

STATE OF COLORADO

Board of Nursing



Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies
Division of Registrations

The Nurse Licensure Compact

What is the Nurse Licensure Compact?

The Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) is a mutual recognition model of nurse licensure that allows a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse to hold one license in his/her primary state of residence (home state) and to practice in all states that have entered into the interstate compact (multi-state licensure).

Under multi-state licensure, practice in other compact states is allowed, whether physical or electronic, unless the nurse's license is under discipline or there exists a monitoring agreement that restricts practice. The mutual recognition model is similar to the motor vehicle driver's license model that allows United States citizens to drive throughout the country on a driver's license issued by a single state. Participating states enter into the interstate compact through legislation.

Colorado's Implementation Plan

On July 1, 2006, Senate Bill 06-020 became law, allowing the Colorado Board of Nursing to enter into a multi-state nurse licensure compact. The bill establishes relationships between participating states in the areas of licensure, discipline, and information sharing.

Colorado's Nurse Licensure Compact is effective on October 1, 2007.

Eligible License Types

The NLC includes registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical or vocational nurses (LPN/VNs).

The NLC does not include advanced practice nurses. Nurses holding an unencumbered license in Colorado on the Advanced Practice Registry must obtain advanced practice authority in each state in which they practice as an advanced practice nurse.

State of Residence Determines State of Issuance of License

In the NLC, a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse – whose primary state of residence (home state) is a compact state – will be issued a multi-state license by the home state and will no longer need individual licenses to practice in other compact states (remote states). By virtue of the NLC, the licensee is granted the “multi-state privilege” to practice in all compact states.

A nurse may hold a license in only one compact state. Upon moving their permanent residence to another compact state, RNs or LPNs will be required to apply for and be issued a nurse license by the new state of residency.

RNs and LPNs whose primary state of residence is a compact state:

- Receive a “multi-state” license and may practice in all compact states if his/her license is unencumbered;
- Must apply for and receive a “single state” license to practice in non-compact state(s).

RNs and LPNs whose primary state of residence is a non-compact state:

- Must apply for and receive a “single state” license in each state (compact or non-compact) in which s/he will practice.

Verification of Licensure

The state that issues the nursing license can also verify the status of that license.

It is the responsibility of the employer to verify licensure of nurses they employ at all significant times of change in status. Significant times include any time a nurse changes state of residence.

An employer may also verify licensure and whether a license is a single state license or a multi-state license by connecting to the national database at www.nursys.com.

Scope of Practice of the RN/LPN

The NLC provides that the nurse be held accountable for the nursing practice laws and other regulations in the state in which the patient receives care. The accountability for safe practice by a nurse is no different from what is expected under single state licensure.

Reporting and Processing Complaints

Complaints may be reported to either the home state or the remote state, and both may conduct the investigation. All investigative information would be shared between the compact states involved. The NLC provides for both the home state and remote state, where the patient is located at the time of the incident, to take action and thus directly address the behavior of the nurse licensed by the compact state.

The home state may take disciplinary action against the nurse's license while the remote state(s) may take action against the nurse's practice privilege. (The home state may restrict or take other action against the license, and the remote state may deny the nurse's privilege to practice in that state.)

The NLC enhances the home state's ability to discipline via exchange of investigative information. Having the most current and accurate information enables the home state to determine an appropriate course of action in disciplinary cases.

States Participating in the NLC

<u>State</u>	<u>Implementation</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Implementation</u>
Arizona	7/1/2002	New Mexico	1/1/2004
Arkansas	7/1/2000	North Carolina	7/1/2000
Delaware	7/1/2000	North Dakota	1/1/2004
Idaho	7/1/2001	South Carolina	2/1/2006
Iowa	7/1/2000	South Dakota	1/1/2001
Maine	7/1/2001	Tennessee	7/2/2003
Maryland	7/1/1999	Texas	1/1/2000
Mississippi	7/1/2001	Utah	1/1/2000
Nebraska	1/1/2001	Virginia	1/1/2005
New Hampshire	1/1/2006	Wisconsin	1/1/2000

Implementation Pending

<u>State</u>	<u>Implementation</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Implementation</u>
Colorado	10/1/2007	Kentucky	6/1/2007

Additional Information

Additional general information regarding the compact may be found in the Nurse Licensure Compact section of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) website at www.ncsbn.org.

Information on the implementation of the Nurse Licensure Compact in Colorado will be provided on the Colorado Board of Nursing website at www.dora.co.us/nursing.

Questions or comments may be addressed to:

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