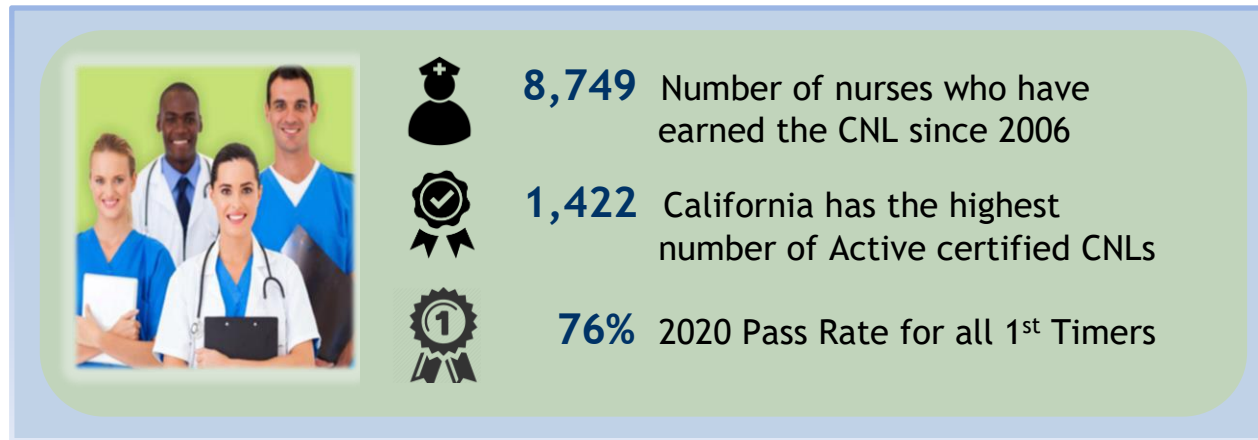# Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC)

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.

**8,749** Number of nurses who have earned the CNL since 2006

**1,422** California has the highest number of Active certified CNLs

**76%** 2020 Pass Rate for all 1st Timers

## CNL Certification Exam Data

The following table indicates the pass rate for the new CNL exam administered during the Winter, Spring, and Summer testing cycles:

| CNL EXAM ADMINISTERED (Winter, Spring, Summer) January 1 - August 15, 2021 | CANDIDATES (Students & Faculty) | CANDIDATES 1st TIME (Students & Faculty) | STUDENTS ONLY | 1st TIME STUDENTS | FACULTY ONLY | 1st TIME FACULTY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TOTAL CANDIDATES | 619 | 517 | 598 | 499 | 21 | 18 |
| PASSED | 425 | 385 | 409 | 371 | 16 | 14 |
| FAILED | 194 | 132 | 189 | 128 | 5 | 4 |
| PASS RATE | 69% | 74% | 68% | 74% | 76% | 78% |

**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.
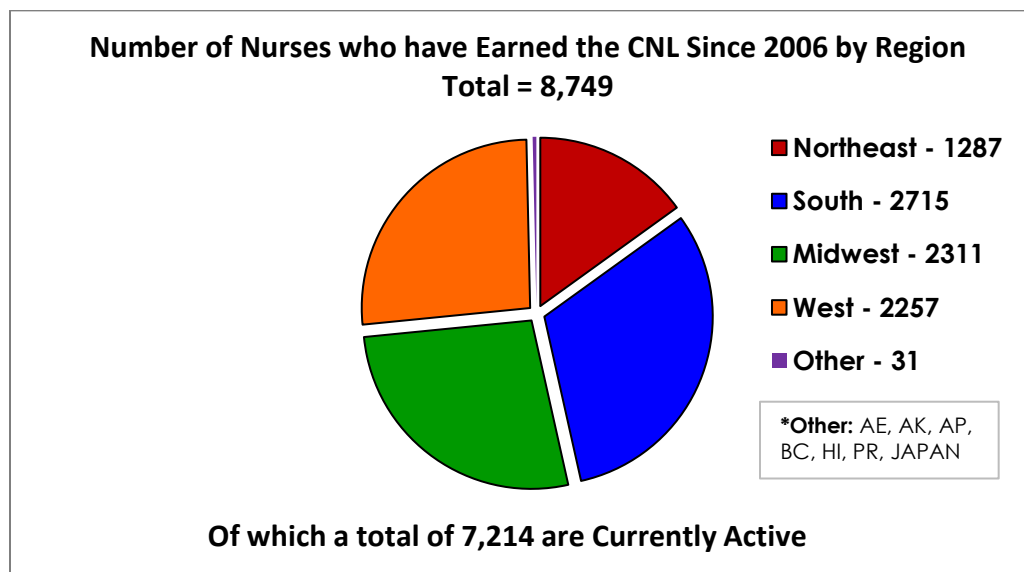
## CNL Certification Exam Data (2010-2020)

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% |
| OVERALL TOTALS | 7349 | 3090 | 10439 | 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 = 8,749**

- Northeast - 1287
- South - 2715
- Midwest - 2311
- West - 2257
- Other - 31

**\*Other:** AE, AK, AP, BC, HI, PR, JAPAN

**Of which a total of 7,214 are Currently Active**

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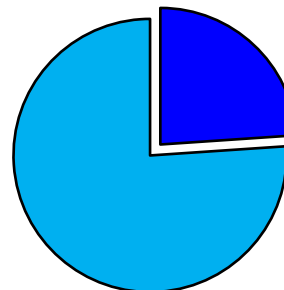
# TRANSFORM. LEAD. EXPERIENCE.

**Earned CNL Since 2006 - Northeast Region**
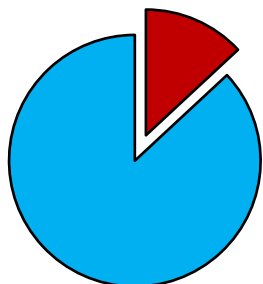
- # Earned CNL in the Northeast - 1317
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 8749

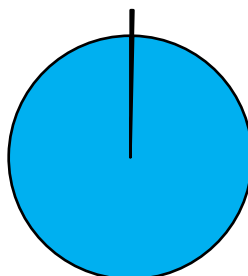**Northeast Region:** CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT

**Earned CNL Since 2006 - South Region**

- # Earned CNL in the South - 2751
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 8749

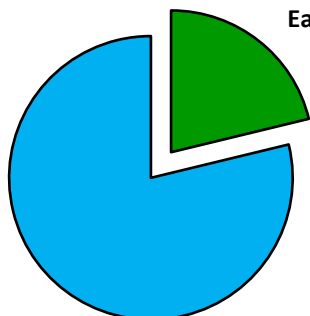**South Region:** AL, AR, DC, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV

**Earned CNL Since 2006 - Other**

- # Earned CNL in Other Areas - 31
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 8749

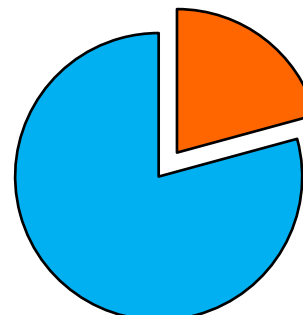**Other:** AE, AK, AP, AU, BC, HI, IRL, ON, PR, JAPAN

**Earned CNL Since 2006 - Midwest Region**

- # Earned CNLs in the Midwest - 2356
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 8749

**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 - 2293
- # Earned CNL Nationally - 8749

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

# Total Number of Nurses who are CNL certified

| Year | Total |
|------|-------|
| 2006 | 83 |
| 2007 | 379 |
| 2008 | 679 |
| 2009 | 978 |
| 2010 | 1390 |
| 2011 | 1908 |
| 2012 | 2508 |
| 2013 | 3152 |
| 2014 | 3834 |
| 2015 | 4501 |
| 2016 | 5069 |
| 2017 | 6199 |
| 2018 | 7036 |
| 2019 | 7746 |
| 2020 | 8353 |
| 2021 | 8749 |

**Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC)**

**Updated: September 1, 2021**
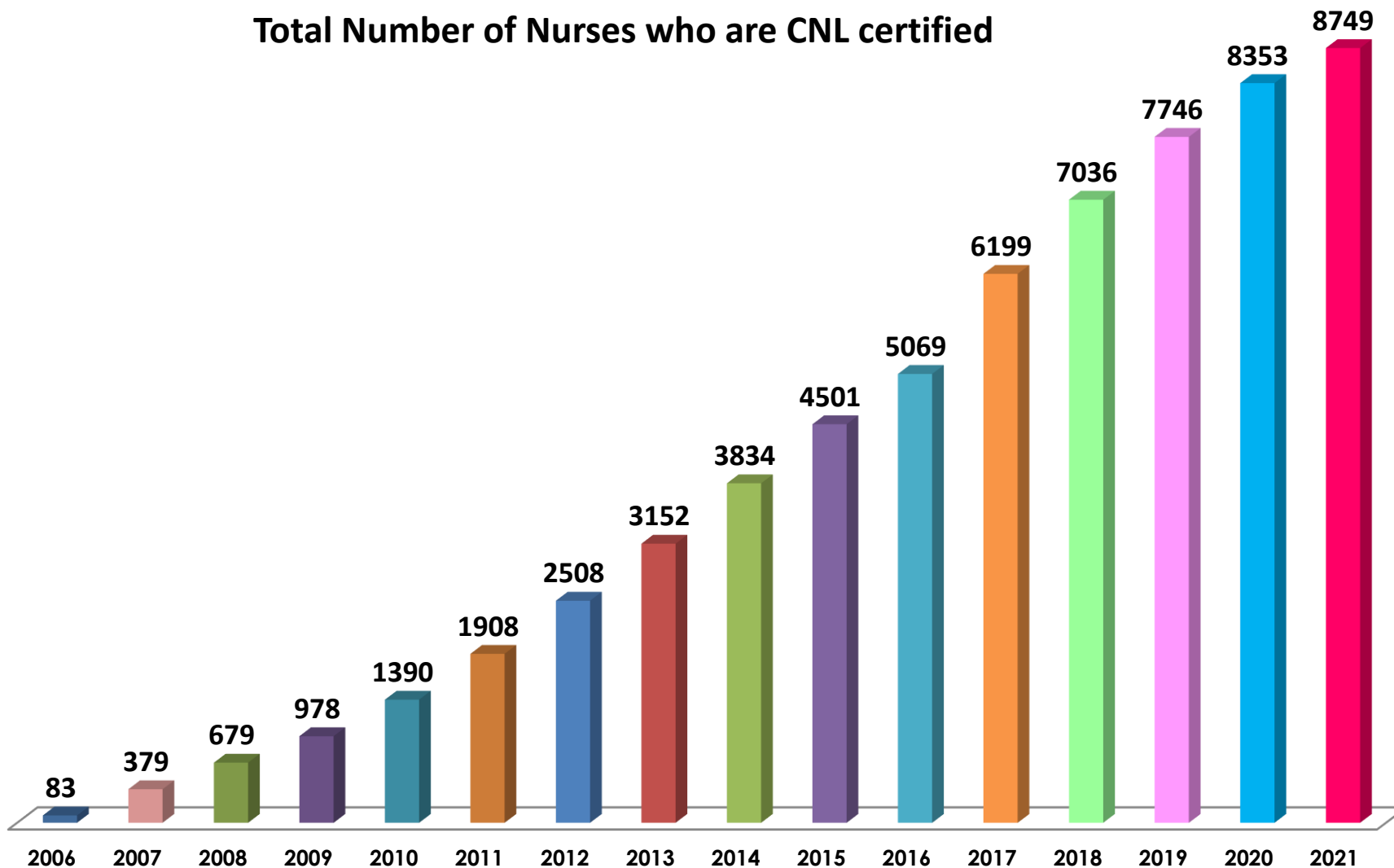
# Earned CNL per Program Model as Provided by the Program Director since 2010



- Model A = 3028
- Model B = 40
- Model C = 4528
- Model D = 355
- Model E = 53
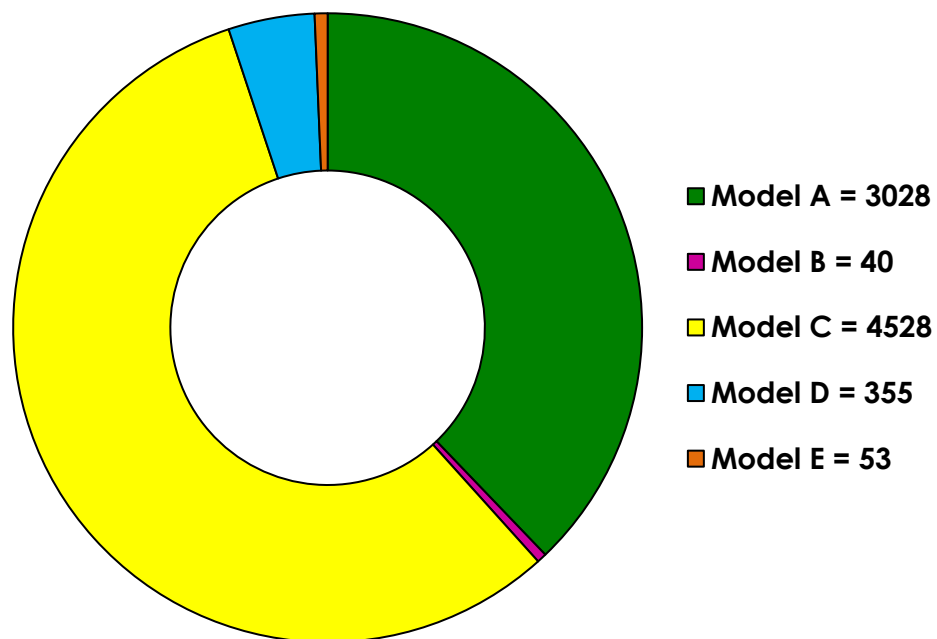
- **Model A:**  Master's degree program designed for BSN graduates
- **Model B:**  Master's degree program for BSN graduates that includes a post-BSN residency that awards master's credit
- **Model C:**  Master's degree program designed for individuals with a baccalaureate degree in another discipline
- **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 – **4,055 CNLs**

Other Healthcare Facilities – **1,087 CNLs***

School of Nursing/University Health – **763 CNLs**

Outpatient Clinic or Surgery – **531 CNLs**

Community/Public Health – **144 CNLs**

Nursing Home/Long-Term/Sub-Acute Care – **143 CNLs**

Home Health – **71 CNLs**

Physician Practice – **62 CNLs**

Hospice – **40 CNLs**

Nurse-Managed Practice – **33 CNLs**

URBAN – **4,245 CNLs**

SUBURBAN – **1,745 CNLs**

RURAL – **582 CNLs**

INTERNATIONAL – **22 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
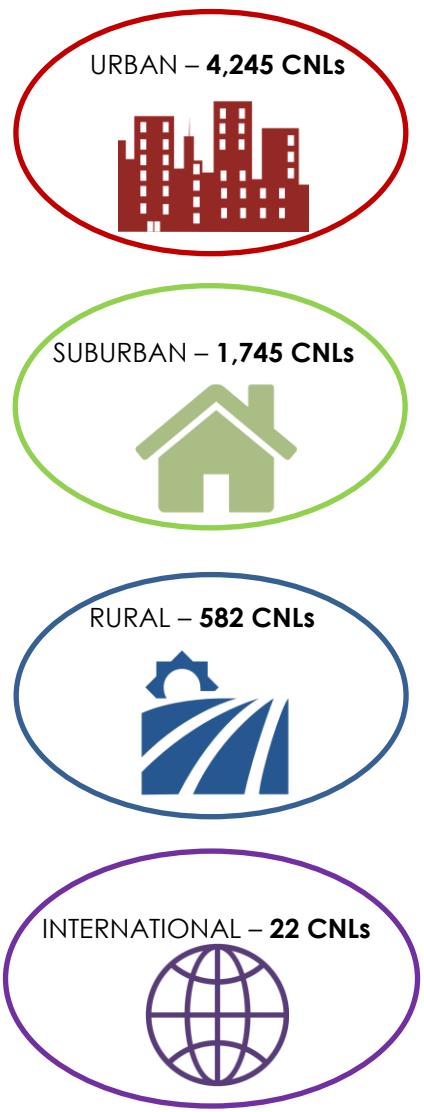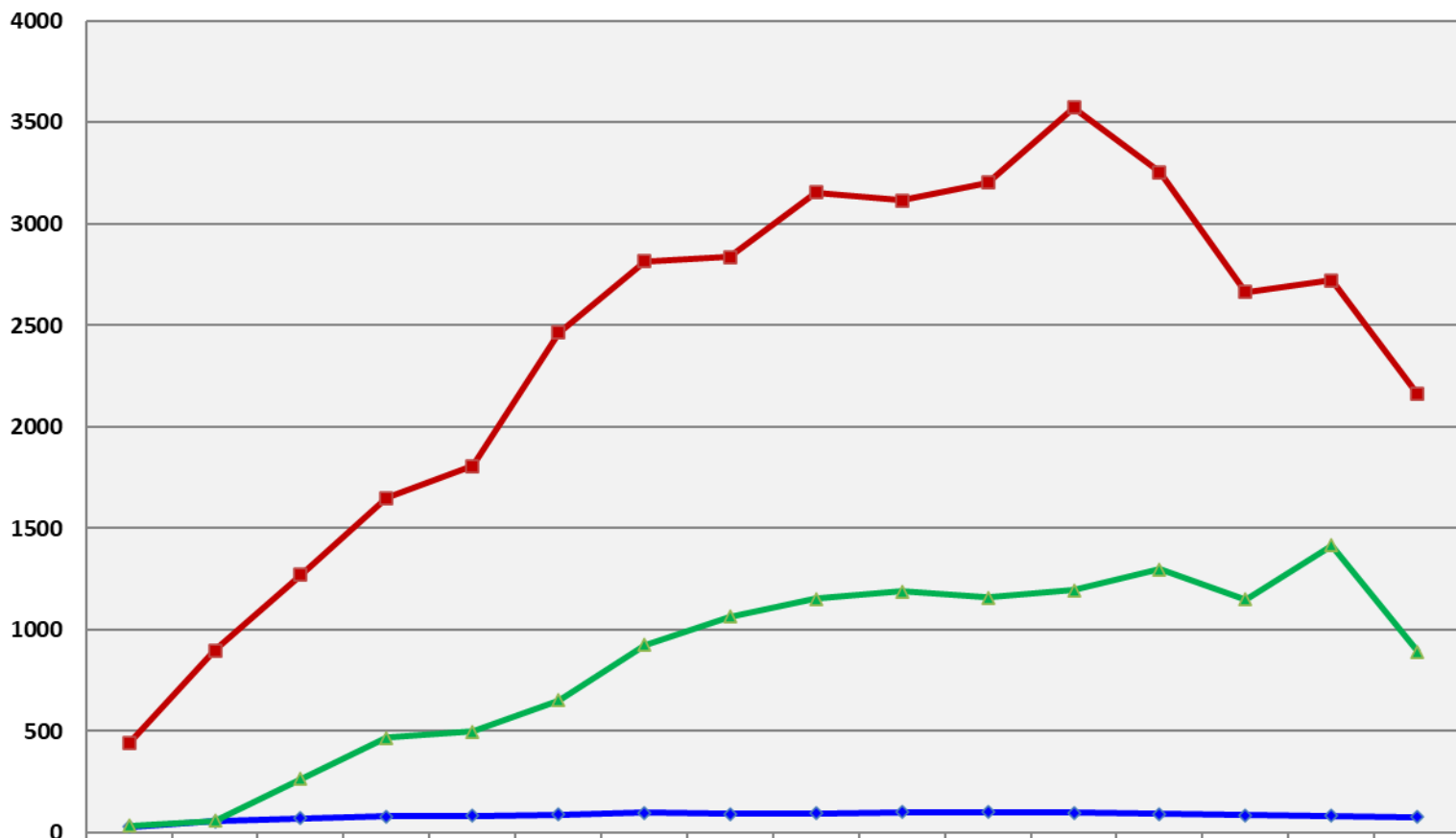
# TRANSFORM. LEAD. EXPERIENCE.

| LOCATION | ACTIVE CNLs | LOCATION | ACTIVE CNLs |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alabama - AL | 163 | Montana - MT | 25 |
| Alaska - AK | 7 | Nebraska - NE | 18 |
| Arizona - AZ | 33 | Nevada - NV | 45 |
| Arkansas - AR | 24 | New Hampshire - NH | 216 |
| California - CA | 1422 | New Jersey - NJ | 213 |
| Colorado - CO | 56 | New Mexico - NM | 7 |
| Connecticut - CT | 151 | New York - NY | 144 |
| Delaware - DE | 7 | North Carolina - NC | 190 |
| District of Columbia - DC | 40 | North Dakota - ND | 1 |
| Florida - FL | 218 | Ohio - OH | 389 |
| Georgia - GA | 321 | Oklahoma - OK | 17 |
| Hawaii - HI | 8 | Oregon - OR | 62 |
| Idaho - ID | 13 | Pennsylvania - PA | 186 |
| Illinois - IL | 884 | Rhode Island - RI | 12 |
| Indiana - IN | 37 | South Carolina - SC | 85 |
| Iowa - IA | 81 | South Dakota - SD | 20 |
| Kansas - KS | 29 | Tennessee - TN | 108 |
| Kentucky - KY | 49 | Texas - TX | 401 |
| Louisiana - LA | 30 | Utah - UT | 8 |
| Maine - ME | 41 | Vermont - VT | 22 |
| Maryland - MD | 243 | Virginia - VA | 320 |
| Massachusetts - MA | 140 | Washington - WA | 126 |
| Michigan - MI | 129 | West Virginia - WV | 4 |
| Minnesota - MN | 36 | Wisconsin - WI | 242 |
| Mississippi - MS | 18 | Wyoming - WY | 2 |
| Missouri - MO | 160 | Other - PR, International | 11 |

American Association
*of* Colleges *of* Nursing

CNL Clinical Nurse Leader^SM

## Enrollment and Graduations of CNL Students 2005-2020

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

AACN Institutional Data System (IDS). 2021

**Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC)** **Updated: September 1, 2021**