INTRODUCTION
We are delighted that you are interested in the Rural Nursing Program. The following will give you an overview of the program.

DESCRIPTION
The Rural California Nursing Preceptorship Program (RCNP) is supported and is administered through California State University, Chico. The program, which was initiated in 1975, provides a unique opportunity for senior level nursing students and graduate nurses to gain clinical experience while exploring career options in rural and semi-rural areas of Northern California. The program is available during summer and intersession and is designed to last approximately four weeks. Placements are available in a number of different health care facilities. The program provides a valuable opportunity to explore career options in rural areas while granting a first-hand look at the quality of life that Northern California offers.

As a participant, you will be encouraged to take an active role in designing an experience that will best meet your particular needs. You will begin by outlining a set of goals and objectives to give your preceptorship focus. In addition, you will indicate the clinical and geographic area where you wish to be placed. After completing your goals and objectives, the coordinator will work with you to select a placement site and preceptor. Housing arrangements may be facilitated by RCNP when needed.

Students have found that they have benefited from the program in several ways. For most students, a focus on self-directed, independent learning makes the experience an important transitional step as they move from student nurse to graduate nurse. Other students have used this opportunity as a means of spending concentrated clinical time in a specialty area.

Rural Nursing
There are a variety of settings available to the student or graduate nurse who wishes to explore career options in a rural area. While educational requirements are the same for urban and rural nurses, there are distinct differences in style of practice. The rural nurse is more of a “generalist” and must be flexible in his/her role. Rural nursing emphasizes autonomy and independence. Medical personnel, particularly specialists, are less available, emergency services may be scarce, and transportation problems may become insurmountable.

In rural areas, social interaction is extremely important and the rural nurse must be willing to become involved with the community. The majority of patients seen by the nurse in a rural area are known personally as well as professionally. This allows for a more enriching nurse-patient relationship. A high level of community involvement and awareness promotes an integrated social system providing emotional and physical support to the members of a rural community.

For the nurse who is looking for an opportunity to utilize a variety of clinical skills, experience close personal contact with patients, families, and co-workers, and live in a beautiful scenic part of the country, rural nursing may be the right career choice.
OPERATION OF THE PROGRAM

Application Process
All participants will enroll in NURS-485 and earn 2 units of academic credit. If you are a registered nurse, you will be granted 30 BRN-approved contact hours in addition to academic credit. Please note that placements will be made according to the order in which applications are received. (It is permissible to temporarily have pending vaccines, titers, or PPD skin test records.)

All students are required to submit a $100 application fee with their application. If the program is full when you submit your application, your application with fee will not be deposited (checks will be destroyed and money orders will be returned). In addition, there will be a $460 course fee which will be paid closer to the time (TBA) of your orientation. Selected applicants are those who: 1) work well with minimal supervision, 2) communicate effectively with patients and the patient care team, and 3) receive strong recommendations.

Placement Period
Shortly after Christmas. In summer, there is more flexibility with start dates. Here, preceptorships begin as early as late May, and as late as mid July.

Working With Your Preceptor
You will be working closely with your preceptor during your placement. The preceptor will help you determine the kinds of activities that will best fulfill your learning objectives, assist you with new procedures, and help acquaint you with the role and responsibilities of the working RN.

Preceptors are chosen by mutual agreement between the placement facility and the Rural Nursing Program. Preceptors are not financially reimbursed for their services -- they usually participate because they are enthusiastic about their job, enjoy teaching and sharing ideas, and are committed to the nursing profession.

You and your preceptor will work together to develop a plan that will assure the quality of your experience. During your placement period, the Program Coordinator will make every effort to meet with you during an “on-site” visit. The purpose of this visit is to discuss your progress and learn more about your unique experience. The preceptor and the coordinator will complete a written evaluation of you at the end of your preceptorship. Your preceptor will review it with you prior to the completion of your preceptorship.

CLINICAL OPTIONS
RCNP offers placements in the areas of acute care, home health, public health, and hospice as appropriate. While not every clinical option will be available in every geographic location, we will do our best to place you where you can best meet your clinical objectives, and in the geographical setting you have requested.

Acute Care
The majority of our student placements are made in acute care. Most acute care placements are made in hospitals ranging in size from 25 beds to 100 beds. In the most rural facilities the resources or the patient census is not able to support specialized nurses. The nurses in these facilities are often cross-trained in various areas and must be "generalists." In the words of one of our preceptors, "The student needs to experience the ability to be a very flexible nurse . . . within an hour's time she/he may be called on to help with a delivery in OB or an arrest in ER, interpret an arrhythmia in CCU, console a family, or assist with the care of an auto accident victim. She/He may also have to spread salt on icy walks or mop up the delivery room floor. There is no real preparation for this type of hospital work except to tolerate the slow days and then to be able to think quickly and work hard when everything seems to be happening at the same time."
Most students who are considering participation in our program have had hospital nursing experience in large, urban hospitals. While it is true that there are basic similarities found in hospital nursing in any setting, the rural hospital has many unique and special qualities which distinguish it from a large hospital. In general, you can expect increased contact with patients and families, a high degree of professional independence and self-direction, and a staff that works as a cooperative and cohesive unit.

Public Health, Home Health, Hospice
Nurses who wish to function in an outpatient role find they are expected to be flexible, innovative, and must possess knowledge and skills in a wide variety of clinical areas. A nurse in this setting is expected to travel to remote areas and perform nursing care without the benefit of readily available medical backup. After assessing the home situation, the nurse may be without the appropriate supplies or equipment for some forms of treatment. The nurse must be ready to improvise and report urgent problems to the appropriate community resources.

The problems of access in rural communities include: geographic barriers, lack of telephone service, limited physician access, and lack of reliable transportation. Understanding the social and economic structure of the rural community served is critical in providing quality health care and assuring patient compliance. However, outweighing these factors is the tremendous sense of fulfillment and personal accomplishment that rural nursing offers. Many rural health nurses thrive on the challenges inherent in their job, make close and lasting friendships with their patients, and love the satisfaction of knowing that they as individuals truly make a difference in the quality of life experienced by their patients and their families.

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS AVAILABLE
Our placement areas offer a wide variety of clinical experiences, extending as far north as the Oregon border and as far south as Bishop near Mammoth Lakes. We encourage the student to specify geographic areas of interest on their application. We try to accommodate our students whenever possible.

HOUSING
RCNP housing providers are available to students in need of housing. RCNP screens all potential housing providers and relies heavily on evaluations from past students for housing referrals.

In most cases, the cost of housing is $325 per month which includes use of a kitchen or in some cases a private kitchenette. Students are responsible for their own meals; however the student and provider may make arrangements to include the student in family meals.

For most students, the close personal involvement with their host families is one of the most meaningful aspects of the preceptorship experience. These "live-in" situations put the student directly in touch with what it means to live in a rural community. Students learn to appreciate the importance of local traditions, events, gossip, and politics. They also experience the frustration of limited shopping and cultural opportunities; but the satisfaction achieved in terms of a greater sense of community, combined with a relaxed pace of life, are positive and lasting experiences for the student. Students and housing providers may form close friendships that include letters and visits, long after the clinical placement has ended.
RCNP Program Application – WINTER 2012

Name__________________________________________ Sex________________________________

first middle initial last

Current Mailing Address:

street city zip phone

Permanent Mailing Address (if different from current address):

street city zip

We communicate frequently with students via e-mail. To assure that email correspondence isn’t being diverted to your SPAM site, please put the following email address in your address book: kkirby@csuchico.edu

e-mail________________________________________

Date of Birth______________ Place of Birth (City, State, Country)________________________________

Do you speak a foreign language? □No □Yes If Yes, which?________ At what level? Beg□ Int□ Adv□

When was your last background check conducted (month/year)? ____________ Last drug test? ____________

School Information:

Do you have a previous bachelor’s or master’s degree? □Yes □No Field: ______________________________

Current Students:
Nursing School ______________________________ * Expected date of graduation ________________

Currently enrolled in: Semester □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 □ 6 □ 7 Quarter □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5

If you will graduate prior to participating in the program, when do you plan on taking the NCLEX? _____________

Graduates:
Are you currently an RN? □Yes □ No Licensed since___________ License Number ________________

Name of Nursing School Previously Attended /Location __________________________________________

Student Interests/Preferences:

Clinical areas of special interest ________________________________________________________________

Geographic areas of special interest ____________________________________________________________

If you have housing available in a specific geographic area(s) of interest, please indicate city or town:

________________________________________

*To participate in the Winter 2012 session, your expected graduation date must be no later than December 2012 for BSN students, and no later than May 2012 for ADN students.
Preceptorships last approximately 4 weeks (150 hours) and will begin approximately 12/26/11 and end approximately 1/22/12.

We normally attempt to place you on a day shift, either 8-hour or 12-hour, depending on the hospital. Sometimes all that’s available is a NOC shift. If you are absolutely unable to work a NOC shift, or would prefer a NOC shift, please explain:

_________________________________________________________________________________________

**Student Records:**

1. What is your health status? ___________________________ Date of last physical examination ___________________________

   Do you have any health problems or physical limitations that you would like us to know about?

   __________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Immunization/Skin test records: Please review the Vaccine Guidelines in the application packet to be sure your records are current. Please send copies as requested (NO STAPLES PLEASE). Be sure your name is on every copy.

3. Emergency Contact: Name ___________________________

   Relationship to you ___________________________ Phone ___________________________

   Address ____________________________________________________________

   Street address city state zip

   • I understand that the Rural California Nursing Preceptorship Program will send my photo to my placement site, and if RCNP housing is needed, one will be sent to my housing provider.

   • I understand that there is a course fee of $460 for participation in NURS/485 – a CSU, Chico Extension course. Course fees are not due until 12/1, 2011.

   • I understand that there is a $100 non-refundable application fee (in addition to course fees) to be submitted with my application. If I am not accepted to the program, I will be notified, and my fee will not be deposited (money orders will be returned and checks will be destroyed).

   • I understand that I will be responsible for providing my own transportation.

   • I authorize the Rural California Nursing Preceptorship Program to forward copies of my application materials to any facility under consideration for my preceptorship placement.

Signature: _______________________________________________ Date: _______________________________

Please return this, the requested documents (NO STAPLES PLEASE), and the $100 application fee to:

Rural California Nursing Preceptorship Program
California State University, Chico
Chico, California 95929-0301

(Above is the correct mailing address; there is no street address.)
Introductory Letter

Every student will write a letter of introduction to their future preceptor. This letter will help both the Rural Nursing Program Coordinator and your preceptor to get to know you better, both professionally and personally.

Guidelines:

◆ Keep your entire typewritten letter to one page.
◆ Use “Dear Preceptor” as the salutation.
◆ Explain why you want to participate in this unique program.
◆ Describe yourself in terms of the level of independence you are comfortable with and your ability to communicate effectively.
◆ Discuss what you consider to be your strong and weak points relative to this type of experience.
◆ Briefly summarize your past work experience, including paid and non-paid positions. (They need not necessarily be in the medical field.)
Skills Proficiency List

Student ____________________________ Date __________________

Self Assessment Key:

1 = Proficient (Confident in performing procedure. No assistance needed.)
2 = Needs Supervision (Needs review and/or assistance to feel comfortable in performing procedure.)
3 = No Practical Experience

Please check the appropriate box next to each skill below:

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<td>Topical Ointment/Patch</td>
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<td>Rectal Suppository</td>
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<td>Sub Q Insulin</td>
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<td>Incentive Spirometer</td>
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<td>Sub Q Heparin</td>
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<td>Trach Care / Suctioning</td>
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<td>NGT Meds/Feedings</td>
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<td><strong>IV ADMINISTRATION AND CARE</strong></td>
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<td>Set-up IV - Calculate Flow Rate</td>
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<td>Change IV Tubing</td>
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<td>DC IV</td>
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<td>IVPB</td>
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<td>Bowel Sounds</td>
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<td>Heplock Med &amp; Flush</td>
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<td>Stool Specimen</td>
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<td>Start IV</td>
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<td>Enema</td>
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<td>IV Pump Set Up</td>
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<td>Oral Suction</td>
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<td>Dressing Change for Central Lines</td>
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<td>NGT Insertion</td>
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<td>Hep/Saline Flush for Central Line</td>
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<td>NGT Residual Check</td>
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<td><strong>D/C</strong> NGT</td>
<td><strong>DOCUMENTATION</strong></td>
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<td>Graphic Vital Signs</td>
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<td>Intake &amp; Output</td>
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<td>Head-to-toe Assessment</td>
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<td>Urine Specimen from Catheter Port</td>
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<td>Nursing Care Plans</td>
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<td>Interpreting Lab Work</td>
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<td>Prioritizing Patient Needs</td>
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<td><strong>INTEGUMENTARY</strong></td>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dry Dressing Change</td>
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<td>Patient/Family Teaching Skills</td>
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<td>Wet to Dry Dressing change</td>
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<td>Working with Patient Care Team</td>
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<td>Wound Packing</td>
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<td>Delegating to CNAs/LVNs</td>
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<td>Wound Suction: Hemovac</td>
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<td>Giving Report</td>
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<td>Wound Suction: Jackson-Pratt</td>
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<td>Remove Staples</td>
<td><strong>MISCELLANEOUS</strong></td>
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<td>K-pad</td>
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<td>BG Finger-Stick</td>
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Guidelines for Formulating Goals and Objectives

Composing a brief summary of your goals and objectives is essential in giving your preceptorship focus and direction. Additionally, it will help your preceptor gain more understanding of what you hope to accomplish during your placement.

Guidelines - Your written goals and objectives should be: 1) typewritten, 2) limited to one page, and 3) include your name and the title, “Preceptorship Goals and Objectives” at the top of the page.

Begin with your Goals - Write two or three sentences that summarize your overall goals. You may find it helpful to simply answer the question: After coming away from this experience, how do I want to be changed?

Follow with RCNP objectives – Begin your list of objectives with...

1. I will become familiar with the workplace culture, relevant protocols, and staffing patterns at my placement facility.

Follow with your own objectives - When composing objectives, keep in mind that the more specific you are, the easier it will be for your preceptor to develop a plan that will help you meet them. To help get you started, the following list includes areas in which you may want to grow:

- subjective findings (history-taking)
- objective findings (physical assessment)
- familiarizing self with referral agencies
- practical use of the NCP
- medication administration
- reporting findings to physicians
- participating at staff meetings, conferences
- various procedures
- documentation
- giving report
- organizational skills
- prioritizing and triage
- interpreting lab work
- patient teaching
Housing Questionnaire

Name

If you have available housing, please indicate the location(s):

Address / City__________________________________________________________

Address / City__________________________________________________________

If the event you may need housing, please complete the following:

If the housing provider is single, will you accept housing with:  □ Male  □ Female  □ Either

Do you smoke? .................................  □ Yes  □ No

Please describe any health needs (including animal allergies) which may require special housing or environmental considerations:

Is there any other information or preferences you would like to share with us that would be helpful in locating appropriate housing for you?

On a separate page, type a Letter of Introduction to your future housing provider. Use the following guidelines to compose your letter:

- Begin your letter with, Dear Housing Provider.
- Describe yourself in terms of your hobbies and interests.
- Relay your career goals.
- Refer to past rural or urban living experiences, family size, etc.
- Provide your name and signature in closing.
Photo

Please send us a digital photo of yourself in a jpg format to: kkirby@csuchico.edu

We realize that your pets are cute and your friends are important to you, but in this particular case, we need a picture of you alone.

Your photo will be sent to your placement site, where they are frequently posted on a bulletin board to announce your arrival to other staff.

If housing is needed during your placement, we will send a copy to your housing provider as a way of introduction.

REMEMBER - "A picture speaks a thousand words”

- Dress modestly and professionally. Avoid tank tops, t-shirts, and revealing attire.
- Keep in mind the importance of that first impression, and submit quality, smart photos.
- Presenting yourself neatly groomed and with a smile, will make a favorable impression with staff, even before you’ve arrived.
- Please be sure your photo is in focus.
Statement of Recommendation – Instructions for the Applicant

Undergraduate Students:

1. SELECT, COPY, and SAVE *Statement of Recommendation* form (next page) to your desk top. *Please do not forward this page or other documents included in the application with the Statement of Recommendation form.*

2. Send a copy (as an e-mail attachment) to two clinical faculty.

3. Referring faculty are instructed (on the form) to return to RCNP via e-mail after completing.

Registered Nurses:

1. SELECT, COPY, and SAVE *Statement of Recommendation* form (next page) to your desk top. *Please do not forward this page or other documents included in the application with the Statement of Recommendation form.*

2. Send a copy (as an e-mail attachment) to two supervisors, professional colleagues, or associates. If you are a recent graduate you may also use previous faculty if you prefer.

3. Referring persons are instructed (on the form) to return to RCNP via e-mail after completing.
Faculty/Colleague Statement of Recommendation Form

Please complete all shaded areas and SAVE on your desk top. ATTACH to an e-mail and send to: kkirby@csuchico.edu

RCNP Applicant (Name): 

Today's Date: 

Please rate applicant using a rating scale from 1-5:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Weak</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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</table>

Skill level …………………………………………………………………………………………………

Level of independence …………………………………………………………………………………

Ability to make sound judgments …………………………………………………………………

Level of confidence …………………………………………………………………………………

Verbal skills ……………………………………………………………………………………………

Written skills ……………………………………………………………………………………………

Ability to deal effectively with conflict ……………………………………………………………

Ability to handle stress …………………………………………………………………………………

Level of self-awareness …………………………………………………………………………………

Tolerance of other lifestyles, cultures, religions …………………………………………………

Do you recommend this applicant without reservation? 

Yes 

No 

Length of time you have known applicant: 

Relationship to Applicant: 

Comments (optional): 

Name: 

Professional Title: 

Contact Phone Number: 

E-mail: 

Thank You, 
Kathleen Kirby, RN, Program Coordinator 
Rural California Nursing Preceptorship Program • California State University, Chico 
Phone: 530-898-5797 • www.csuchico.edu/rcnp
Are your vaccines up-to-date?

Please review to make sure your vaccine and TB testing records are current:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Vaccine/Test</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Alternate Option</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubella (German Measles)</td>
<td>2 doses</td>
<td>positive titer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rubeola (Measles)</td>
<td>2 doses</td>
<td>positive titer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps</td>
<td>2 doses</td>
<td>positive titer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis B</td>
<td>3 doses</td>
<td>positive titer or signed waiver</td>
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<tr>
<td>dTaP</td>
<td>1 dose in last 10 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Varicella (Chicken Pox)</td>
<td>2 doses</td>
<td>positive titer</td>
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<tr>
<td>TB Testing</td>
<td>2 negative skin tests within the past 12 months</td>
<td>clear baseline chest x-ray OR TB Blood test QuantiFERON Gold within past 12 months</td>
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**Seasonal:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Flu Vaccine</th>
<th>Not required for Summer sessions</th>
<th>signed waiver</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1N1 Vaccine</td>
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The guidelines above are based on the recommendations of the U.S. Public Health Services Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Some placement facilities have stricter requirements for TB testing.
RCNP Application Check List - First time Applicants

Please confirm with a ✔ that you have completed each part of the application. Your application will not be processed unless it is complete (OK for temporarily pending titers, TB tests, and vaccines) and we have received two “Statements of Recommendation.” Please send your application materials by mail, unless otherwise instructed. If you have questions regarding any part of the application process, please contact the program coordinator.

I have:  □ completed both pages of the application form and have signed at the bottom.
        □ e-mailed “Statements of Recommendation” to referring persons as instructed. We recommend that you follow-up with your references to assure they have been forwarded to RCNP in a timely manner to assure you “a spot.”
        □ enclosed typed copies of “Introductory Letter” and “Goals and Objectives.”
        □ enclosed my “Self-Assessment Skills List.”
        □ enclosed my “Housing Questionnaire.” (Please include a typed introductory letter on an attached page if you think you may need housing).
        □ e-mailed a digital photo in a jpg format to kkirby@csuchico.edu
        □ enclosed copies of vaccine and skin test records.  Please be sure that your vaccine and skin test records meet the requirements listed on the Vaccine Guidelines. If you have any questions, please contact our office.
        □ enclosed a copy of my current CPR/BLS for Health Care Professionals card
        □ enclosed a copy of nursing license (if you are an RN)
        □ enclosed the $100 application fee (check or money order made payable to CSU, Chico)

Once accepted, you will…

receive an orientation packet in the mail by October 15. If you do not receive one, please contact us. In addition, we will be communicating with you periodically via e-mail. To assure that email correspondence isn’t being diverted to your SPAM site, please put the following email address in your address book: kkirby@csuchico.edu