



Credentials Evaluation Service Application Instructions Handbook

The CGFNS Credentials Evaluation Service (CES) is a requirement in certain states and territories in the United States for state licensure of registered and practical nurses who were educated outside the United States. It is also used by U.S. schools and prospective employers to assess the education of nursing professionals who wish to continue their education or to be employed in the United States.

The Credentials Evaluation Service results in a written report detailing the applicant's education and professional registration/licensing/certification credentials. There are two types of reports: the Professional Report and the Academic Report.

CGFNS has issued more than 40,000 Credentials Evaluation Service reports to nursing professionals educated outside the United States during the past 17 years.

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CGFNS contact information

CGFNS Customer Care*	+1 (215) 222 8454, extension 601
Appointments*	+1 (215) 222 8454, extension 221
Mailing address	Suite 400, 3600 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2651
CGFNS website	http://www.cgfns.org
CGFNS Connect	https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/intro.jsp
Apply/Check Status	https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/intro.jsp
Email	https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do

*check sidebar on <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do> for times

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Introduction to the CGFNS Credentials Evaluation Service

CGFNS International's Credentials Evaluation Service (CES) analyzes the credentials of various types of nursing-related professionals educated and registered/licensed/certified outside of the United States who wish to work or study in the United States. The CES report helps qualified nursing professionals meet requirements for licensure or academic admission.

U.S. state boards of nursing and educational institutions require a credentials evaluation to help them appropriately assess educational and professional credentials earned outside of the country. The majority of the U.S. state boards of nursing require CES reports for foreign-educated applicants seeking licensure for either a registered or a practical nurse in their state. In addition to boards of nursing and schools, employers, recruiters and lawyers working on your behalf may request that you complete the CGFNS Credentials Evaluation Service program and designate them as a recipient to receive a CES report.

Choose from two types of reports

A Credentials Evaluation Service report analyzes and compares your education and licensure earned outside of the United States to that of U.S. standards. In this objective evaluation, CGFNS carefully assesses the documents received from source agencies. The CES report is advisory in nature and does not make specific placement recommendations. This service does not include an examination. After all required documents, fees and a completed application are received and analyzed, CGFNS prepares a report and sends it to the recipient(s) that you designate. You will also have access to view and print the report in your online applicant account through the CGFNS Connect at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/intro.jsp>.

CGFNS currently offers two types of CES reports:

- **Professional Report** – This report meets the specific requirements of individual state boards of nursing, incorporating their requirements templates and including a statement of comparability of an applicant's education when measured against U.S. standards.
- **Academic Report** – This report is designed to meet the needs of applicants pursuing further education in U.S. institutions of higher learning.

Both CES reports contain an analysis of secondary and post-secondary (tertiary) education, country-specific background information about schools attended by the applicant, complete dates of attendance, validations of license/registration/diploma information received directly from source authorities. All information is explained in terms of U.S. standards. CGFNS may choose to evaluate only the documents that it considers relevant to the CES Review.

What this handbook contains

1. Information regarding the Credentials Evaluation Service program and process.
2. Instructions for completing
 - The *Request for Academic Records/Transcripts* form (see page 3)
 - The *Request for Validation of License/Registration/Diploma* form (see page 4)
 - The *Authorization to Release Information* form (see page 4)
3. Guidelines for communicating with CGFNS (see page 6)
4. The *Authorization to Release Information* form (page 8)
5. The *Credit Card Payment Form* (page 9)

This instruction booklet describes how to apply for a CES report. There are many steps (see Table 1 on page 2). Please read this entire booklet before completing the application online or any of the forms. The detailed description of each step will help you to understand the process.

CGFNS processes all applications at its headquarters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in the United States. If you have any questions or concerns as you proceed through the CGFNS Credentials Evaluation Service, please contact CGFNS Customer Care by email or by telephone at +1 (215) 222 8454 extension 601 during the hours listed on our Contact Us page at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do>. Refer to page 8 for guidelines on communicating with CGFNS. For more information on CGFNS and its services, please visit our website at www.cgfns.org.

Table 1: Overview of the steps to receive a CGFNS Credentials Evaluation Service report

ACTIONS YOU TAKE	ACTIONS CGFNS TAKES
Register to create your online account. Go to https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/register.jsp , and fill out the information fields. This account will help keep you informed about the status of your application, and help us inform you about documents we need from you, even if you choose to apply through postal mail rather than online.	
Apply online after creating your user account. You can find payment instructions at www.cgfns.org/sections/apply/fees.shtml .	We send you welcome notification and, after we receive your payment, your CGFNS ID number* .
Prepare and send the <i>Request for Academic Records/Transcripts</i> form to any nursing or nursing-related post-secondary (tertiary) schools that you attended outside the United States, asking them to send your academic records/transcripts to CGFNS. Send us a photocopy of your secondary school certificate/diploma or results of external exams.	CGFNS reviews all academic records/transcripts that we receive from your schools. Then we compare them to information from our global database to find the specific school and grading system.
Prepare and send the <i>Request for Validation of License/Registration/Diploma</i> form to all licensing authorities outside of the United States who have issued you licenses/registrations, asking them to send us the completed form and any attachments.	CGFNS reviews all registrations/licenses and verifies that they come from the issuing source.
Check your status online at https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/login.jsp . Respond to any correspondence from CGFNS regarding missing items.	After CGFNS receives and evaluates all the requested documents to satisfy the requirements, we issue a report to the designated recipient. We also provide you access to an applicant copy of the report in your online account.

***Please note:** If you applied for another CGFNS service in the past, the CGFNS ID number you were issued at that time remains your permanent ID number. The CGFNS ID number helps us help you keep track of your status and complete your application successfully.

****IMPORTANT:** Documents that must come directly from your school's officials, licensing authorities or other source agencies can be translated by them and sent directly to us in the signed, stamped and sealed envelope. Documents that you are permitted to send (such as marriage certificates, secondary school diplomas) can be translated by you or anyone you choose. These translations must contain the following, called the Certificate of Accuracy, typed or written at the end of the translation. The translator must sign the translation.

Certificate of Accuracy

This is to certify that this is a true and correct English translation of the attached photocopy of the original [insert name of document] of [insert applicant name]"

CGFNS can also provide translations for the fee listed at www.cgfns.org/sections/apply/fees.shtml#5.

Apply online

Apply online at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/intro.jsp>. You must still mail certain documents to CGFNS, e.g., copies of secondary school education documents.

Additional CES services

BEFORE REPORT IS ISSUED

- *Additional CES report recipients* – This is for those who want to send the Credentials Evaluation Service report to more recipients than the one included in the application (such as other state boards of nursing or schools)
- *Evaluation of an additional academic credential*
- *Evaluation of an additional license/registration/diploma*

AFTER REPORT IS ISSUED

- *Duplicate Credentials Evaluation Service report for applicant* – This is for applicants who want an unofficial copy of their report mailed to them
- *Re-evaluation of an Academic Report* – After one report has been issued, another *Academic Report* can be completed and issued to one designated recipient
- *Re-evaluation of a Professional Report* – After one report has been issued, another *Professional Report* can be completed and issued to one designated recipient

Fees for additional CES services can be found at <http://www.cgfns.org/sections/apply/fees.shtml>

Other CGFNS services

- *Forwarding academic records/transcripts* – This is a request for CGFNS to send copies of your official academic records/transcripts to a licensing board or educational institution (this service does not include an evaluation of the documents)
- *Forwarding academic records/transcripts and license/registration/diploma* – This is a request for CGFNS to send copies of both your official academic records/transcripts and your official professional license/registration/diploma validations to a licensing board or educational institution (this service does not include an evaluation of the documents)
- *Document translation* – This is to request that CGFNS have your required documents translated into English

Fees for other CGFNS services can be found at <http://www.cgfns.org/sections/apply/fees.shtml#5>

Other requirements

- *English language proficiency report* – This is for state boards of nursing that require an English proficiency report included with Credentials Evaluation Service report.
- Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, New Jersey, Virginia and Wisconsin (practical nurse only) require proof that the applicant has achieved a passing score on the English Proficiency examination required by the Department of Homeland Security for certification of health care workers in Section 343 of the *Illegal Immigration Reform Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996*. The Michigan Board of Nursing also requires proof of English language proficiency for applicants who graduated from a nursing school taught in a language other than English. The CGFNS CES report must be accompanied by this English language proficiency report containing the passing scores of the approved English examinations detailed in the CGFNS *VisaScreen®* handbook.

If your application expires

If your initial application expires, you may qualify for a reprocess application. You are given 12 months to meet the requirements of the initial application order, after which it expires. If an initial application that has been paid in full expires, you have up to 12 months to apply for a reprocess (another 12 months on that application) and fully pay the reprocess fee listed in the fees table at <http://www.cgfns.org/sections/apply/fees.shtml#5>. If you have NOT paid in full, or if fees paid were applied to previous services, and the initial application order expires, you do not qualify for the reprocess, but must submit a new application and pay the full fee to have 12 months to process the application and complete all the requirements. The subsequent 12 months begins when we receive the application. Only one reprocess application is accepted after an initial CES application expires.

Completing the forms

The Request for Academic Records/Transcripts form

To supply CGFNS with the necessary information about your education, you will need to download the *Request for Academic Records/Transcripts* form from your online account and send one copy to each health care post-secondary (tertiary) school that you attended outside the United States and request that they send us your academic records/transcripts. Please check before sending that the applicant's section reflects what you have entered in your application.

Please note: Enclose any payment that your school(s) may require (including translation costs).

IMPORTANT: We must receive all of your nursing-related academic records/transcripts directly from your school(s). We cannot accept records supplied by you or anyone else other than the school. If CGFNS receive documents that are not in English without an English translation attached, we can have them translated for the fee listed on the fees page at <http://www.cgfns.org/sections/apply/fees.shtml#5>, at your request. Further information may be required after your academic record/transcripts are reviewed.

The Request for Validation of License/Registration/Diploma form

You need to request validations for your current and initial license/registration/diploma obtained outside the United States. To do this, download and send the *Request for Validation of License/Registration/Diploma* from your online account. Please check before sending that the applicant's section reflects what you have entered in your application. The section at the bottom titled "FOR LICENSING AUTHORITY TO COMPLETE" is to be completed by the licensing authorities. If you have a diploma that authorized you to practice in your country, send this form to the institution that issued your diploma (for example, your school or the Ministry of Health) and request that an official copy of the diploma in the original language be sent to CGFNS. If CGFNS receive documents that are not in English without an English translation attached, we can have them translated for the fee listed on the fees page at <http://www.cgfns.org/sections/apply/fees.shtml#5>, at your request.

Please note: If validation of your non-U.S. license/registration/diploma was previously mailed to CGFNS for another CGFNS program with an issue date of three or more years ago, it needs to be validated again. Validation of U.S. state licensure is not required for CES reports. Further information may be required after your license/registration/diploma forms or diplomas are reviewed.

The Authorization to Release Information form

This form is available on the website at <http://www.cgfns.org/sections/apply/forms.shtml> and on page 8.

Because we protect your privacy, your application will only be discussed with you. If you choose to let CGFNS disclose file information or provide file status information to another person, you need to submit an *Authorization to Release Information* form, to designate an authorized agent. Or, if you choose to have all mail from CGFNS sent to someone else, you can do this by either completing the *Authorization to Release Information* form or providing the other person's mailing address on your application form.

The *Authorization to Release Information* is valid for two years. You can revoke the authorization at any time. We must receive a revocation in writing by postal mail or courier service.

The completed *Authorization to Release Information* form may be submitted to CGFNS with your application or mailed separately by postal mail or delivered by courier.

Please note: CGFNS only keeps one mailing address per applicant. Therefore, if you choose to have your correspondence from CGFNS sent to an alternative address, all correspondence will be sent to that person. CGFNS cannot be held responsible for any correspondence withheld by a third party you designated as an authorized agent.

Also please note: A letter signed by you authorizing CGFNS to communicate with a relative, recruiter or any other person will not be accepted. Please complete the official *Authorization to Release Information* form.

Finishing your application

CHECK EACH ITEM BELOW TO ENSURE THAT YOU AVOID PROCESSING DELAYS

Before submitting your application, check to see that you have:

- completed each item on the application.
- included documentation of your secondary school education or external exam certificate, with literal English translations, including a *Certificate of Accuracy* (see page 2).
- completed the *Request for Academic Records/Transcripts* form and sent them to the appropriate schools (see page 3).
- completed the *Request for Validation of License/Registration/Diploma* form and sent them to the appropriate licensing authorities (see page 4).
- every document is either in English or has a literal English translation attached that includes the *Certificate of Accuracy*, signed by the translator (see page 2).
- signed the *Authorization to Release Information* form, if you would like CGFNS to communicate with someone other than yourself (see pages 4 and 8).
- included full payment through a **bank check**, an **international money order** (drawn on a United States bank in United States dollars) made payable to CGFNS or **credit card payment** (Visa, MasterCard or Discover), with the completed *Credit Card Payment form*. DO NOT SEND CASH (see pages 4 and 9).

THESE DOCUMENTS HAVE TO BE SUBMITTED DIRECTLY FROM OTHER AUTHORITIES TO CGFNS:

- If they are required by your recipient, English language proficiency scores from ETS or IELTS (see page 3).
- Completed *Request for License/Registration/Diploma* forms, that you sent to them, and corresponding documents directly sent from all licensing authorities (see page 4).
- Completed *Request for Academic Records/Transcripts* forms and corresponding records, that you sent to them, from each post-secondary health care school you attended (see page 3).
- Certified translation of any documents not in English.

Please note: CGFNS does not return any of the documents that are part of your complete application. Please send only legible photocopies, **not originals**, of the documents CGFNS requests directly from you. Applications remain open for 12 months.

Falsified or altered documents

If CGFNS finds that your documents have been altered in any way or that information in your application is falsified, CGFNS will send the CES report to the designated recipients and notify them of the falsification. In addition, your file will be sealed and you will not be eligible in future for other CGFNS services. This includes all documents and application documents submitted by you, or on your behalf by another person. Therefore, before anything is sent to CGFNS, make certain that none of the documents and forms have been falsified or altered in any way.

Mailing forms and documents

After completing any forms other than the ones to be sent to issuing authorities, send them to CGFNS International, along with a photocopy of your secondary school diploma and all required fees, to the following address:

CGFNS International
3600 Market Street, Suite 400
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2651 USA

Guidelines for communicating with CGFNS

Your online account

You can apply for any of CGFNS's services online at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/intro.jsp>. By creating an account you can check your file status, verify receipt of documents and scores, make changes to your contact information, confirm mailing dates and access many other services all through your browser.

If you have questions about your application or required documents, we recommend that you check the status of your online account at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/login.jsp>. You may also contact CGFNS via letter, telephone or through the Contact Us form at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do>. The following guidelines are provided to make this communication easier (see Table 2 on page 7 for additional information).

Email

You may email CGFNS Customer Care with questions regarding your application through the Contact Us form on our website at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do>.

Letters

When you mail a letter, it must be written and signed only by you for confidentiality purposes. When you write to us, always include your CGFNS ID number, full name and birth date. CGFNS recommends that you send all correspondence by air mail, and that you consider using express couriers when time is limited.

On-site appointments

You or your authorized agent may call +1 (215) 222 8454, extension 221, to schedule an appointment in our offices in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. See the Contact Us form on our website at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do> for appointment days and times.

Telephone calls

CGFNS Customer Care provides applicant status information by telephone to applicants only. CGFNS will not release information by phone to anyone else unless a completed and signed *Authorization to Release Information* form has been received from you. If you wish to telephone CGFNS, call the Customer Care Center at +1 (215) 222 8454, extension 601. To save time, have your CGFNS ID number ready. If the Customer Care Representative is unable to adequately verify your identity, information will not be released by telephone.

For Customer Care Center hours, go to the Contact Us form at <https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do>. CGFNS Customer Care is not available weekends or U.S. holidays, and does not accept reverse charge telephone calls.

In the event of a disaster

CGFNS makes every effort to ensure that our communication with applicants is straightforward and timely. However, some events are out of our control. Events such as natural disasters, political unrest and postal strikes may occasionally occur. CGFNS cannot be responsible for delays caused by such conditions, but we will make every reasonable effort to notify you when this happens.

Please note: Please notify CGFNS of any change in your contact information, especially in the event of a disaster in your country.

Table 2: Communication guidelines

REASON FOR COMMUNICATION	WHO CAN INITIATE REQUEST?	COMMUNICATIONS CHANNEL	YOU NEED
QUESTIONS ABOUT CGFNS RECEIPT OF YOUR DOCUMENTS	Only you or your authorized agent	Email through the Contact Us form at https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do , write us, telephone us, or visit CGFNS Connect at https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/intro.jsp	Include your full name, CGFNS ID number and birth date
QUESTIONS ABOUT CORRESPONDENCE FROM CGFNS	Only you or your authorized agent	Email through the Contact Us form at https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do , write us or telephone us	Include your full name, CGFNS ID number and birth date
ADDRESS CHANGE	Only you or your authorized agent	Email through the Contact Us form at https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/processContactUs.do , write us or make changes via the online application system (CGFNS Connect) at https://www.cgfns.org/cerpassweb/intro.jsp	Include your full name, CGFNS ID number and birth date
LEGAL NAME CHANGE	Only you	Write to CGFNS including legal documentation of name change	Include your full name, CGFNS ID number and birth date

Authorization to Release Information

NOTICE: By signing below you (1) allow CGFNS to disclose confidential, personal, private information about you and your file at CGFNS to the person designated below; (2) give up the right to receive information from CGFNS directly; and (3) release and indemnify CGFNS, its members, trustees, officers and employees from any liability for losses, damages or claims of any type arising out of actions taken by CGFNS in reliance upon this *Authorization to Release Information*, hereafter known as "Authorization".

This Authorization will remain valid for two years from the date supplied by you on the "Date" line below (or if no date is supplied, from the date this Authorization is received by CGFNS).

REVOCATION: This Authorization can be revoked by submitting a new authorization dated and signed after the initial authorization. In addition, you may revoke this Authorization in writing at any time, which will be effective on or after the 30th day after CGFNS receives it, by regular mail or courier, at its headquarters office in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.

AUTHORIZATION: I authorize CGFNS to release to the authorized agent indicated by me below, any and all information about me and my application/order for services from CGFNS, including, and without limitation, the status of my application/order, the results of any credentials review, examination or test and any other information in or relating to my file at CGFNS. **I understand that all mail (including certificates, exam scores and reports) will be sent to the authorized agent.**

This authorization revokes all previous authorizations submitted by the applicant.

1 Your CGFNS ID number (if known)

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2 Your birth date (spell the month and enter numbers for the day and year)

Month	Day	Year

3 Your signature

Your signature

Do not print

Date _____ / _____ / _____
Month Day Year

Print your name

4 Your authorized agent (please print)

Your contact's name

The organization your contact is representing

Your contact's address

Day telephone

Fax

Evening telephone

Email



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CGFNS Mission

To serve the global community through programs and services that verify and promote the knowledge-based practice competency of health care professionals.



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