

Chapter N 2

LICENSURE

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Note: Chapter N 4 as it existed on July 31, 1981 was repealed and a new chapter N 4 was created effective August 1, 1981. Chapter N 4 as it existed on March 31, 1984 was repealed and a new chapter N 2 was created effective April 1, 1984. Chapter N 2 as it existed on July 31, 2014 was repealed and a new chapter N 2 was created effective August 1, 2014.

Subchapter I — Authority; Definitions

N 2.01 Authority. (1) This chapter is adopted pursuant to authority of ss. 15.08, 227.11, and 441.01 (3), Stats.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; am. (2), Register, May, 1990, No. 413, eff. 5-1-90; correction in (1) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, May, 1990, No. 413, eff. 6-1-90; CR 14-002: r. and recr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8-1-14.

N 2.02 Definitions. As used in this chapter:

(1) “Board” means board of nursing.

(1m) “Board-approved prelicensure education program” means a nurse prelicensure program from a Wisconsin-approved school or a prelicensure program approved by another state board of nursing.

(2) “Board-approved school” means any of the following:

(a) A school in Wisconsin which has been approved by the board or the board has granted authorization to admit students under ch. N 1.

(b) A school which participates in the electronic application process.

(3) “Certificate of approval” means the verification from a school of nursing that the applicant has been approved to take the NCLEX prior to receiving a diploma in practical nursing or professional nursing.

(4) “Certificate of completion” means the verification from a school of nursing that the applicant has completed the portion of the program equivalent to a diploma in practical nursing or professional nursing.

(5) “Comparable school” means any of the following:

(a) A school holding nursing accreditation by a board-recognized nursing accreditation organization.

(b) A school located in the United States approved by the board of nursing for that jurisdiction.

(c) A school located in a U.S. territory or a province of Canada which is approved by the board of nursing for that jurisdiction and meets the standards of the Wisconsin board of nursing.

(6) “Department” means the department of safety and professional services.

(7) “Direct supervision” means immediate availability to coordinate, direct and inspect the practice of another.

(8) “LPN” means licensed practical nurse.

(8m) “Multistate license” means a license to practice as a registered or licensed practical nurse issued by Wisconsin that authorizes the licensed nurse to practice in all nurse licensure compact party states under a multistate licensure privilege.

(9) “NCLEX” means national council licensure examination.

(9m) “Party state” means any state that has adopted the nurse licensure compact.

(10) “RN” means registered nurse.

(11) “Single state license” means a license issued by Wisconsin that does not include a multistate licensure privilege to practice in any other nurse licensure compact party state.

History: Cr. Register, March, 1984, No. 339, eff. 4-1-84; renum. (1), (2), (4) to (6) to be (2), (1), (5), (6) and (4) and am. (2), (4) and (5) am. (3), Register, May, 1990, No. 413, eff. 6-1-90; CR 01-049: am. (2), cr. (5m), Register October 2001 No. 550, eff. 11-1-01; correction in (3) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 6., Stats., Register November 2011 No. 671; CR 14-002: r. and recr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8-1-14; CR 18-030 cr. (1m), (8m), (9m), (11) Register June 2019 No. 762, eff. 7-1-19; correction in (1m) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register June 2019 No. 762.

Subchapter II — Licensure By Examination

N 2.10 Qualifications for licensure. (1) REGISTERED NURSE APPLICANTS FOR A SINGLE STATE LICENSE. An applicant is eligible for a registered nurse single state license if the applicant complies with all of the following requirements:

(a) Graduates from a high school or its equivalent.

(b) Does not have an arrest or conviction record, subject to ss. 111.321, 111.322 and 111.335, Stats.

(c) Graduates from any of the following:

1. A board-approved school of professional nursing.

2. A comparable school of professional nursing.

(d) In lieu of meeting the requirement in par. (c), evidence of general and professional educational qualifications comparable to those required in this state at the time of graduation.

(e) Passes the NCLEX.

(1m) REGISTERED NURSE APPLICANTS FOR A MULTISTATE LICENSE. An applicant is eligible for a registered nurse multistate license if the applicant meets all of the following requirements:

(a) Graduated from one of the following:

1. A board-approved prelicensure education program.

2. A foreign-registered nurse prelicensure education program that has been approved by the authorized accrediting body in the applicable country and has been verified by an independent credentials review agency to be comparable to a board-approved prelicensure education program.

(b) If a graduate from a foreign prelicensure education program not taught in English or if English is not the individual's native language, successfully passed an English proficiency

examination that includes the components of reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

(c) Successfully passed an NCLEX or recognized predecessor examination.

(d) Is eligible for or holds an active, unencumbered license.

(e) Has not been convicted or found guilty, or has entered into an agreed disposition, of a felony offense under applicable state or federal criminal law.

(f) Has not been convicted or found guilty, or has entered into an agreed disposition, of a misdemeanor offense related to the practice of nursing.

(g) Is not currently enrolled in an alternative program.

(h) Is subject to self-disclosure requirements regarding current participation in an alternative program.

(i) Holds a valid United States social security number.

(2) LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE APPLICANTS FOR A SINGLE STATE LICENSE. An applicant is eligible for a single state practical nurse license if the applicant complies with all of the following requirements:

(a) Completed two years of high school or its equivalent.

(b) Is 18 years or older.

(c) Does not have an arrest or conviction record, subject to ss. 111.321, 111.322 and 111.335.

(d) Graduates from any of the following:

1. A board-approved school of practical nursing.

2. A comparable school of practical nursing.

(e) In lieu of meeting the requirement in par. (d), evidence of general and professional educational qualifications comparable to those required in this state at the time of graduation.

(f) Passes the NCLEX.

(2m) LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE APPLICANTS FOR A MULTISTATE LICENSE. An applicant is eligible for a practical nurse multistate license if the applicant meets all of the following requirements:

(a) Graduated from one of the following:

1. A board-approved precicensure education program.

2. A foreign practical nurse precicensure education program that has been approved by the authorized accrediting body in the applicable country and has been verified by an independent credentials review agency to be comparable to a board-approved precicensure education program.

(b) If a graduate from a foreign precicensure education program not taught in English or if English is not the individual's native language, successfully passed an English proficiency examination that includes the components of reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

(c) Successfully passed an NCLEX or recognized predecessor examination.

(d) Is eligible for or holds an active, unencumbered license.

(e) Has not been convicted or found guilty, or has entered into an agreed disposition, of a felony offense under applicable state or federal criminal law.

(f) Has not been convicted or found guilty, or has entered into an agreed disposition, of a misdemeanor offense related to the practice of nursing.

(g) Is not currently enrolled in an alternative program.

(h) Is subject to self-disclosure requirements regarding current participation in an alternative program.

(i) Holds a valid United States social security number.

History: CR 14-002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8-1-14; correction in (2) (intro.) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 18-030: am. (1) (intro.), (2) (intro.), cr. (1m), (2m) Register June 2019 No. 762, eff. 7-1-19; corrections in (1m) (a) 1., 2., (2m) (a) 1., 2. made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register June 2019 No. 762.

N 2.105 Application procedure for a multistate license. (1) Each applicant for a multistate license shall complete and submit an application by the electronic application process or on forms provided by the department, declare Wisconsin as the primary state of residence, and pay the fee.

(2) The educational administrator or designee for a board-approved precicensure education program shall submit one of the following:

(a) Via the electronic application process a verification that the applicant has graduated.

(b) A certification of graduation.

(c) An official transcript indicating graduation.

(3) If the applicant graduated from a foreign precicensure education program, the applicant shall submit a certificate or report demonstrating verification from an independent credentials review agency that the precicensure education program is comparable to a board-approved precicensure education program.

(4) If the applicant graduated from a foreign precicensure program that was not taught in English or if English is not the applicant's native language, the applicant shall submit proof of successfully passing an English proficiency examination that includes the components of reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

(5) (a) The board shall notify the applicant of eligibility for admission to the NCLEX once it receives verification of one of the following:

1. Certificate of approval.

2. Graduation.

(b) The applicant shall contact the examination provider to schedule the NCLEX date and time within one year from the time the notice of eligibility is received by the applicant.

(c) The board shall send notification of results to applicants who fail to earn a passing score on the NCLEX. An applicant may apply to the board for authorization to schedule reexamination. The reexamination may not occur earlier than 45 days after the most recent sitting for the NCLEX.

(6) The applicant shall submit, through an approved process, fingerprints or other biometric-based information for the purpose of obtaining an applicant's criminal history information from the federal bureau of investigation and the Wisconsin department of justice.

(7) If the applicant has been convicted or found guilty, or has entered into an agreed disposition, of a misdemeanor offense, the applicant shall provide the board all related information necessary for the board to determine whether the circumstances substantially relate to the practice of nursing.

History: CR 18-030: cr. Register June 2019 No. 762, eff. 7-1-19; corrections in (1), (2) (intro.), (3) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register June 2019 No. 762.

N 2.11 Application procedure for a single state license for applicants from board-approved schools. (1) Each applicant from a board-approved school shall complete and submit an application by the electronic application process or on forms provided by the department and shall pay the fee.

(2) The educational administrator or designee for a school of professional nursing or practical nursing shall submit any of the following:

(a) Via the electronic application process a verification that the applicant has graduated or received a certificate of completion.

(b) A certification of graduation or completion to the department.

(3) (a) The examination accepted by the board is the NCLEX.

(b) The board shall notify the applicant of eligibility for admission to the NCLEX once it receives verification of any of the following:

1. Certificate of approval.

2. Graduation.
3. Certificate of completion.

(c) The applicant shall contact the examination provider to schedule the NCLEX date and time within one year from the time the notice of eligibility is received by the applicant.

(d) The board shall send notification of results to applicants who fail to earn a passing score on the NCLEX. An applicant may apply to the board for authorization to schedule reexamination. The reexamination may not occur earlier than 45 days after the most recent sitting for the NCLEX.

(4) An applicant who has a pending criminal charge or has been convicted of any crime or ordinance violation shall provide the board all related information necessary for the board to determine whether the circumstances of the arrest or conviction or other offense substantially relate to the practice of nursing.

(5) An applicant who has committed any act, which would be subject to discipline under ch. N 7, shall provide the board with all related information regarding the act necessary for the board to make a determination on the application for licensure.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14; correction to (3) (title) and renumbering (3) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 1. and 2., Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 18–030: am. (title) Register June 2019 No. 762, eff. 7–1–19.

N 2.12 Application procedure for a single state license for applicants from comparable schools.

(1) Each applicant from a comparable school shall complete and submit an application on forms provided by the department.

(2) The school of professional nursing or practical nursing shall forward directly to the department, official transcripts of nursing education for applicants who graduated from the school. If the applicant graduated from a school of professional nursing or practical nursing not located in the United States or a U.S. territory, the applicant shall submit any of the following:

- (a) For a professional nursing applicant, one of the following:

1. A valid certificate issued by the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools or another board–approved entity that evaluates education.

2. A credential evaluation service academic report and demonstration of passing a board–accepted language proficiency exam.

(b) For a practical nursing applicant, a credential evaluation service academic report and demonstration of passing a board accepted language proficiency exam.

- (3) (a) The examination accepted by the board is the NCLEX.

(b) The board shall notify the applicant of eligibility for admission to the NCLEX once it receives verification of any of the following:

1. Certificate of approval.
2. Graduation.

(c) The applicant shall contact the examination provider to schedule the NCLEX date and time within one year from the time the notice of eligibility is received by the applicant.

(d) The board shall send notification of results to applicants who fail to earn a passing score on the NCLEX. An applicant may apply to the board for authorization to schedule reexamination. The reexamination may not occur earlier than 45 days after the most recent sitting for the NCLEX.

(4) An applicant who has a pending criminal charge or has been convicted of any crime or ordinance violation shall provide the board all related information necessary for the board to determine whether the circumstances of the arrest or conviction or other offense substantially relate to the practice of nursing.

(5) An applicant who has committed any act, which would be subject to discipline under ch. N 7, shall provide the board with

all related information regarding the act necessary for the board to make a determination on the application for licensure.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14; correction to (3) (title) and renumbering (3) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 1. and 2., Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 18–030: am. (title) Register June 2019 No. 762, eff. 7–1–19; CR 19–140: am. (2) (intro.), renum. (2) (a) to (2) (a) (intro.) and am., cr. (2) (a) 1., 2. Register June 2020 No. 774, eff. 7–1–20.

Subchapter III — Licensure by Endorsement

N 2.19 Endorsement of an applicant for a multistate license. (1) Each applicant for a multistate license by endorsement shall complete and submit an application on forms provided by the department and shall pay the fee.

- (2) The applicant shall provide all of the following:

(a) Evidence of holding an active, unencumbered license.

(b) Declaration or evidence that Wisconsin is the primary state of residence.

- (c) Evidence of graduation from one of the following:

1. A board–approved nurse prelicensure education program.

2. A foreign nurse prelicensure education program that has been approved by the authorizing accrediting body in the applicable country and has been verified by an independent credentials review agency to be comparable to a board–approved prelicensure education program.

(d) If the applicant graduated from a foreign prelicensure program not taught in English or if English is not the applicant's native language, evidence of successfully passing an English proficiency examination that includes the components of reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

(e) Evidence of successfully passing an NCLEX exam or recognized predecessor.

(f) If the applicant has been convicted or found guilty, or has entered into an agreed disposition, of a misdemeanor offense, all related information necessary for the board to determine whether the circumstances substantially relate to the practice of nursing.

(3) The applicant shall submit, through an approved process, fingerprints or other biometric data for the purpose of obtaining criminal history record information from the federal bureau of investigation and the Wisconsin department of justice.

History: CR 18–030: cr. Register June 2019 No. 762, eff. 7–1–19; corrections in (2) (c) 1., 2. made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register June 2019 No. 762.

N 2.21 Endorsement of an applicant for a single state license. (1) (a) A license from another U.S. state, a U.S. territory, or Canada is considered to have met educational and other qualifications comparable to those required in this state provided the requirements of the initial license included all of the following:

1. Graduation from a school approved by the board in the jurisdiction of initial licensure or had education the board in the jurisdiction of initial licensure deemed to be comparable to a school that board approves.

2. Passage of the NCLEX.

(b) An applicant, whose initial license from another U.S. state, U.S. territory, or Canada does not meet the requirements in par. (a), shall submit all of the following to the board to assist the board in determining whether the qualifications are comparable:

1. Evidence of educational qualifications.

2. Evidence of passing the NCLEX or other nursing licensure examination.

(2) An applicant shall submit a completed application and pay the applicable fee. The application shall include the following:

(a) Verification of licensure from the state, territory or province in which the original license by examination was issued and the state, territory or province in which the current, active license was issued.

(b) Documentation of employment history.

(c) An applicant who has a pending criminal charge or has been convicted of any crime or ordinance violation shall provide the board with all related information necessary for the board to determine whether the circumstances of the arrest or conviction or other offense substantially relate to the practice of nursing.

(d) An applicant who has a license encumbered by adverse action shall provide the board with all related information necessary to determine whether the board deems the action taken to warrant a denial in Wisconsin.

(e) An applicant who has been terminated from any employment related to nursing within the 10 years immediately preceding the date of application shall provide the board with all related information necessary to determine current competency.

(f) An applicant who has committed any act, which would be subject to discipline under ch. N 7, shall provide the board with all related information regarding the act necessary for the board to make a determination on the application for licensure.

(3) An applicant who does not have current nursing education or been employed in a position that requires a nursing license within the last 5 years may apply to the board for a limited license to enable the applicant to complete a nursing refresher course approved by the board. Upon successful completion of an approved nursing refresher course, the license holder may petition the board for full licensure.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14; correction in (1) (a) (intro.) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 7., Stats., Register December 2018 No. 756; CR 18–030: am. (title) Register June 2019 No. 762, eff. 7–1–19; CR 19–140: am. (title), (1) (a) (intro.), (b) (intro.), (2) (e) Register June 2020 No. 774, eff. 7–1–20.

N 2.23 Reciprocal credentials for service members, former service members, and their spouses. A reciprocal multistate or single state license shall be granted to a service member, former service member, or the spouse of a service member or former service member who the board determines meets all of the requirements under s. 440.09 (2), Stats. Subject to s. 440.09 (2m), Stats., the board may request verification necessary to make a determination as to service member or former service member status under this subsection.

Note: Forms to apply for a reciprocal credential are available from the department of safety and professional services' website at www.dsp.wi.gov.

History: CR 21–044: cr. Register March 2022 No. 795, eff. 4–1–22; title created under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 2., Stats., Register March 2022 No. 795.

Subchapter IV — Temporary Permits

N 2.30 Definitions. In this subchapter:

(1) “G.N.” means graduate nurse.

(2) “G.P.N.” means graduate practical nurse.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14.

N 2.31 Application. A nurse who has graduated from a board–approved school or comparable school or granted a certificate of completion by a board–approved school may be granted a temporary permit. An applicant shall submit a completed application and pay the applicable fee. The application shall include any of the following:

(1) Verification from a board–approved school via the electronic application process that the applicant has graduated or received a certificate of completion.

(2) A certification of graduation or completion from a board–approved school.

(3) An official transcript of nursing education submitted by the school of professional nursing or practical nursing directly to the department.

Note: A temporary permit does not grant multistate licensure privileges.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14.

N 2.32 Title. (1) A registered nurse applicant for licensure by exam who is granted a temporary permit may use the title “graduate nurse” or the letters “G.N.”

(2) A practical nurse applicant for licensure by exam who is granted a temporary permit may use the title “graduate practical nurse” or the letters “G.P.N.”

(3) A registered nurse or practical nurse for licensure by endorsement who is granted a temporary permit may use the title “registered nurse” or “licensed practical nurse.”

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14.

N 2.33 Supervision. (1) Except as provided in sub. (2), the holder of a temporary permit shall practice only under the direct supervision of a registered nurse.

(2) A holder of a temporary permit who is currently licensed as a registered nurse or practical nurse in another jurisdiction may practice without the direct supervision of a registered nurse.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14.

N 2.34 Duration. The temporary permit is valid for a period of 3 months or until the holder receives notification of failing the NCLEX, whichever occurs first. Practice under temporary permits, including renewals under s. N 2.35, may not exceed 6 months total duration.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14.

N 2.35 Renewal. (1) A temporary permit for a registered nurse or practical nurse may be renewed once by completing an application and paying applicable fees.

(2) Subsequent renewals may be granted in hardship cases including illness, family illness or death, accident, natural disaster or delay of verification from another state. The board shall consider each application for renewal under this subsection individually on its merits, and the board may grant a renewal as deemed appropriate.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14; CR 19–140: am. (1) Register June 2020 No. 774, eff. 7–1–20.

N 2.36 Denial or revocation. A temporary permit may be denied or revoked for the following:

(1) Providing fraudulent information on an application for licensure.

(2) Misrepresentation of being an R.N., G.N., L.P.N. or G.P.N. without holding a valid temporary permit.

(3) Violation of any of the rules of conduct set forth in ch. N 7.

History: CR 14–002: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14.

Subchapter V — Renewal

N 2.40 Renewal. (1) GENERAL. A person with an expired credential may not reapply for a credential using the initial application process.

(2) RENEWAL WITHIN 5 YEARS. A person renewing the credential within 5 years shall do all of the following:

(a) Pay the renewal fee as determined by the department under s. 440.03 (9) (a), Stats., and any applicable late renewal fee.

(b) Pay a nursing workforce survey fee.

(c) Complete the nursing workforce survey to the satisfaction of the board.

(3) RENEWAL AFTER 5 YEARS. This subsection does not apply to credential holders who have unmet disciplinary requirements or whose credential has been surrendered or revoked. A person renewing the credential after 5 years shall do all of the following:

(a) Pay the renewal fee as determined by the department under s. 440.03 (9) (a), Stats., and the late renewal fee.

(b) Pay a nursing workforce survey fee.

(c) Complete the nursing workforce survey to the satisfaction of the board.

(d) Meet one of the following requirements:

1. Documentation of employment requiring a nursing license within the last five years.

2. Completion of a board approved nursing refresher course or education equivalent to a nursing refresher course. A nursing refresher course requires a limited license for the purpose of completing the clinical component of the course.

Note: The licensee may request the Board grant a limited license for the sole purpose of completing a nurse refresher course.

History: CR 15-099; cr. Register August 2016 No. 728, eff. 9-1-16.

N 2.41 Reinstatement. A credential holder who has

unmet disciplinary requirements and failed to renew the credential within 5 years or whose credential has been surrendered or revoked may apply to have the credential reinstated in accordance with all of the following:

(1) Evidence of completion of the requirements in s. N 2.40 (3) if the license has not been active within 5 years.

(2) Evidence of completion of the disciplinary requirements, if applicable.

(3) Evidence of rehabilitation or change in circumstances warranting reinstatement.

(4) A revoked license may not be reinstated earlier than one year following revocation. This subsection does not apply to a license that is revoked under s. 440.12, Stats.

History: CR 15-099; cr. Register August 2016 No. 728, eff. 9-1-16.