This update presents data for the 84 vocational nursing (VN) programs and the military-based VN program[1] in Texas during the 2024 reporting year, including:

- 80 generic programs
- 4 Multiple Entry/Exit Programs (MEEPs)

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) collected data using the 2024 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 1, 2024. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2023-2024 (September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024) unless otherwise noted. TCNWS collaborated with the BON in the design and dissemination of the survey.

[1] Data collected from the military-based VN program were analyzed separately and can be found on page 6. Data on VN programs that offer options for high school students were analyzed separately and can be found in Vocational Nursing Education for High School Students (https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-center-nursing-workforce-studies/nursing-education-reports).

Vocational Nursing Programs Admissions

Table 1 lists data on qualified applications[2] and admissions to VN programs from 2015 through 2024.

Table 1. Qualified Applications, Admissions, and Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission (QANA), 2015-2024

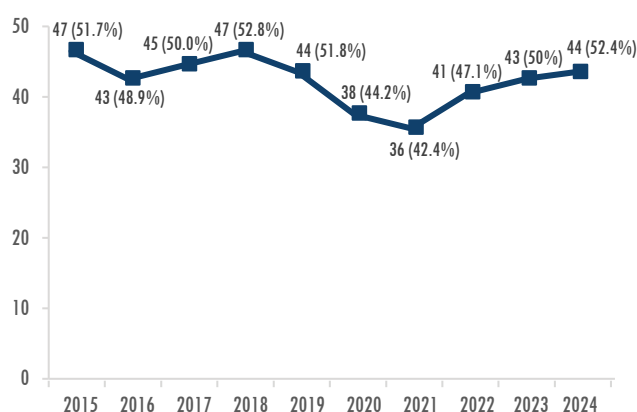| Year	Seats for New Students[3,4]	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	QANA (%)
2015 (n=91)	8,719	9,305	7,698	1,607 (17.3%)
2016 (n=88)	7,770	7,964	6,956	1,008 (12.7%)
2017 (n=90)	8,220	8,843	7,693	1,150 (13.0%)
2018 (n=89)	7,483	8,433	7,174	1,259 (14.9%)
2019 (n=85)	7,165	8,240	6,819	1,421 (11.4%)
2020 (n=86)	7,438	8,098	6,881	1,217 (15.0%)
2021 (n=85)	6,763	8,237	6,713	1,524 (18.5%)
2022 (n=87)	6,096	7,806	6,312	1,494 (19.1%)
2023 (n=86)	6,424	7,812	6,811	1,001 (12.8%)
2024 (n=84)	7,083	7,222	6,170	1,052 (14.6%)

Note: n = number of programs

- Seats for new students[3,4] increased by 659 (10.3%) between 2023 and 2024.
- There were 7,222 qualified applications in 2024, a decrease of 590 (7.6%) from 2023.[5]

Offered Admission

6,170 qualified applications were offered admission in AY 2023-2024. This was a 9.4% decrease from the previous academic year.

Figure 1 shows the number and percentage of programs that offered admission to all applications from 2015 to 2024. In 2024, 44 (52.4%) programs offered admission to all qualified applications. This number has increased since 2021.

Figure 1. Programs Offering Admission to All Qualified Applications, 2015-2024

Of the 44 programs that offered admission to all applications:

- 26 (59.1%) were in metropolitan non-border counties.
- 32 (72.7%) were community, state, or technical colleges.
- 42 (95.5%) were generic vocational nursing programs.

Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission

The 40 programs that did not accept all qualified applications were asked to rank the importance of reasons why qualified applications were not accepted. Table 2 presents the rank and the mean rank score assigned by programs. A lower rank score indicates a higher level of importance.

Table 2. Rank Score Reasons Programs Did Not Accept Qualified Applications, 2024

Reason Qualified Applications Not Accepted	Rank	Mean Rank Score
Lack of clinical space	1	2.9
Limited classroom space	2	3.4
Other	3	3.6
Lack of qualified faculty applicants for budgeted positions	4	4.1
Lack of budgeted faculty positions	5	4.1
Delays in hiring faculty	6	4.4
High faculty turnover	7	5.0

Programs that ranked lack of clinical space as the first or second most important reason for not offering admission to all applications cited reasons such as competition between other programs (7 programs) and preference given to professional nursing students (5 programs).

- Programs that ranked 'other' reasons as the first or second most important reason for not offering admission to all applications cited reasons such as students admitted to and choose the ADN program route (8 programs) and financial or personal barriers (3 programs).
- In 2023, the highest weighted reasons why qualified applications were not accepted was a lack of qualified faculty applicants and a lack of budgeted faculty positions.

[2]Qualified applications refer to applications submitted, not individual applicants, since candidates for admission may apply to more than one nursing program.

[3]In previous reports seats for new students was reported as enrollment capacity.

[4]Per the survey operational definition, seats for new students refers to the maximum number of seats for new students that a program can enroll in any given admission period. Seats for new students may be limited by Board of Nursing rules or logistical concerns (faculty size, classroom space, etc.).
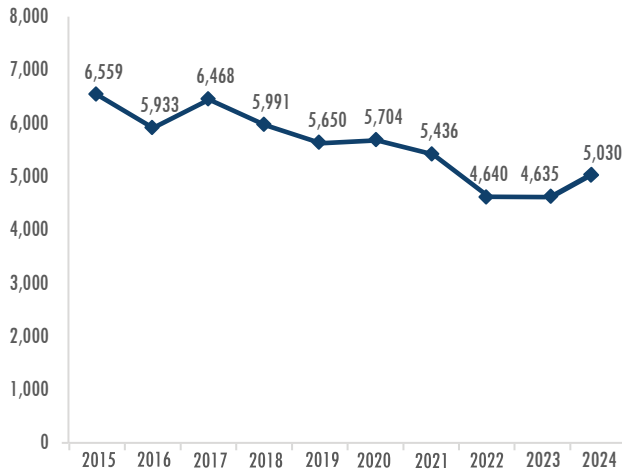
[5]Candidates for admission may apply and be accepted by more than one nursing program; therefore, these data may represent some duplicated counts of individuals.

Figure 2 and Table 3 show the yearly change in the number of newly enrolled students from 2015 to 2024. Newly enrolled students are those who were offered admission and decided to register and enroll in the program.

Figure 2. Newly Enrolled Students, 2015-2024

- From 2023 to 2024, the number of newly enrolled students increased by 8.5%, from 4,635 to 5,030.

- 2024 is the first year since 2020 that there was an increase in the number of newly enrolled VN students.

Table 3. Change in Newly Enrolled Students, 2015-2024

Year	Newly Enrolled Students	% Annual Enrollment Change
2015	6,559	-9.2%
2016	5,933	-9.5%
2017	6,468	9.0%
2018	5,991	-7.4%
2019	5,650	-5.7%
2020	5,704	1.0%
2021	5,436	-4.7%
2022	4,640	-14.6%
2023	4,635	-0.1%
2024	5,030	8.5%

Seats Unfilled

Table 4 shows the number of seats for new students and the number of newly enrolled students from 2015 to 2024.

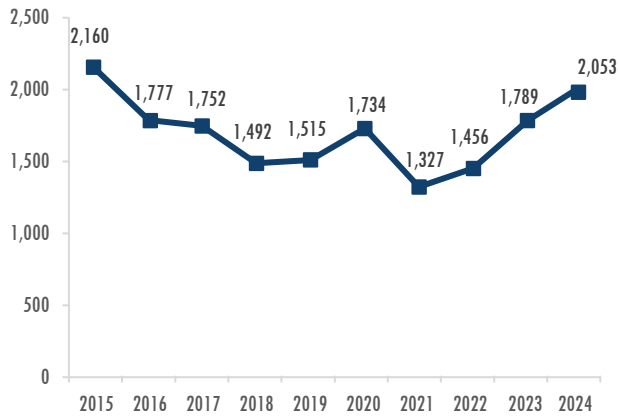- 29.0% of seats for new students remained unfilled in 2024.

Table 4. Seats for New Students and Newly Enrolled Students, 2015-2024

Year	Seats for New Students	Newly Enrolled Vocational Nursing Students	Seats Unfilled (%)
2015	8,719	6,559	24.8%
2016	7,770	5,993	22.9%
2017	8,220	6,468	21.3%
2018	7,483	5,991	19.9%
2019	7,165	5,650	21.1%
2020	7,438	5,704	23.3%
2021	6,763	5,436	19.6%
2022	6,096	4,640	23.9%
2023	6,424	4,635	27.8%
2024	7,083	5,030	29.0%

Figure 3 shows the number of unfilled seats for new students from 2015 to 2024.

- Between 2023 and 2024, the number of unfilled seats for new students has increased by 14.8%.

- The number of unfilled seats for new students has increased by 5.0% from 2015 to 2024.

Figure 3. Total Unfilled Seats for New Students, 2015-2024

Of the 84 VN programs, only 11 reported 0 seats unfilled.

- Seats unfilled ranged from 1 to 518.

- The median number of seats unfilled was 8.

41 programs reported more than 8 seats unfilled. Of these 41 programs:

- 32 (78.0%) reported fewer qualified applications than seats for new students.

- 9 (22.0%) reported more qualified applications than seats for new students.

Of the 9 programs that reported more than 8 seats unfilled and more qualified applicants than seats for new students:

- 3 (33.3%) programs reported that their number of students offered admission was less than their number of seats for new students.

- 5 (55.6%) programs reported that their number of students offered admission was more than their number of seats for new students.

- 1 (11.1%) program reported that their number of students offered admission was the same as their number of seats for new students.

Total Enrollment in Vocational Nursing Programs

Table 5 presents the breakdown of total enrollment by program type and institution type[6] for AY 2023-2024.

- 99.2% of enrolled students were in generic programs.

- 0.8% of enrolled students were in MEEPs[7] during AY 2023-2024.

- 58.8% of all enrolled students were enrolled in community, state, or technical colleges.

- 41.2% of students were enrolled in private/ independent institutions for higher education, even though these represented only 19.0% of VN programs.

Table 5. VN Program Enrollment by Institution Type, AY 2023-2024

Program Type	Institution Type	Enrollment	% of Total Enrollment
Generic	Community, State, or Technical College	4,424	58.0%
	Private/Independent Institutions for Higher Education	3,140	41.2%
MEEP	Community, State, or Technical College	62	0.8%
Total	All Settings	7,626	100.0%

Figure 4 shows the trend in total VN enrollment since 2015.

- Total VN student enrollment increased by 1.6% since 2023.

- The total number of students enrolled in VN programs decreased by 12.4% between 2015 and 2024.

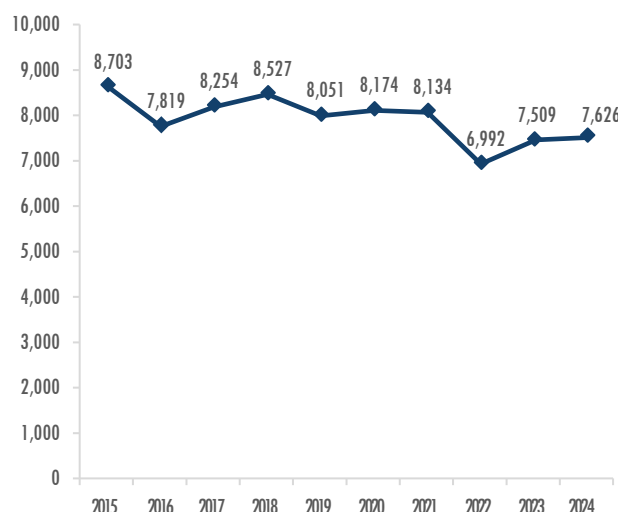**Figure 4. Total VN Enrollment, 2015-2024**

[6]Institution types are classified by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in their program inventories list.

[7]Multiple Entry-Exit Program is an approved exit option which is a part of a professional nursing education program designed for students to complete course work and apply to take the NCLEX-PN® examination after they have successfully met all requirements needed for the examination.

Graduates from Vocational Nursing Programs

Figure 5 and Table 6 (page 5) show the change in the number of VN graduates since 2015.

- A total of 3,298 students graduated in 2024, an increase of 2.5% from 2023.

- The total number of VN graduates decreased by 27.5% between 2015 and 2024.

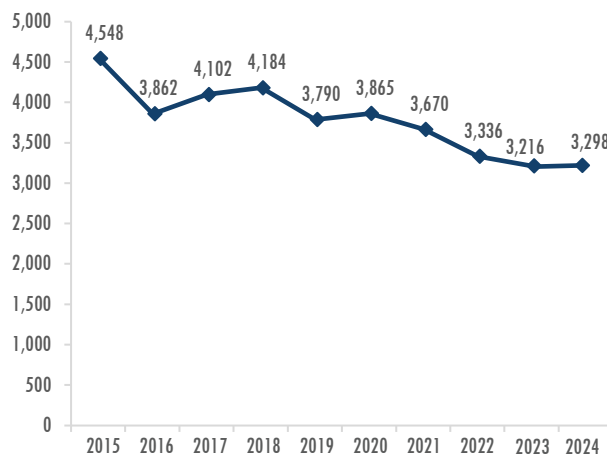**Figure 5. VN Graduates, 2015-2024**

Table 6. Change in VN Graduates, 2015-2024

Year	Graduates	% Annual Change in Graduates
2015	4,548	-1.6%
2016	3,862	-15.1%
2017	4,102	6.2%
2018	4,184	2.0%
2019	3,790	-9.4%
2020	3,865	2.0%
2021	3,670	-5.0%
2022	3,336	-9.1%
2023	3,216	-3.6%
2024	3,298	2.5%

VN graduates by program and institution type are shown in Table 7.

- 98.6% of students graduated from generic programs.
- 45 students (1.4%) graduated from MEEPs.
- 69.9% of total graduates were from community, state, or technical colleges.
- Private/independent institutions for higher education graduated 30.1% of VN students during the reporting period.

Table 7. VN Graduates by Institution Type, 2024

Program Type	Institution Type	Graduates	% of Total Graduates
Generic	Community, State, or Technical College	2,260	68.5%
	Private/Independent Institutions for Higher Education	993	30.1%
MEEP	Community, State, or Technical College	45	1.4%
Total	All Settings	3,298	100%

Barriers to Increasing Graduates

Programs were asked to list barriers that they faced in increasing VN graduates in AY 2023-2024. 63 programs identified having barriers to increasing the number of graduates.[8] Some of these barriers included:

- Students exiting programs due to financial or personal extenuating circumstances (8 programs)
- Lack of qualified applicants (11 programs)
- Lack of readiness in student's abilities to be prepared, engaged, and effective in learning (9 programs)
- Lack of faculty (8 programs)

Level of Difficulty for Graduates to Find a Job in Nursing

Programs were asked to rank the perceived difficulty their graduates had with respect to finding a job in nursing.

- Most VN programs perceived that it was easy or very easy for their graduates to find jobs (97.6%).
- One program perceived that it was neither difficult, nor easy for their graduates to find jobs.
- One program selected that it was difficult or very difficult for their graduates to find jobs. In 2023 no programs selected that it was difficult or very difficult for their graduates to find jobs.

Programs were asked to select reasons why graduates had difficulty finding jobs:

- 9 programs selected that graduates want to work specific hours or in a specific setting.
- 2 programs selected that employers want applicants with more experience.

[8]Programs could list more than one barrier to increasing the number of graduates.

Table 8 lists data on qualified applications[9] and admissions to the military-based VN program from 2015 to 2024.

- There were 569 qualified applications in 2024, an increase of 43.3% from 2023.

- All qualified applications were offered admission in 2024.

Newly Enrolled Students, Total Enrollment, and Graduates

Table 9 reports the total number of newly enrolled students, total enrollment, and graduates for the military-based VN program from 2015 to 2024.

- There were 569 newly enrolled students, which was also the number of total enrolled students for the military-based VN program.

- In 2024, there were 184 graduates. This represented a 28.1% decrease in graduates from 2023.

[4]Per the survey operational definition, seats for new students refers to the maximum number of seats for new students that a program can enroll in any given admission period. Seats for new students may be limited by Board of Nursing rules or logistical concerns (faculty size, classroom space, etc.).

[5]Candidates for admission may apply and be accepted by more than one nursing program; therefore, these data may represent some duplicated counts of individuals.

[9]Qualified applications refer to applications submitted, not individual applicants, since candidates for admission may apply to more than one nursing program.

Table 8. Qualified Applications, Admissions, and QANA for Military-Based Program, 2015-2024

Year	Seats for New Students[4,5]	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	QANA (%)
2015 (n=1)	610	457	457	0 (0%)
2016 (n=1)	561	560	560	0 (0%)
2017 (n=1)	631	566	566	0 (0%)
2018 (n=1)	620	558	558	0 (0%)
2019 (n=1)	640	590	590	0 (0%)
2020 (n=1)	650	458	458	0 (0%)
2021 (n=1)	707	662	662	0 (0%)
2022 (n=1)	668	259	259	0 (0%)
2023 (n=1)	700	397	397	0 (0%)
2024 (n=1)	700	569	569	0 (0%)

Note: n = number of programs

Table 9. Newly Enrolled Students, Total Enrollment, and Graduates for Military-Based Program, 2015-2024

Year	Newly Enrolled Students	Total Enrollment	Graduates
2015	457	457	352
2016	560	560	469
2017	566	566	375
2018	558	558	355
2019	590	590	333
2020	458	458	364
2021	662	662	372
2022	259	259	402
2023	397	397	256
2024	569	569	184