Amends the Medical Assistance Article of the Illinois Public Aid Code. Requires the Department of Healthcare and Family Services to establish a Certified Nursing Assistant Workforce Pipeline Program to recruit, support, and train individuals to work as certified nursing assistants at nursing facilities, with a focus on facilities in disadvantaged communities, those serving residents of color, and high-Medicaid facilities. Requires the program to be administered by a labor-management organization acting on behalf of a partnership between nursing facilities and a labor organization representing nursing home workers. Provides that the labor-management organization must demonstrate the ability to recruit, support, train, and place individuals in a career in healthcare with a specific focus on addressing the staff shortages at nursing facilities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Provides that the program must utilize a hybrid model of in-person and online instruction for both the lecture and simulation lab component of the nursing assistant curriculum. Requires program training and instruction to meet State and federal education regulations and to provide a pathway for participants to receive certification as nursing assistants. Provides that to ensure financial hardship is not a barrier to successful completion of the program, supportive services may be offered to program participants, including, but not limited to, monetary grants; childcare and transportation stipends; loaned computers, Internet access hotspots, and other digital supports; and academic coaching and counseling. Provides that the program may also provide wage supplements to program graduates. Provides that funds available through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 may be used to fund the program in accordance with the permitted purposes under the American Recovery Plan Act and all related federal guidance. Grants the Department rulemaking authority.
AN ACT concerning public aid.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The Illinois Public Aid Code is amended by adding Section 5-45 as follows:

(305 ILCS 5/5-45 new)

Sec. 5-45. Certified Nursing Assistant Workforce Pipeline Program. The Department shall establish a Certified Nursing Assistant Workforce Pipeline Program to recruit, support, and train individuals to work as certified nursing assistants at nursing facilities, with a focus on facilities in disadvantaged communities, those serving residents of color, and high-Medicaid facilities. The program shall be administered by a labor-management organization acting on behalf of a partnership between nursing facilities and a labor organization representing nursing home workers. The labor-management organization must demonstrate the ability to recruit, support, train, and place individuals in a career in healthcare with a specific focus on addressing the staff shortages at nursing facilities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program must utilize a hybrid model of in-person and online instruction for both the lecture and simulation lab component of the nursing assistant curriculum. Program
training and instruction must meet State and federal education regulations and must provide a pathway for participants to receive certification as nursing assistants.

To ensure financial hardship is not a barrier to successful completion of the program, supportive services may be offered to program participants, including, but not limited to, monetary grants; childcare and transportation stipends; loaned computers, Internet access hotspots, and other digital supports; and academic coaching and counseling. The program may also provide wage supplements to graduates of the program with payments beginning 6 months after a graduate obtains employment at a qualifying nursing facility and continuing for up to one year following receipt of the first payment or until the graduate is no longer employed at a qualifying nursing facility, whichever comes first.

Funds available through the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund pursuant to Section 9901 of the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 may be used to fund the program in accordance with the permitted purposes under Section 9901 of the American Recovery Plan Act and all related federal guidance.

The Department may adopt any rules necessary to implement the provisions of this Section.