

# Hiring Temporary Nursing Staff: Self-assessment Questionnaire

The following tool is designed to help healthcare organizations hire and vet agency and traveling nurses, prepare them for the clinical setting, and track and document their onboarding progress over the critical first weeks of employment.

Requirement	Yes	No	Action Plan
<b>Application essentials:</b>			
1. Do applicants for temporary nursing positions complete, sign and date a full application versus an abbreviated format?			
2. Does the application elicit information necessary to determine whether the nurse can perform the essential job functions, such as education, certifications and past employment?			
3. Does the application contain a comprehensive checklist of the nurse's core skills and clinical proficiencies?			
4. Does the application include a statement authorizing the organization to contact previous employers and professional references regarding past performance in both full-time and temporary positions?			
5. Does the application clearly state that providing false or misleading information is grounds for immediate termination?			
6. Does the application note the nurse will be an "at-will" employee subject to termination at any time, if applicable?			
<b>Vetting prospective hires:</b>			
1. Does the application authorize in writing an inquiry into the agency or traveling nurse's history - criminal or otherwise?			
2. Are criminal background checks conducted by representatives of the Human Resources department, according to state law?			
3. Is the nurse's history checked for motor vehicle citations, if applicable to the job description?			
4. Has the staffing agency or traveling nurse company been assigned responsibility, in writing, for performing the initial licensure and competence evaluation of prospective candidates?			

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5. Is a credentialing file prepared for the agency or traveling nurse that includes, at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed, dated and completed application?</li> <li>• Signed statement that the nurse will abide by the organization's policies and procedures?</li> <li>• Verification of training and documentation of clinical references affirming the nurse's competency?</li> <li>• Proof of state licensure?</li> <li>• Verification of current certifications and memberships in professional organizations?</li> <li>• Continuing education achievements?</li> <li>• Health screening and physical examination findings?</li> <li>• Certificate of insurance and evidence of professional liability coverage in required amounts?</li> <li>• Job description and delineation of responsibilities?</li> </ul>			
6. Do hiring records reflect verification with previous employers regarding the nurse's reliability and integrity?			
<b>Contractual safeguards:</b>			
1. Does legal counsel negotiate and review contracts with staffing and traveling nurse agencies?			
2. Do contracts include basic and customary provisions, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal names of the parties to the agreement?</li> <li>• Effective date of the contract?</li> <li>• Terms of the contract, termination date and/or renewal clause?</li> <li>• Fee structure and arrangements?</li> <li>• Performance and quality expectations?</li> <li>• Licensing and certification requirements?</li> <li>• Process for amending the contract?</li> <li>• Remedies for non-performance of the contract terms?</li> <li>• Confidentiality requirements and access to records?</li> <li>• Insurance requirements and indemnification/hold harmless provisions?</li> <li>• Signature of appropriate parties?</li> </ul>			
3. Do contracts clearly state who the "employer" is on issues of liability?			
4. Do contracts define "employee" and avoid any appearance of an agency status?			
5. Do contracts undergo regular review based upon the terms and length of assignment?			

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6. Are contract requirements consistent with the nurse's written job description regarding essential job functions, competency-based performance requirements and the skills necessary to complete those requirements?			
7. Is the contract and job description reviewed with the nurse to underscore expectations?			
<b>Before the first day:</b>			
1. Is the agency or traveling nurse welcomed via a personal letter or e-mail message, and is an onboarding schedule attached?			
2. Is the onboarding experience described in writing, including goals, methods and approximate timelines?			
3. Are the name and telephone number of the assigned supervisor and peer mentor provided in writing should questions arise prior to the start date?			
4. Is a link provided to the organization's website, directing the nurse to a welcome video and "fast facts" section regarding orientation essentials?			
5. Is important information provided via a dedicated webpage for agency or traveling nurses, containing employment information, announcements and retrievable forms?			
6. Is a copy of the employee handbook or access to its online equivalent provided?			
7. Is a checklist prepared to streamline preparations for first-day paperwork, including such essentials as tax forms, benefit enrollment, payroll processing information and employee-behavior agreements?			
<b>Onboarding:</b>			
1. Are policies and procedures maintained in a comprehensive and up-to-date digital manual?			
2. Is the agency or traveling nurse asked to review essential policies and procedures before the onboarding experience, in order to be prepared to discuss them?			
3. Does the nurse sign a form endorsing a commitment to comply with the organization's policies and procedures?			
4. Is attendance at mandatory onboarding sessions documented?			
5. Are general job expectations communicated and answers provided to any questions that have arisen?			

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6. Is a basic understanding of important organizational facts and rules verified in writing, such as how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage emergencies?</li> <li>• Invoke the chain of command?</li> <li>• Locate resources?</li> <li>• Report safety-related events?</li> </ul>			
7. Does the onboarding experience reinforce healthy communication and problem-solving techniques?			
8. Does the nurse complete an onboarding experience questionnaire?			
<b>Peer monitoring:</b>			
1. Is the peer monitoring role discussed with the agency or traveling nurse, emphasizing that it serves as a link between the nurse and the organization?			
2. Are short-term performance goals set, and are issues and concerns in need of resolution clearly defined?			
3. Is a plan developed to ensure acquisition of necessary skills and training within a reasonable time frame?			
4. Has the nurse been introduced to all co-workers?			
5. Does the peer mentor meet with the nurse on a daily basis for short periods, such as 15-minute check-ins?			
6. Is a formal performance review held, examining achievement of short- and longer-term goals, adjusting these goals as necessary?			
7. Are three accomplishments for praise and three areas for improvement identified during the review, and is an action plan created?			
8. Does the nurse provide feedback regarding personal job satisfaction and areas where onboarding has been deficient?			

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