



Career Choices in Nursing



A Simple Comparison Between A
U.S. Army Registered Nurse
And
A Civilian Registered Nurse

U.S. Army Registered Nurse

Civilian Registered Nurse

Pay	Annual salary and allowances starting at about \$45,600 (varies with location) with yearly raises. After 15 years in service, salary exceeds \$75,000. A portion of your pay is nontaxable and Health Insurance is free.	Annual salary depends on location. Average salary in 2009 for RN with less than 1 year experience was \$44,343. Average salary after 15 years experience was \$69,601 (Source: 2009 <i>RN Magazine Salary Survey</i>).
Benefits	Free medical and dental care for service members. Full coverage for family members with minimal premium. Inexpensive life insurance. Unlimited sick leave.	Expense is usually shared with employer to include a deductible that must be met.
Vacation Time	Annual 30 days paid vacation, not including federal holidays.	Dependent on hospital. Full-time nurse may receive 2 weeks paid vacation.
Where to Work	You can choose from 26 medical treatment facilities around the world including Germany, Korea, Alaska, and Hawaii. Adequate staffing levels; high quality of care.	Entry level jobs are often on the less desirable shifts. Current nursing shortage resulting in increased overtime hours worked.
Position	You would be a staff and/or charge nurse in addition to being an officer in the U.S. Army. Most importantly, you are a leader.	Staff Nurse
Malpractice Insurance	Covered entirely by the U.S. Government.	The desired level of coverage is your responsibility.
Environment	As an officer, you have autonomy in your practice. Ability to change job/location without loss of seniority or pay. Diverse nursing population: 35% male and 65% female.	Traditional doctor nurse relationship. Nursing population in most hospitals: 15% male and 85% female.
Specialty Training	Fully funded training of your choice in 1 of 4 specialty nursing areas after one year of experience. Courses are guaranteed.	Some hospitals offer additional training on your own time.
Graduate School Opportunities	Opportunity for full scholarship to graduate school with regular pay included. At a minimum there is a 75% reimbursement for graduate courses.	Scholarships and assistance are sometimes offered to limit numbers of individuals.
Promotion Potential	First promotion after 18 months, then nurses get promoted to Captain at about the 4 year mark (annual salary of Captain \$55,000).	Promotions are difficult to attain. They are based on availability, performance, and experience.
Commitment	Four years as a nurse with the option to continue your career in the Army.	You may not have a commitment to the hospital, but the hospital also has no commitment to you.