

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status  
 From Initial Approval with Warning to Conditional Approval  
 Bell Tech Career Institute in Houston, Texas  
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request:**

Consider the proposed change in approval status for the Bell Tech Career Institute (BTCI) Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Initial Approval with Warning to Conditional Approval based upon the 2015 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, review of the 2015 Nursing Education Program Information Survey, and areas of compliance with Board Rule 214.

**Historical Perspective:**

- BTCI VN program was approved October 27, 2011.
- BTCI is licensed by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past three (3) years are provided in the following table:

<b>NCLEX Examination Year</b>	<b>BON Approval Status</b>	<b>NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate</b>	<b>Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</b>
2015	Initial with Warning (Board Meeting April 2015)	20.83%	5/24
2014	Initial (Self Study Report)	58.82%	10/17
2013	Initial	37.93%	11/29
2012	New Program	No candidates	

- The program submitted a Self-Study Report (SSR) in 2014 due to the 2013 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate of 37.93%. Although the program implemented measures to improve the performance of students on the national licensing examination, the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate has continued to be below 80%.
- Among the nineteen (19) areas identified as possible factors that may have affected the 2013 NCLEX-PN® pass rate were: 1) a lack of standardized computer testing; 2) a lack of faculty orientation and training; 3) inconsistent application of admission standards; 4) a lack of rigor in admission standards; 5) deficient evaluative processes for students and faculty; 6) lack of regularly scheduled faculty meetings; and 7) a non-operationalized total program evaluation tool.
- Major areas needing corrective actions with accompanying time frames for implementation were identified in the SSR. Some of the corrective measures included: 1)

establish a standardized testing policy and process; 2) establish faculty continuing education development using “Nurse Tim” and local resources; 3) establish weekly faculty meetings to include a faculty committee structure; 4) implement a remediation program; 5) implement standardized assessment testing for admission applicants, update recruitment process, and institute candidate orientation; and 6) implement the Total Program Evaluation plan.

- At the October 17-18, 2013 Board meeting, Board members accepted the report of the September 10-11, 2013 survey visit made to BTCI. Three (3) requirements were issued to the program. These included: 1) submission of documentation that the program director had full authority to direct the program in all its phases; 2) revision of clinical evaluation tools and program documents to reflect the *Differentiated Essential Competencies* (DECs, 2010); and, 3) evidence of adequate clerical support.
- Although the program implemented corrective measures to improve the performance of VN graduates on the national licensing examination, the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate continues to be below 80%. The 2015 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate was 20.83% with five (5) of twenty-four (24) candidates passing the licensing examination.
- Tonye Cox-Miller, DNP, MSN, MBA, RN was appointed in February 2016 as the fifth program director and meets the requirements of Board Rule 214 to serve in the nursing leadership position.
- Currently, 19 students are enrolled in the program with the prospective graduation date February 3, 2017.

**Rationale for Recommendations:**

Rule 214.4(c)(3)(B)(i) states: “A program may be placed on conditional approval status if the pass rate of first-time NCLEX-PN® candidates ... is less than 80% for three (3) consecutive examination years.”

**Staff Recommendations:**

Move to change the approval status for the Bell Tech Career Institute VN Education Program in Houston, Texas from Initial Approval with Warning to Conditional Approval based upon the 2015 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, review of the 2015 Nursing Education Program Information Survey, and areas of noncompliance with Rule 214, and issue the conditions and requirements in the attached Board Order (Attachment #1).

## **DRAFT LETTER**

April 21, 2016

Tonye Cox-Miller, DNP, MSN, MBA, RN, Director  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
Bell Tech Career Institute  
14602 Presidio Square Boulevard  
Houston, TX 77083

Dear Dr. Cox-Miller:

At the April 21-22, 2016 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) discussed the approval status of the Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas. Members of the Board wish to thank you, Mr. Raffy Bell, MBA CEO, and Mrs. Kikelomo Bello, BSN, RN School Director for being present at the meeting to answer questions.

Based upon the discussion and review of information, it was the decision of the Board to change the approval status of the Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Initial Approval with Warning to Conditional Approval based upon the 2015 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, review of the 2015 Nursing Education Program Information Survey, and areas of noncompliance with Rule 214, as indicated in the attached Board Order.

If you have questions or if we may offer assistance, please contact Board Staff at [susan.lee@bon.texas.gov](mailto:susan.lee@bon.texas.gov) or 512-463-4631.

Sincerely,

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director

copy: Keke Bello, Bell Tech Career Institute President  
Texas Workforce Commission

**BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING**

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**In the Matter of:**

Bell Tech Career Institute  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
Houston, Texas

**ORDER OF THE BOARD**

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on April 21, 2016, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the approval status of the Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing Education in Houston, Texas, based upon the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for 2015, review of the 2015 Nursing Education Program Information Survey, and areas of noncompliance with Rule 214 pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 214.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, as well as the presentation by representatives from Bell Tech Career Institute in Houston, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby CHANGES the approval status of the Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, from INITIAL APPROVAL WITH WARNING to CONDITIONAL APPROVAL and hereby imposes the following conditions and requirements:

1. The program shall not enroll students while on conditional approval status.
2. The program will remain on conditional approval status until the program demonstrates a pass rate for first-time candidates of at least 80% on the 2016 NCLEX-PN® examination. The NCLEX-PN® examination year is January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016.
3. The program must demonstrate full compliance with Rule 214 prior to consideration of a change in approval status.

Entered this 21st day of April, 2016

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Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director  
On Behalf of the Texas Board of Nursing