



Background

- The NLC allows a nurse (RN and LPN/VN) to have one multistate license in the nurse's primary state of residency (the home state) and practice in other compact states (remote states), while subject to each state's practice laws and discipline.
- Lawful practice requires that a nurse be licensed or have the privilege to practice in the state in which the patient is located at the time care is directed or service is rendered. This pertains to practice by physical or electronic means.
- Nurses holding a multistate license are allowed to practice across state lines, except when practice is limited to the home state due to a restriction on the license or some level of disciplinary action.
- Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) are not included in this compact. APRNs must apply for licensure in each state in which they practice unless exempted when employed in a federal facility.
- To view a map of compact states, visit www.ncsbn.org/nlc.

Definitions

- **Compact:** An interstate agreement between two or more states established for the purpose of remedying a particular problem of multistate concern (*Black's Law Dictionary*).
- **Party or Compact State:** Any state that has adopted the NLC.
- **Home State:** The party state that serves as the nurse's primary state of residence.
- **Primary State of Residence:** The state in which a nurse declares a principal residence for legal purposes. Sources used to verify a nurse's primary residence may include driver's license, federal income tax return, Military Form #2058 or voter registration.
- **Remote State:** A party state other than the home state where the patient is located at the time nursing care is provided or in the case of the practice of nursing not involving a patient, a party state where the recipient of nursing practice is located.
- **Nursys®:** A database with a free public access website (www.nursys.com) that contains the licensure and disciplinary information of all licensed registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical/vocational nurses (LPN/VNs), as contributed by party states.

Employer Verification of a Nurse's Licensure Status

- Employers need to verify the licensure status of all nurses seeking employment. Many state boards of nursing have gone paperless and no longer issue a wallet size license card. NCSBN's online verification system, Nursys® (www.nursys.com), provides licensure data obtained directly from the licensure systems of boards of nursing through frequent database updates.
- It is important to verify licenses online with Nursys or with the state board of nursing where the nurse is licensed.
- All NLC states provide licensure data to Nursys. Many, but not all non-NLC states provide licensure data to Nursys. To view a map of Nursys licensure-participating boards of nursing, visit <https://www.nursys.com/NLV/LicenseVerificationJurisdictions.aspx>.
- For those states that submit licensure data to Nursys, employers can verify a nurse's license and receive a Licensure Quick Confirm report at no cost by visiting www.nursys.com. The report will contain the nurse's name, jurisdiction, license type, license number, compact status (multistate/single state), license status, expiration date, discipline against license and discipline against privilege to practice.
- For those states that do not submit licensure data to Nursys, employers can verify a nurse's license via a board of nursing website, however, they will not have access to the licensee's licensure, discipline or privilege to practice status in other states.
- To verify temporary licenses, employers must contact the board of nursing that issued the temporary license.

Licensure and Privileges

- A nurse licensed in a compact state must meet the licensure requirements in the primary state of residence (home state). When practicing on a privilege in a remote state, the nurse is accountable for complying with the Nurse Practice Act of that state.
- Compact states may issue a multistate or a single state license. Employers should verify licensure status online.
- A nurse with an active multistate license has the privilege to practice in any of the remote states.
- The NLC laws allow for the nurse to hold only one active license in his or her primary state of residence. Employers should not require the nurse to apply for licensure in a remote state when the nurse has lawfully declared a primary state of residence based on where he or she pays federal income tax, votes and holds a drivers license.
- A nurse who holds a license issued by a state that is not a member of the NLC has a single-state license that is only valid in that state.
- While under some levels of disciplinary action, multistate privileges may be removed and the nurse's practice may be restricted to the home state.

Requirements when a Nurse Moves

- When a nurse declares a new compact state as his or her primary state of residence, the nurse must apply for licensure by endorsement in the new state of residency.
- When a nurse changes primary state of residency by moving from one compact state to another, the nurse can practice on the former license for up to 30 days. The 30-day period begins on the nurse's first day of employment. If the licensee begins employment before changing the primary state of residence, the 30 days begins upon the date that the licensee establishes a new primary state of residence. Obtaining a drivers license in the new state, for example, would signify the establishment of a new primary state of residence. The nurse is required to apply for licensure by endorsement and complete a declaration of primary state of residency in the new home state, whereby a new multistate license is issued and the former license is made inactive.
- Licensure renewal cycles vary state to state. Nurses are required to promptly declare a new state of residency when they obtain a new drivers license, change where federal taxes are paid or register to vote and must not wait for their license to lapse or expire in the prior home state.

Complaints

Should you need to report a nurse practice violation, contact the state board of nursing where the nurse is practicing or report the information to the board of nursing in the home state of licensure.



For more information about NLC, visit www.ncsbn.org/nlc or e-mail nursecompact@ncsbn.org.