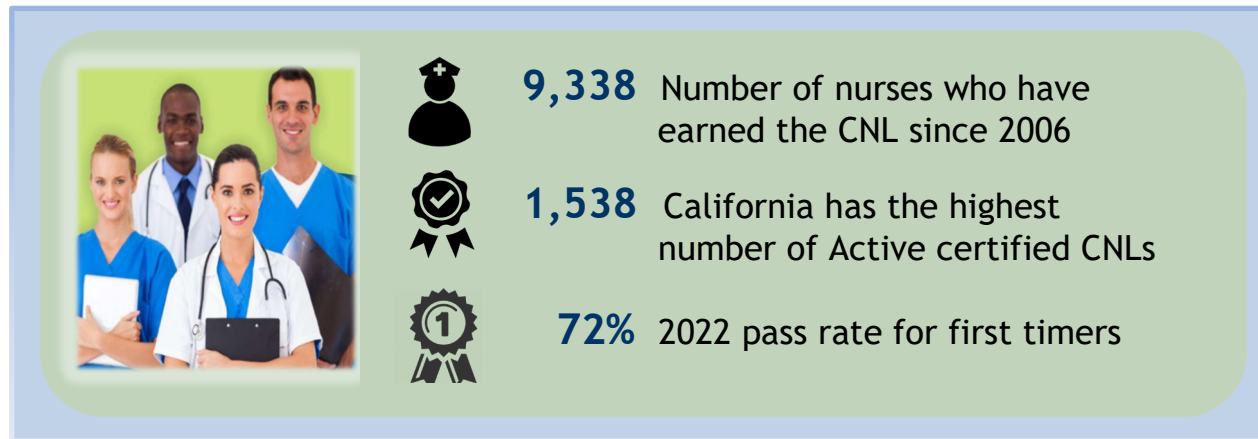# Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC)

CNC is the autonomous certifying arm of the AACN who oversees the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) certification activities to assure communities of interest that certificants have met accepted standards of practice.

9,338 Number of nurses who have earned the CNL since 2006

1,538 California has the highest number of Active certified CNLs

72% 2022 pass rate for first timers

CNL Certification Exam Data

The following table indicates the pass rate for the CNL exam administered during the 2022 testing cycles:

CNL EXAM ADMINISTERED January 1 – December 31, 2022	CANDIDATES (Students & Faculty)	STUDENTS ONLY	FACULTY ONLY
TOTAL CANDIDATES	674	666	8
PASSED	430	425	5
FAILED	244	241	3
PASS RATE	**64%**	**64%**	**63%**

Note: Aggregate data above includes candidates with outstanding RN license information who sat for the exam. These individuals are not officially certified and therefore the total number of candidates who have passed the exam may not reflect the actual number of certified CNLs.
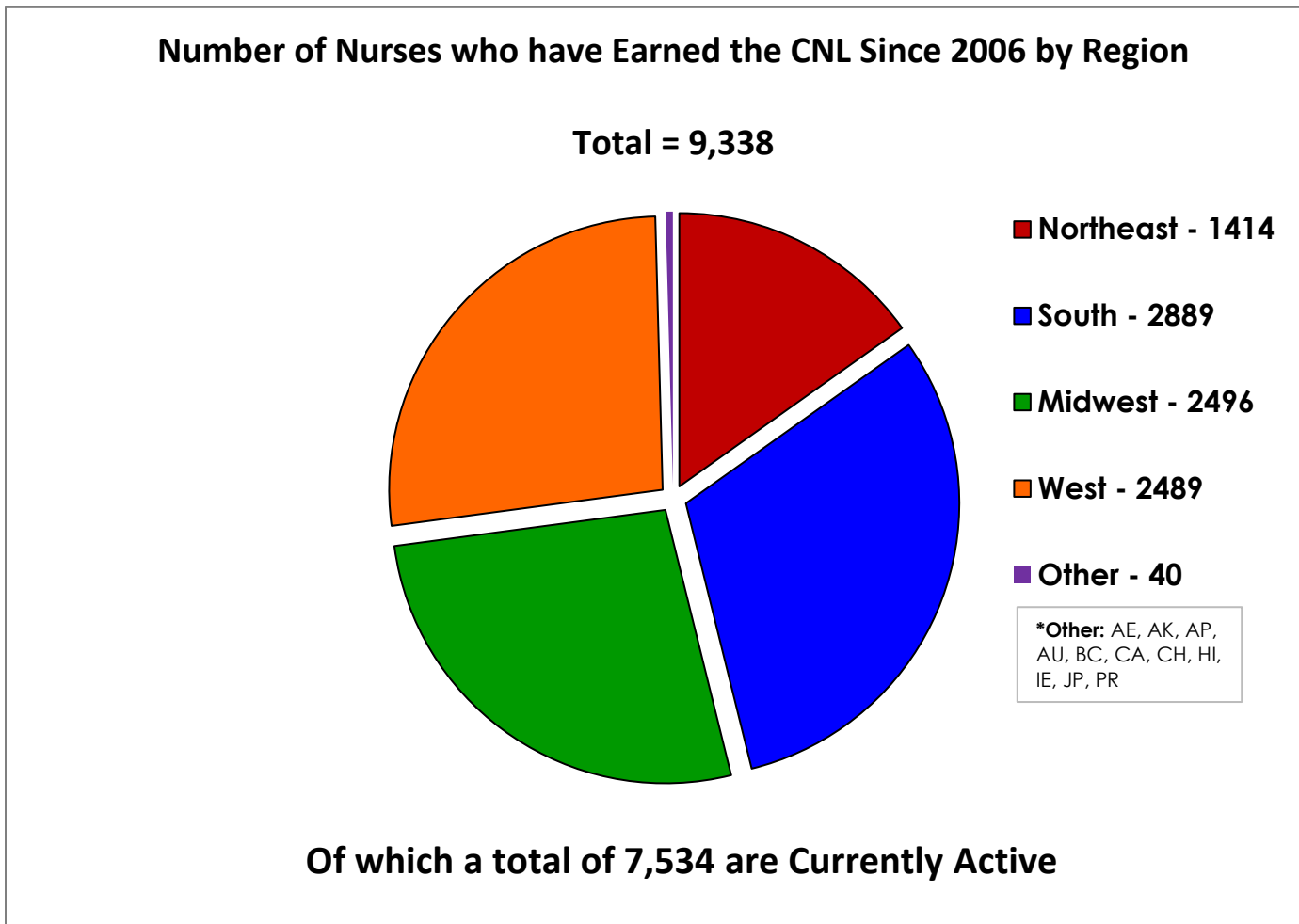
CNL Certification Exam Data (2010-2022)

The following table indicates the overall pass rate for the CNL exams administered since 2010.

YEAR	PASSED	FAILED	TOTAL CANDIDATES	PASS RATE
2010	406	191	597	68%
2011	488	242	730	67%
2012	597	225	822	73%
2013	646	249	895	72%
2014	711	241	952	75%
2015	709	371	1080	66%
2016	755	357	1112	68%
2017	761	324	1085	70%
2018	809	321	1130	72%
2019	858	317	1175	73%
2020	609	252	861	71%
2021	568	240	808	70%
2022	430	244	674	64%
OVERALL TOTALS	8347	3574	11921	70%

Note: Aggregate data includes candidates with outstanding RN license information who sat for the exam. These individuals are not officially certified and therefore the total number of candidates who have passed the exam may not reflect the actual number of certified CNLs.
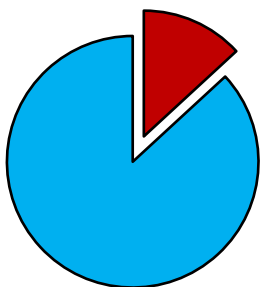
Earned CNL Certification Since 2006 by Region

Number of Nurses who have Earned the CNL Since 2006 by Region

Total = 9,338

- Northeast - 1414
- South - 2889
- Midwest - 2496
- West - 2489
- Other - 40

Note: The total indicates the number of individuals who have earned Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) Certification since 2006.

*Other: AE, AK, AP, AU, BC, CA, CH, HI, IE, JP, PR

Of which a total of 7,534 are Currently Active
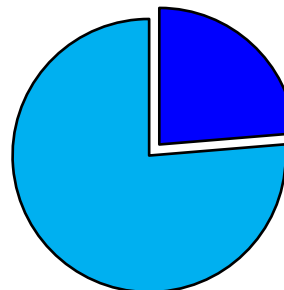
TRANSFORM. LEAD. EXPERIENCE.

Earned CNL Since 2006 - Northeast Region

- # Earned CNL in the Northeast - 1414
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 9338

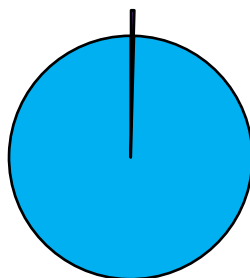**Northeast Region:** CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT

Earned CNL Since 2006 - South Region

- # Earned CNL in the South - 2899
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 9388

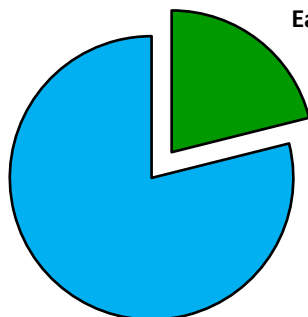**South Region:** AL, AR, DC, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV

Earned CNL Since 2006 - Other

- # Earned CNL in Other Areas - 40
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 9338

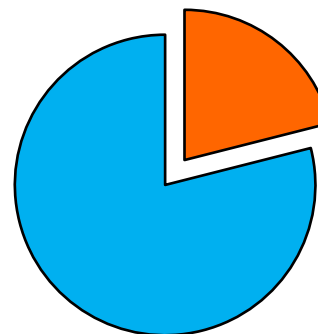**Other:** AE, AK, AP, AU, BC, CA, CH, HI, IE, JP, NZ, PR

Earned CNL Since 2006 - Midwest Region

- # Earned CNLs in the Midwest - 2496
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 9338

Midwest Region: IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI

Earned CNL Since 2006 - West Region

- # Earned CNL in the West - 2489
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 9338

West Region: AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY

Total Number of Nurses who are CNL certified

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	83	379	679	978	1390	1908	2508	3152	3834	4501	5069	6199	7036	7746	8353	8907	9338
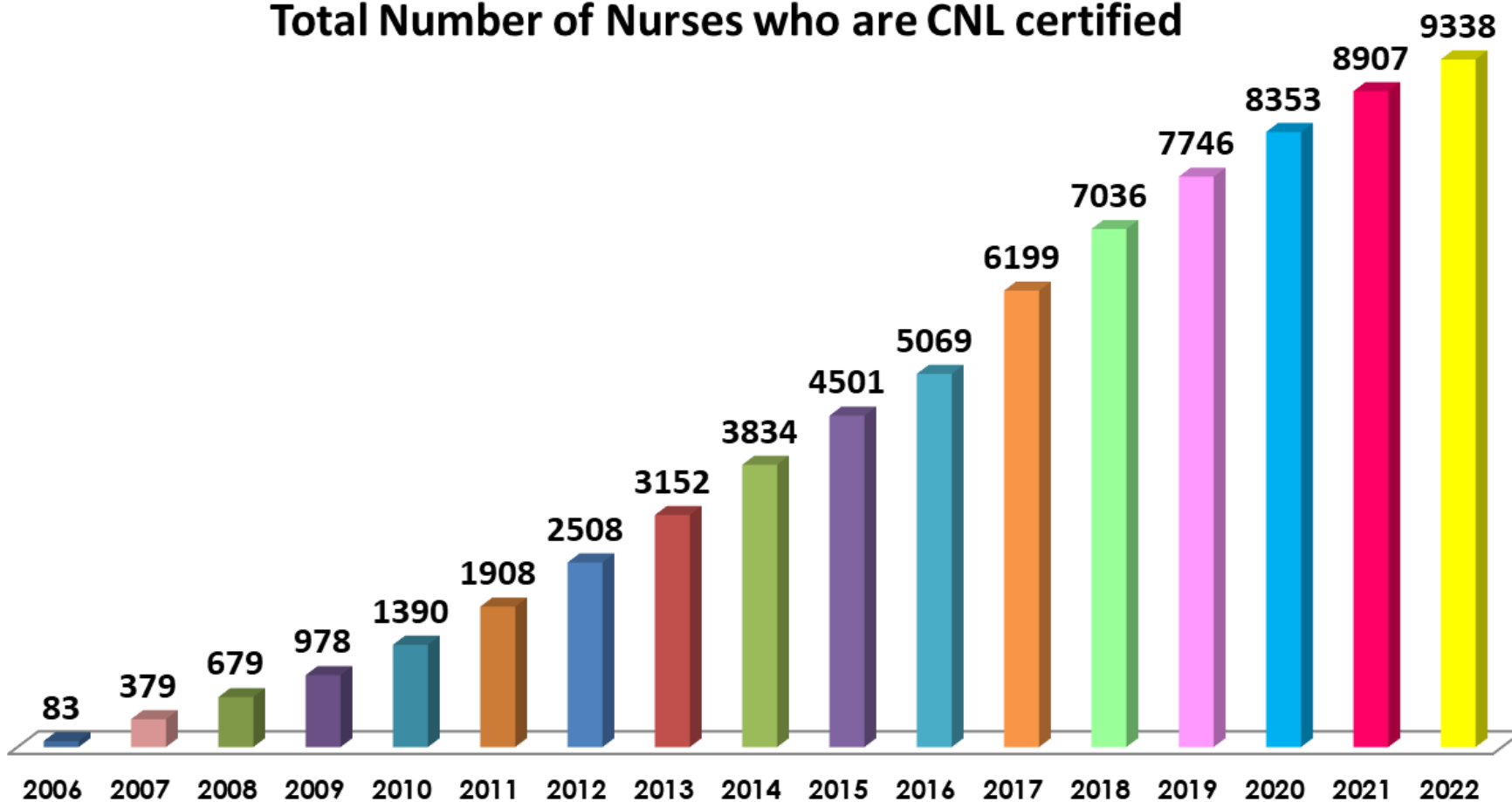
Earned CNL per Program Model as Provided by the Program Director since 2010

Model A = 3233
Model B = 44
Model C = 4874
Model D = 379
Model E = 54
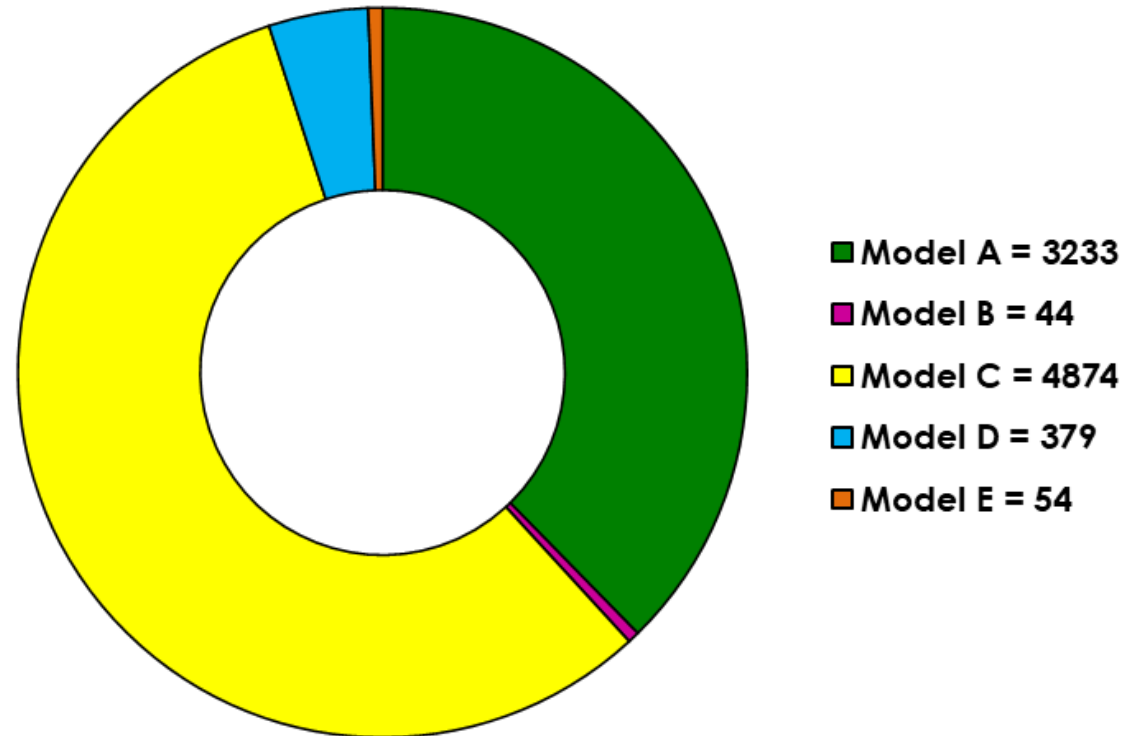
- **Model A:** Master's degree program designed for BSN graduates
- **Model B:** Master's degree program for BSN graduates that includes a post-BSN residency that awards master's credit
- **Model C:** Master's degree program designed for individuals with a baccalaureate degree in another discipline
- **Model D:** Master's degree program designed for ADN graduates (RN-MSN)
- **Model E:** Post-master's certificate program designed for individuals with a master's degree in nursing in another area of study

CNLs by Employment Setting and Type of Community

Acute Care Inpatient – **4,302 CNLs**

Other Healthcare Facilities – **1,343 CNLs***

School of Nursing/University Health – **880 CNLs**

Outpatient Clinic or Surgery – **643 CNLs**

Community/Public Health – **166 CNLs**

Nursing Home/Long-Term/Sub-Acute Care – **152 CNLs**

Home Health – **77 CNLs**

Physician Practice – **69 CNLs**

Hospice – **42 CNLs**

Nurse-Managed Practice – **37 CNLs**

URBAN – **4,618 CNLs**

SUBURBAN – **1,916 CNLs**

RURAL – **630 CNLs**

INTERNATIONAL – **23 CNLs**

***Other:** Addiction/Recovery Facility, Administration, Behavioral Health Center, Corporate Office, Correctional Facility, Emergency Room/Department, Infection Control, Informatics, Insurance Company, Medical-Surgical, Oncology, Orthopedics/Neuroscience, and Research.

Note: Totals are based on the number of nurses who earned the CNL since 2010

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LOCATION	ACTIVE CNLs	LOCATION	ACTIVE CNLs
Alabama - AL	209	Montana - MT	29
Alaska - AK	7	Nebraska - NE	24
Arizona - AZ	44	Nevada - NV	54
Arkansas - AR	24	New Hampshire - NH	307
California - CA	1985	New Jersey - NJ	267
Colorado - CO	69	New Mexico - NM	13
Connecticut - CT	177	New York - NY	172
Delaware - DE	9	North Carolina - NC	225
District of Columbia - DC	42	North Dakota - ND	1
Florida - FL	317	Ohio - OH	522
Georgia - GA	417	Oklahoma - OK	29
Hawaii - HI	11	Oregon - OR	108
Idaho - ID	11	Pennsylvania - PA	215
Illinois - IL	1068	Rhode Island - RI	18
Indiana - IN	13	South Carolina - SC	105
Iowa - IA	96	South Dakota - SD	22
Kansas - KS	38	Tennessee - TN	163
Kentucky - KY	71	Texas - TX	462
Louisiana - LA	33	Utah - UT	11
Maine - ME	52	Vermont - VT	29
Maryland - MD	352	Virginia - VA	404
Massachusetts - MA	177	Washington - WA	158
Michigan - MI	150	West Virginia - WV	6
Minnesota - MN	42	Wisconsin - WI	285
Mississippi - MS	31	Wyoming - WY	5
Missouri - MO	202	Other - PR, International	40

American Association
of Colleges *of* Nursing

CNL Clinical Nurse Leader ℠

Enrollment and Graduations of CNL Students 2005-2022
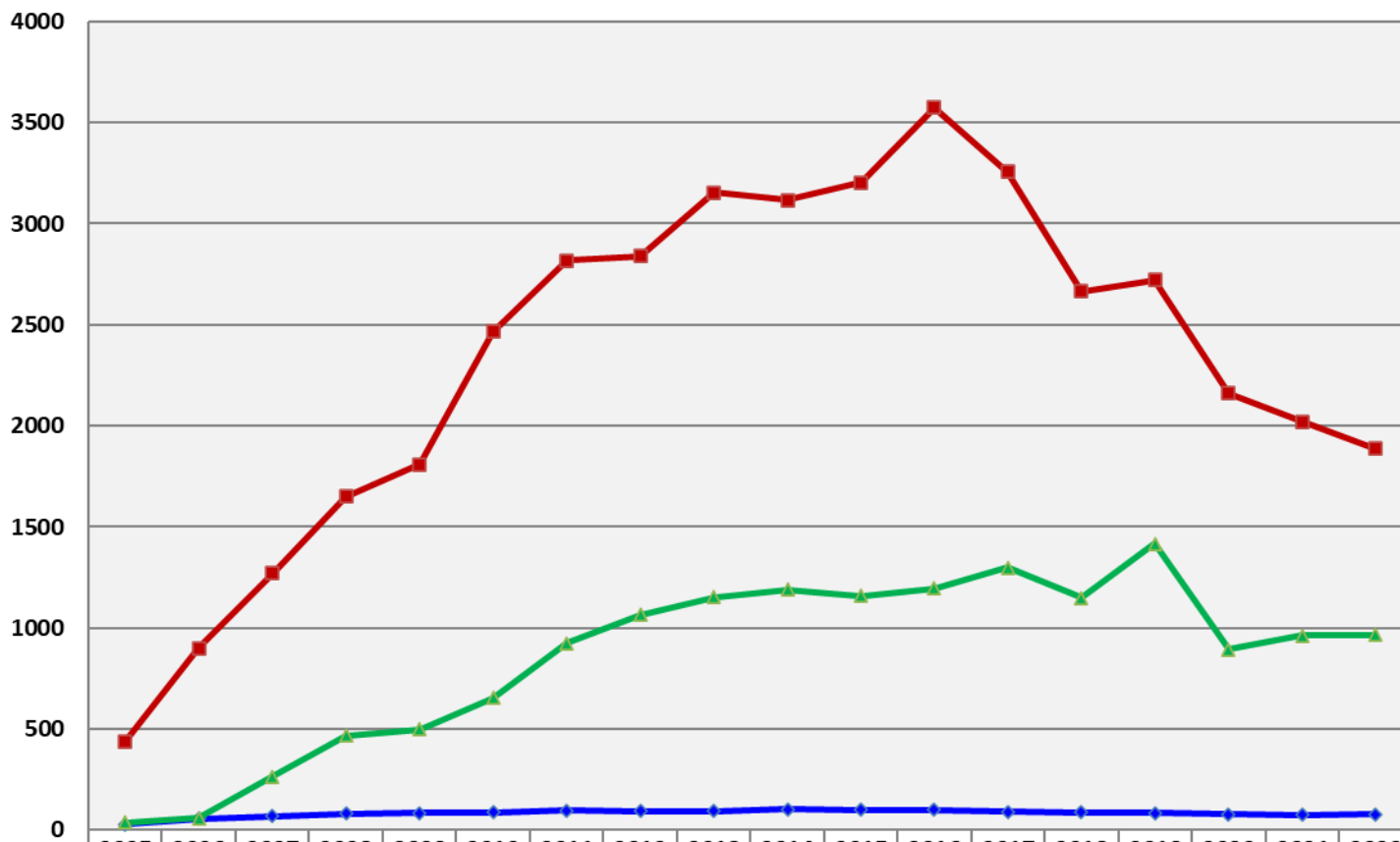
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
CNL Programs	28	56	70	81	83	88	97	93	95	102	100	99	91	87	84	77	76	77
Enrolled Students	440	899	1270	1650	1808	2465	2817	2838	3155	3115	3202	3574	3255	2664	2722	2162	2020	1888
Graduates	36	60	265	467	499	654	926	1066	1153	1190	1158	1194	1298	1148	1416	893	961	966

AACN Institutional Data System (IDS). 2021

Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC)   **Updated: February 6, 2023**