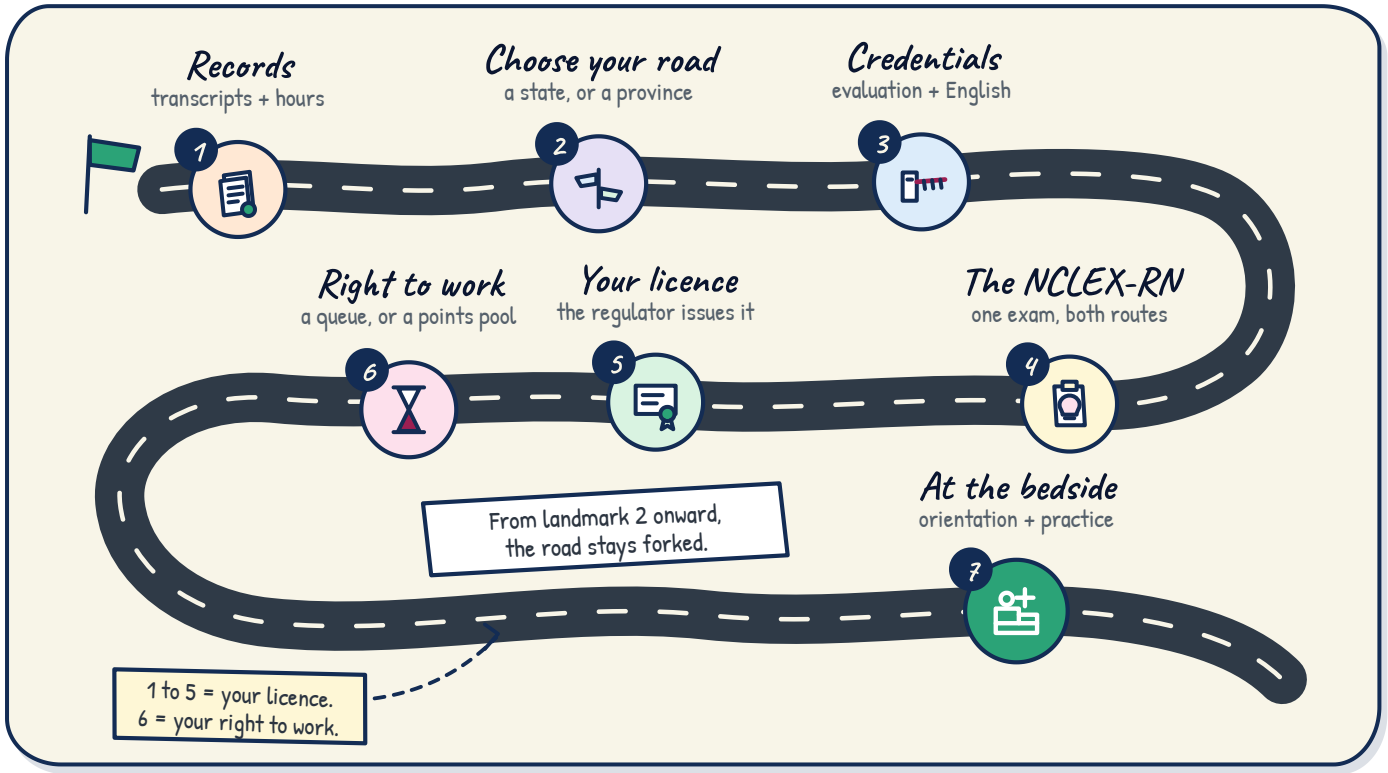
Seven landmarks. One exam. Two destinations.



A sketch-map of the road from an Indian nursing register to a US or Canadian one — for B.Sc and GNM graduates, staff nurses in India, and anyone in the Gulf or the UK planning the next move.



Read the whole map with this in mind

Your licence and your right to work are two different processes, run by two different authorities, on two different clocks. Neither waits for the other — so start both the day you can.

1 Records

Nothing further down this road moves faster than your slowest document. Evaluators count hours, not course names — a B.Sc reads as a US BSN, a GNM reads as a diploma, and your own marksheets decide which jurisdictions are even open to you.

- Council registration — RN + RM
- Sealed transcripts from the college
- Theory + clinical hours per subject
- Letters naming your duties, not titles
- One spelling of your name

Roadside sign: your paperwork travels slower than you do.



2 Choose your road

United States

A **state** licenses you — fifty boards, fifty rule sets, no national licence. Ask each one: does it take your qualification, does it want an **SSN you don't have yet**, and which reports does it name?

Canada

A **province** licenses you, usually after a central assessment. Quebec, Yukon, NWT and Nunavut go their own way, and BCCNM no longer requires an NNAS report — though it still accepts one.[8,9]

Roadside sign: fifty boards, fifty rulebooks — and no group chat between them.



3 Credentials & English — the toll gate

Order exactly what your board or regulator names. The wrong report gets bought twice.

CES Professional Report — TruMerit, formerly CGFNS.[3] The one US boards name most.

NNAS Advisory Report — Canada's version. Source verification is the slow bit, and it expires.[8]

English — IELTS, OET, PTE or TOEFL. Minimums vary, and **at-home versions don't count**.

VisaScreen — US federal, under 8 CFR 212.15. Valid five years.[4,5]

Roadside sign: this toll gate takes documents, not cash.



4 The NCLEX-RN — the only landmark that tests you

One exam licenses RNs in the US and, since 2015, in every Canadian province and territory except Quebec.[1,2] Your board confirms eligibility → **Pearson VUE** seats you, India included → the **board** issues the licence. Never Pearson.

- Clinical judgment, not recall
- Unfolding case studies
- Matrix, cloze, drag-and-drop, highlight
- Computer-adaptive — no two papers alike

Mind the ATT window. Your Authorization to Test **cannot be extended** — don't request it until your study plan is done and your leave approved.

Roadside sign: it doesn't want your memory. It wants your judgment.



5 Your licence — passing isn't the same as licensed

United States

The board issues it. Many need an **SSN or ITIN** first — **testing** without one is not the same as being **licensed** without one. **New York** and **Illinois** are the boards most often named as reachable without an SSN; confirm it with the board itself before you pay.

Canada

The regulator clears you to test, asks for **bridging or a practice assessment** first, or refuses. Final registration can carry its own conditions.

Roadside sign: the hard part is behind you. The slow part isn't.

6 The right to work — where the roads stop resembling each other

A queue, scored on where you were born

EB-3 is the staff-RN route: nurses sit in Group I of Schedule A, so the employer skips labour certification.[6] But visas are capped by country of birth — in September 2026 the EB-3 India date stood at **1 January 2014**.[7] H-1B rarely fits a staff nurse; TN is closed to Indians.

A points pool, scored on you

Express Entry runs healthcare rounds that clear below the general ones. Since **18 Feb 2026** you need twelve months of qualifying experience in the past three years, up from six; foreign experience counts.[10] Your code must match your **duties**, not your title.

Roadside sign: patience isn't tested on the NCLEX. It probably should be.

7 At the bedside

Orientation and preceptorship come first: you work alongside an assigned nurse before carrying a full load, and that stretch is where a licence turns into practice.

- Scope of practice shifts both ways
- Charting + barcode medication admin
- Structured handover, at speed
- Delegation + escalation are graded skills

Roadside sign: you made it. Now do all of it again in a new accent.

Potholes — where files lose months

- Picking a jurisdiction before reading your own marksheets
- Posting documents yourself
- Booking an at-home English test
- Requesting the ATT too early
- Letting an assessment report lapse
- Running licensure and immigration one after the other

Before you sign with any recruiter or employer

Ask who pays — ethical direct-hire employers carry the recruitment cost, not the nurse. **Ask what leaving costs** — repayment clauses, buyouts, minimum terms. **Never hand over your passport or originals.** And no agency controls a visa queue, whatever the brochure says.

Stop memorizing. Think like the NCLEX.

Six of the seven landmarks are paperwork. Landmark four asks whether you can reason through a deteriorating patient. Caden's NGN case practice and clinical judgment training are taught by US board certified physicians.

Start your NCLEX prep →

References

1. NCSBN, *NCLEX & Other Exams* — test plan, registration, ATT, international test centres, nclex.com · **2.** Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators, *Registered Nurses* — NCLEX-RN required in Canada with the exception of Quebec, ccrnr.ca · **3.** CGFNS International, *CGFNS International to Change its Name to TruMerit*, 25 February 2025, trumerit.org · **4.** USCIS, *Health Care Worker Certification* — occupations under 8 CFR 212.15(c), five-year validity per 212.15(n)(4), uscis.gov · **5.** eCFR, *8 CFR 212.15 — Certificates for foreign health care workers*, ecfr.gov · **6.** *20 CFR 656.15 — Applications for labor certification for Schedule A occupations* — Group I professional nurses, law.cornell.edu · **7.** US Department of State, *Visa Bulletin*, September 2026, travel.state.gov · **8.** National Nursing Assessment Service, *How to Apply* and *Expedited Service*, nnas.ca · **9.** BC College of Nurses and Midwives, *Internationally educated nurses — FAQ*, bccnm.ca · **10.** IRCC, *Express Entry: category-based selection*, canada.ca

Requirements, fees and queue positions change without notice. Treat the dated figures as of 18 September 2026 and confirm each at its source — and go direct to the bodies that govern your own file: your state board of nursing, your provincial regulator, the Indian Nursing Council and your State Nursing Council.