



ALABAMA BOARD OF NURSING

INSIGHTS

A Message from the Executive Officer

Focus on RN Renewal 2020

With RN Renewal 2020 just a few short days away, this newsletter is intended to give our licensees a rundown of some significant changes this year.

As everyone is aware, 2020 has been one of the most impactful years in the history of healthcare in our state. This year has seen nurses make amazing contributions to the health and safety of Alabama patients, as our nation strives to contain and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

But before most Alabamians had even heard of coronavirus, nursing in our state already was undergoing a historic transition. On January 1, Alabama officially became a party to the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). Today, nurses who choose multistate licenses issued by the Board are free to work in 34 other states without obtaining licenses there. The same is true for licensees from any of those other states who choose to work in Alabama.

It is impossible to overstate what NLC participation has done for Alabama nurses, patients, and employers. However, any change of this magnitude carries with it the responsibility to get the regulatory side of it right. The Board and Board staff have drastically altered the way that we approach licensing. The following pages are our chance to explain these changes, as more than 85,000 RNs approach this year's Renewal period.

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Reminder: ABN Offices Closed to the Public Due to COVID-19

Pursuant to the orders of Governor Kay Ivey in response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Board has resumed normal operations. However, the Board's offices remain closed to the public until further notice. Please understand that we have taken this action out of necessity, and that the Board

remains ready, willing, and able to help through electronic means.

As always, if you require assistance with any issue, please feel free to contact us via telephone, social media, Live Chat on the Board's website, or by emailing us at abn@abn.alabama.gov.

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APN NEWS

Out-of-State Advanced Practice Nurses with Compact Licenses Must Provide Notice to the ABN or Risk Lapsing their Approvals

As Alabama is now a member of the Nurse Licensure Compact, it is no longer necessary for CRNPs, CNMs, CRNAs, and CNSs who hold valid multistate RN licenses (MSL) in other states to maintain their Alabama RN license. However, the Compact does not govern advanced practice, so these providers must maintain their Alabama APRN approvals.

Any APRN with a non-Alabama RN MSL must provide notice to the Board of his or her home state license status. These nurses will not be required to renew their Alabama RN licenses in 2020, and will have their Alabama APRN renewal dates reset to December 31 of odd years, beginning in 2021. However, those APRNs who fail to provide this notice are subject to lapsing and losing their legal authorization to engage in advanced practice nursing.

With all single state RN licenses set to expire on December 31, it is imperative that this requirement be met.

The notification form is available on the [ABN website](#), and should be returned by fax, at (334) 293-5201, or email to advancedpractice@abn.alabama.gov. There is no application fee for this form.

NOTES

Free CE Offerings Available on the ABN Website

As RNs prepare to renew in 2020, many are looking for opportunities to earn the 24 hours of continuing education (CE) that are required of every nurse each renewal cycle. As we have for many years, the ABN is pleased to offer licensees dozens of hours of Board-developed CE, at no cost to the nurse. To access these courses, simply log into [My Profile](#) on the Board's website and choose "My CE Record." On this page, you are able to review your current CE credit and to access the courses, using the "Online Courses" tab.

We encourage all licensees to visit the page regularly, as new courses are added throughout the year and there is never a charge for taking them.

Renewal Demographic Questions are Vital to Nursing's Future

Each year during renewal, nurses have the opportunity to ensure the future of the profession, by responding to a series of voluntary demographic questions. While participation is not required, the Board encourages everyone to respond to the survey, which is used to assemble a national data set for regulators and employers to make crucial decisions regarding workforce needs for the future. As you prepare to renew this year, please consider answering this survey. Your individual responses will never be shared, as the Board remains committed to preserving your privacy.

LICENSING NOTES

Reminder: RNs with Multistate Licenses Not Required to Renew in 2020

Upon entering the NLC, the Board established a bifurcated RN renewal process, to ease the transition. While RNs with SSLs continue to renew their licenses in even-numbered years, MSL RN licenses expire in odd-numbered years, beginning in 2021. Accordingly, any RN who has converted his or her single state license to a multistate license is not required to renew in 2020. Please take note of this, as the renewal application is designed to eliminate duplicate licensure.

SSL to MSL Conversion

The Board is happy to allow RNs to apply to convert their Alabama SSLs to MSLs throughout the renewal period. However, the MSL process includes a fingerprint background check, which can take several weeks to complete. If you apply for conversion during renewal, you may be required to renew your SSL, to avoid having your licensure lapse on December 31.

Nurses Holding MSLs Issued by Other States No Longer Required to Renew Their RN Licenses

As a party to the NLC, the ABN now recognizes MSLs issued by other Compact states. Any RN who holds a valid, unencumbered MSL issued by a state other than Alabama is no longer required to maintain RN licensure in Alabama. If you hold such a license, you should not renew, and allow your Alabama RN license to lapse. However, if you are an advanced practice nurse (APN) who holds an MSL from another state, you must notify the Board of your home state licensure status (using the attached form) prior to the end of 2020 renewal, or your Alabama advanced practice approval will lapse. If your approval lapses, you will no longer be authorized to engage in advanced practice in this state.

Urgent Reminder for Nurses with Pending SSL-to-MSL Applications

Alabama nurses are understandably excited by the opportunity to apply for multistate licenses (MSLs) and thousands have applied to convert to this license type from the single state license (SSL). However, a large number of these applications remain pending, as the Board awaits further information (such as documentation of adequate CE) to complete them. Unfortunately, those nurses whose applications remain incomplete risk having their SSLs lapse in December, prior to completing the MSL application process. These nurses have two options for maintaining licensure:

1. Completing the pending RN MSL application, at which time these nurses will be granted a multistate license, which is valid through December 31, 2021. No additional licensure fees will be due to the Board, as the \$200.00 MSL fee was paid at the time of application.

OR

2. Renewing their RN SSLs, at an additional cost of \$100.00, during the 2020 Renewal Period, which begins on September 1, 2020. Those RNs who choose to renew their SSLs should be aware that their pending MSL applications will remain pending, until one year from the date on which it was filed, at which time the application will expire.

Please feel free to direct any questions to licensing@abn.alabama.gov.

State of Alabama



MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

As we move forward through these unprecedented conditions, I continue to reflect on the hard work, dedication, and daily strength required to be a nurse. We, the nurses, truly have a spirit of compassion and empathy that drives and enables us to keep going when others cannot. I know that you work hard daily, and give so much of yourselves to everyone. As a nurse, mother, sister, daughter, friend, and advocate, I cannot begin to tell you how very proud I am of each and every one of you. Thank you so much for choosing nursing as your career and for being here in the moment of need. You make all the difference in the lives of so many people; life would not be the same without nurses!

Thank You Alabama Nurses,
Peggy

Our nation faces a substance abuse crisis.

At the Alabama Board of Nursing, we see every day the devastating effects of the disease of addiction, which destroys families, careers, and lives.

But we also see the hope that comes with successful recovery.

We want to spread that hope and we want you to help us. If you or a loved one has experienced a successful recovery from addiction, you can share your story with others and contribute to our efforts to fight the substance abuse crisis in America.

**Simply send your story to
testimonials@abn.alabama.gov**

and we may share it, or parts of it, through our continuing campaign to encourage recovery among Alabama nurses and the public. You can be assured that you remain anonymous and that your personal information will never be shared without your consent.

**If you have a recovery story to share,
please send it and know that you have
helped us help others build a better life.**



**Voluntary
Disciplinary
Alternative
Program**