Step 1: **Apply for NOVA Membership**
You must be a member of NOVA to charter a chapter. If you are not a member, the first step is to apply for NOVA membership. Click Here to complete a NOVA membership application online.

Step 2: **Identify Interest in Chapter Start-Up**
Individuals interested in starting a NOVA Chapter (i.e., founding members) should consider compiling a list of fellow VA nurses who may be interested in assisting with NOVA Chapter start-up activities. A personal connection should then be made to assess their willingness to participate either as a member of the organizing team or as a future participant. Contact NOVA National Office to receive a list of members from your facility. Conduct outreach to identify those individuals who are willing to help establish the chapter. Ensure that individuals who are interested in starting the NOVA chapter are NOVA members.

Collect contact information to include PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESSES for communication with others who are interested in assisting you. Please note that VA email addresses must not be used for the purposes of promoting NOVA membership or chapter development activities.

Step 3: **Elect Your Chapter Board of Directors**
Once you have identified a minimum of three (3) individuals who are interested in participating, you will need to establish your Chapter’s Board of Directors. At a minimum, you need to have a President, President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and three (3) Directors. Once a chapter has 25 members or more, the chapter must have a President, President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, Membership Secretary & two at-large directors.

Step 4: **Establish Chapter Bylaws**
Each chapter shall adopt its own bylaws which should align with and support of NOVA’s mission and national bylaws. Use the enclosed NOVA Bylaws as a basis upon which to draft your chapter bylaws. A copy of the Chapter bylaws must be submitted to the NOVA National Headquarters with the charter application complete form SS-4 and submit it directly to the IRS. A copy of the form is included with this document. Chapters can also obtain an EIN by calling the IRS Business & Specialty Tax Line (800-829-4933). An assistant will take the information, assign the EIN, and provide your number. You must provide NOVA with your chapter’s EIN number with the charter application.
Step 5: Establish Chapter Dues Structure (If Any)

Chapters shall be responsible for determining Chapter dues (if any) and collecting such dues; provided, however, the amount of such dues shall not exceed NOVA national dues. These dues are for Chapter use and are not the property of the NOVA National Office. (Donations towards Educational Grants for NOVA are welcomed.)

Step 6: File Articles of Incorporation

Each Chapter shall file articles of incorporation within the state where the chapter will be based. This process will vary from state to state; contact your state government for more guidance. Click here for links to state websites to find out what is required in your state.

It is recommended that the chapter consider hiring legal counsel and a local accountant to assist in these matters. If you do not use an attorney, take advantage of your state employees charged with assisting in such matters. Filing fees in most states are under $100.00. (This is something to consider once your chapter is established, guidance can be provided upon request from NOVA National Office.)

Step 7: Obtain a Chapter EIN Number

Each Chapter is required to provide their EIN number to be a chartered chapter of NOVA. To apply for your chapter’s EIN you can apply online on the IRS website or you can complete form SS-4 and submit it directly to the IRS. A copy of the form is included with this document. Chapters can also obtain an EIN by calling the IRS Business & Specialty Tax Line (800-829-4933). An assistant will take the information, assign the EIN, and provide your number. You must provide NOVA with your chapter’s EIN number with the charter application.

Important Note

Each chapter shall be solely responsible for its debts and liabilities, and for fulfilling all requirements imposed by governmental authorities, including report and return requirements. Chapters shall not be responsible for the debts or liabilities of NOVA National, or for fulfilling requirements of NOVA National imposed by governmental authorities.
Step 8: Apply for Official Chapter Status

Once your chapter is established, you need to make it official! Click here to complete NOVA Chapter Charter Application Form at https://www.vanurse.org/page/startachapter. Include copies of the following items with your application:

- Officers & Directors List
- EIN (IRS Form SS-4). (Obtain within 6 months)
- Articles of Incorporation (Submit only if available)

When your application for chapter status is approved, you will receive written notice from the National Office. Your new chapter will be recognized during the NOVA Annual Meeting.