

Changes to Licensing Requirements (“Waivers”) for Professionals Licensed by the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing

This memo includes guidance for:

- Certified Registered Nurse Practitioners (CRNPs), including CRNP Prescriptive Authority Collaborative Agreements
- Registered Nurses (RNs) Retired RNs
- Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)
- Clinical Nurse Specialists
- Nursing School Graduates
- Practice Permits & Fees
- Retired RNs and CRNPs

Due to the COVID-19 emergency, the Department of State requested, and Governor Wolf granted, the extension for 90 days of certain license renewal deadlines which fall between April 30, 2020, and June 30, 2020. Any associated regulations that establish these dates are temporarily suspended. While the department will provide guidance encouraging licensees to renew on time, if possible, this waiver ensures that if they miss the deadline their licenses will remain valid, and they will have an additional 90 days to renew them.

Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner

CRNP license renewal deadlines will be extended from April 30, 2020, to July 29, 2020.

The BPOA has issued the following Temporary Waivers:

- CRNPs must have a collaborative agreement with all physicians with whom they collaborate throughout an emergency declaration.
- Under the waiver, CRNPs who have a collaborative agreement with a physician in a hospital or health system are now permitted to collaborate with other physician(s) within the same hospital or health system, without written and signed collaborative agreements. **Unless there is a Prescriptive Authority Collaborative Agreement, CRNPs may not prescribe and dispense under the additional collaboration.**
- Requirements are waived that CRNPs may only collaborate with physicians who hold current Pennsylvania licensure. This waiver will enable CRNPs to collaborate with physicians from other states. **Unless there is a Prescriptive Authority Collaborative Agreement, CRNPs may not prescribe and dispense under the additional collaboration.**

The following requirements have also been suspended:

- The restrictions traditionally requiring a CRNP practice within a specific clinical specialty are suspended in order to allow CRNPs to practice to their full capabilities and assist in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Restrictions which prohibit CRNPs from prescribing drugs outside of the established formulary are suspended.
- In the event that Board-recognized national CRNP certification examinations become unavailable during the COVID-19 pandemic, the requirement that CRNPs hold national certification in a particular specialty will be suspended during the declared emergency.

For applicants for certification as a CRNP by endorsement, the educational equivalence is suspended for active licensees of other states who hold Board recognized national certification.

Updated: March 30, 2020

CRNP Prescriptive Authority Collaborative Agreements

The following administrative requirements have been suspended:

- On an initial application for prescriptive authority, the State Board of Nursing will require only one collaborative physician and one substitute physician.
- During the emergency period, for changes to an existing prescriptive authority collaborative agreement (PACA), the Board of Nursing will suspend Board pre-approval requirements for the following:
 - Deletion or addition of drug categories
 - Change of controlled substances
 - Deletion or addition of substitute physicians
 - Changes to the circumstances and how often the collaborating physician will personally see the patient
 - Termination of the PACA
- For an additional prescriptive authority authorization, if a CRNP has one active Pennsylvania prescriptive authority with a physician, the CRNP, upon application, will be permitted to practice with a new collaborating physician for up to 6 months provided the CRNP and the new collaborating physician hold current unrestricted licenses.

Updated: March 30, 2020

Registered Nurse

RN license renewal deadlines will be extended from April 30, 2020, to July 29, 2020.

Temporary permits for nurses licensed in other states can be issued immediately **upon application, once licensure in the applicant's home state is verified through NURSYS**, based on a suspension approved by the Governor. The Governor also temporarily suspended continuing education requirements.

BPOA staff can check licensure status through NURSYS. BPOA may suspend any continuing education (C.E.) requirements for applicants seeking a temporary license.

For practitioners licensed in another state, the English language proficiency testing requirement for RN and PN Temporary Practice Permits is temporarily waived, due to the closure of testing centers during this disaster declaration.

Updated: March 30, 2020

Licensed Practical Nurse

LPN license renewal will be extended from June 30, 2020, to Sept. 28, 2020

For practitioners licensed in another state, the English language proficiency testing requirement for RN and PN Temporary Practice Permits is temporarily waived, due to the closure of testing centers during this disaster declaration.

The required 1,500 hours of education, or its equivalent, for PN licensure by endorsement is temporarily waived for PNs who hold a current license in another state and have graduated from a practical nursing education program approved by another state.

The required 1,500 hours of education, or its equivalent, for PN licensure by examination is temporarily waived for graduates of a practical nursing education program approved by another state.

Updated: March 30, 2020

Clinical Nurse Specialist

License renewal deadlines will be extended from April 30, 2020, to July 29, 2020. For CNS's who hold an active license in another state and current national certification must demonstrate educational equivalency for certification by endorsement. This requirement is temporarily waived.

Updated: March 30, 2020

Nursing School Graduates

Nursing school graduates who (1) have been issued "Authorizations to Test" by the Board, (2) who have been unable to sit for the licensure examinations due to cancellation of the examinations because of COVID-19, and (3) who do not already have a graduate permit **may immediately apply for a graduate permit** to allow them to assist in the pandemic response.

The graduate permit authorizes the graduate nurses to practice under supervision of a registered nurse. Supervision requires that a RN is physically present in the area or unit where the graduate nurse is practicing. The permits expire if the graduate permit holder fails the examination.

Updated: March 30, 2020

Practice Permits and Fees

In order to allow **nurses with temporary practice permits and nursing school graduates with graduate permits** to continue practicing during the COVID-19 pandemic disaster emergency, the following requirements have been changed and/or waived:

- Requirements which restrict temporary practice permits and graduate permits to a term of one year is suspended.
- For Registered Nurses, requirements to apply for an extension of an RN graduate permit or temporary permit, including any related fees and time-frames for extensions of temporary permits, are waived.
- For Practical Nurses, requirements to apply for an extension of an PN graduate permit or temporary permit, including any related fees and time-frames for extensions of temporary permits, are waived.
- All temporary and graduate permits that would normally expire during the next 90 days will be automatically extended for an additional 90 days.

Updated: March 30, 2020

Retired RNs, CNSs, and CRNPs

Registered Nurses (RNs), Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs), and Certified Registered Nurse Practitioners (CRNPs) who are expired/inactive for less than five years may apply for reactivation of their licenses with a suspension of the continuing education requirements. For reactivations granted to the above professionals, all reactivation fees for the licensees are suspended by the Governor.

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