact with your technical processes, please email:

RSD_LMS@hhs.texas.gov

Question: How do I view my grades?

Answer: Click on Gradebook in the course you are trying to view. You can also view your course's grade or progress on your Dashboard.

Question: How much time do I have to take a Learning Tree test or quiz?

Answer: Some tests are untimed, meaning you have as long as you want. Other tests have a time limit set by the instructor. If there is a time limit,

you will be notified on the instructions page before you begin the test. There will also be a countdown timer that appears on the test page itself, showing how much time you have left.

Question: I can't find my certificate on my dashboard, how do I get it?

Answer: There are a few different reasons why you may not be seeing your certificate on your [Learner Dashboard](#):

Reason #1: You did not complete the training.

If you took a training, you must complete all necessary steps to complete the course to receive your certificate of completion. Go back to the course and read all of the directions.

If you have followed those steps and still cannot find your certificate, please email RSD_LMS@hhs.texas.gov with a description of the course and the reason for your email.

Reason #2: You took an in-person or virtual course and the trainer has not completed their completion entries yet.

When you take an in-person course or virtual course, your certificate of completion is entered into the gradebook by the trainer. Please give the trainer 7 business days to complete their entry for you to receive credit.

Reason #3: You are taking a training that is asynchronous and forgot to finish the Course Survey and Course Attestation or Quiz.

Some trainings have a folder that requires you to complete an end-of-course survey and Attestation. Follow the steps to complete that section to receive your certificate.

If you need additional assistance, please contact Learning Tree's [Help Center](#).

Question: I lost network connection while taking a test, what do I do?

Answer: If you have a technical issue or lose network connection while taking a test in Learning Tree, first notify your instructor that you are having an issue. Losing network connection can cause your test to auto submit. It is

up to your instructor if they want to allow you another attempt to take the test.

NOTE: The LMS System Administrator **cannot** clear any test submission attempts in Learning Tree without the written consent of the course instructor.

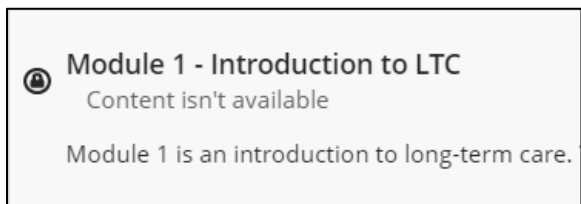
Question: I received an error message or code, what do I do with it?

Answer: If you can, take a screenshot of the error code, do so and include in the email. Email the screenshot to RSD_LMS@hhs.texas.gov with a description of the issue in your email. Be as descriptive as possible on what you were doing and what you are trying to achieve when you received the message.

Question: Should I use a certain internet browser when I log in to Learning Tree?

Answer: It is recommended that all users use Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, or Chrome as their internet browser. Opera is not supported at this time.

Question: There is a lock picture next to a folder I am trying to open with the words "Content isn't available" below the folder's title. How do I fix this so I can open the folder and access what's inside?

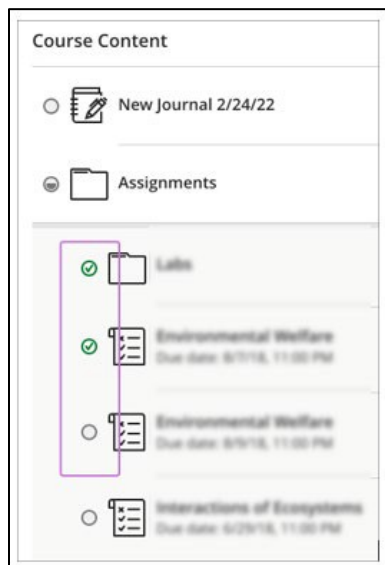


Answer: If you're having trouble opening course materials or modules, make sure to check if there are any items that you must complete before being able to continue in the course. The lock means that there are items you must complete before it will unlock.

Progress tracking allows you to review your course progress relating to your course content, assignments, and tests.

You can review your own progress through the coursework displayed with a circle icon:

- Empty when you have not yet accessed the item.
- Partially filled when you have opened the item.
- Green checkmark when you have completed the item.



Once you've completed the items like Assessments, or tests, progress tracking will automatically mark them as complete. You can mark items such as Documents, uploaded files, or links.

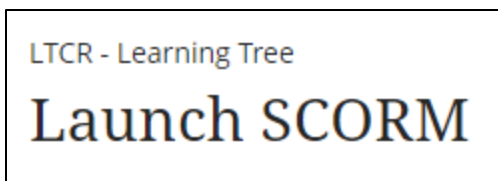
If you're having trouble opening course materials or modules, make sure to check if there are any items that you must complete before being able to continue in the course.

By following the items in the order set by HHSC, you can ensure that you are receiving information in a logical and coherent way, which can help you better understand and retain the material.

Question: What fields are required to complete in my user profile?

Answer: To complete your user profile on Learning Tree, you'll usually need to fill out required fields such as name, email address, username, password, and possibly student ID or course information. It's recommended to fill out all required fields for accurate account information.

Question: When I take a computer-based training, a SCORM word appears on the screen. What does that mean? Why does it say launch and how do I launch it?



Answer: SCORM means Sharable Content Object Reference Model which is used with e-learning software. All CBTs will have this. It means you have opened the CBT.

When you click and open the CBT it will automatically say "Launch SCORM".

There is nothing you need to do. Opening the CBT means you have launched the software.

Question: Where are my assignments posted in my course?

Answer: LTCR has the option to post assignments in different areas of Learning Tree. Some course developers will create a Content Area specifically named Assignments. Other developers might house assignments in Course Materials. This is why it is important to go through the Course Menu to familiarize yourself with the posted materials.

Question: Where do I find grades for my Learning Tree classes?

Answer: Click [here](#) to learn more.

Question: Why am I not receiving emails from my Learning Tree courses?

Answer: Your email address that was used to register your account is your default email address in Learning Tree. If you are not receiving emails, it could be that your email address was incorrectly added to the system.

From the dashboard, click on your name to enter your profile page to edit your account. Update your email address and click "Save".

Question: Why can't I go backwards in a test to check my answers?

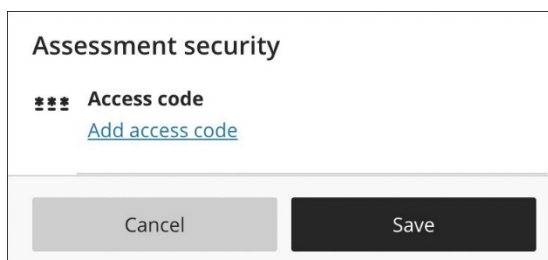
Answer: When the curriculum developer creates the test, they can choose to allow you to go back and check previous answers, or not. If you cannot go back to check previous answers on your test, this means that the course does not allow backtracking.

Question: Why did my assignments disappear?

Answer: Instructors can set date or time restrictions that will restrict your access to an assignment in Learning Tree. If your instructor sets a date or time restriction, once that date or time passes you can no longer access that assignment in Learning Tree. It is up to the discretion of your instructor if they want to open any assignment. Blackboard Support cannot make any changes to an assignment without the permission of the instructor.

Question: Why do I need an access code for some tests?

Answer: A course may require a 6-digit access code to ensure that learners have attended all parts of the training. Instructors will issue the access codes. After you type the code, you can open the test. You can use the code to resume a test you saved. You don't need the code to view your grades. If your instructor changes the code between attempts, you'll need to ask for it again.



Assessment security

*** Access code

[Add access code](#)

Cancel Save

Question: Why does my Course Menu look different in each course?

Answer: Instructors and curriculum developers have the ability to personalize the course menu. They can add or remove different Content Areas specific to their course. It is important that you go through each Content Area on the Course Menu to familiarize yourself with how the course is set up.