

Cover Letter Guide

Cover letters express your interest in, and earn the interest of, a potential employer. They provide a link between your resume/CV and the opportunity, highlighting your most relevant experiences to showcase your qualifications. They can assist you in explaining any gaps in employment, or other pieces of your story that your resume cannot. Additionally, a good cover letter demonstrates your written communication skills and ability to organize your thoughts cohesively.

Name, Nursing Credentials Already Obtained (e.g. MSN, RN)

Phone| Email

Date

Organization Name

Address

City, ST Zip Code

Dear Hiring Manager/Committee: (if you cannot find a specific contact name)

First Paragraph: Introduce yourself as a student at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing in the [name of degree/track- see the [school's website](#) for proper listing]. Note the month and year you will graduate (or did graduate), as well as your licensure or certification exam date (if you know it), or any licenses/ certifications you have, especially if a new grad (e.g., RN license and in which state/ compact license for Master's Entry, board certification for DNP AP). Specify the position or program for which you are applying. If you have spoken to someone about the opportunity, name them here!

Middle Paragraph(s): Share *brief* highlights of your career that don't just repeat your resume, but tell key pieces of your story. Indicate how long you have been in the workforce and in which industry, and if nursing is a new career, why you chose it. State your total number of clinical hours completed, and call attention to the number of hours most relevant to this opportunity (e.g., in pediatrics or in high acuity settings) and share something you most enjoyed or learned. Some new grad RN programs only allow you to write one letter for multiple positions; in that case, indicate a top 2-3 units, but also express openness to other areas (if you truly are open). If you didn't have a clinical in your target area(s), mention other aspects of your education or transferrable skills from a past career, or an example of how you are a quick learner. Note any leadership or volunteering experience, even if outside of nursing. Use words/ideas that are emphasized in the position/program description. Your goal is to show the match between the skills written in this opportunity's qualifications, and what you can offer.

Provide a brief overview of why this opportunity and organization are of interest, stating specific reasons such as connection to their mission/vision/values, rather than generically complimenting them. Elaborate on any reasons not described above that you think make you a fit at this organization. If you are from that region, and/or have a vested interest in relocating (e.g., partner/spouse/family there), mention it. You do not need to write these two paragraphs linearly- you can weave your interest for the opportunity and organization into your story and skills if that flows better given your circumstances.

Closing Paragraph: Let the reader know you would like to further discuss the opportunity, and list your phone and email. Thank the reader for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Typed name

Final Considerations:

- Write letters with the reader in mind. How will they benefit from hiring you? Not how you will benefit from being hired.
- Personalize your letter for each opportunity to which you are applying.
- Double check that you have written the correct date, organization, and position/program title.
- Stick to one page and 3-4 concise paragraphs, using 1" margins.
- Use easy to understand language and proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Vary your sentence structure such that not each one starts with "I..." or "my..."