

Advancing a culture of health.

ONL Position Statement: Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact

The enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC) is a multi-state licensing solution that allows nursing practice to be fluid and uninterrupted across state lines. Nurse leaders from across Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Vermont are committed to advancing health through leadership and support enacting the eNLC across New England. Currently, 34 states across our country have adopted required (standardized) language to participate in the eNLC. Nurses who hold such a compact license are eligible to work in any of the 34 participating states. In New England, New Hampshire and Maine are members of the eNLC.

All nurses must take the same national licensing exam known as NCLEX. This is different than licensing practices for other disciplines, where exams vary by state. Each nurse must pass the National licensure exam- NCLEX before having eligibility to apply for a license to practice nursing in a state or from the enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact.

The Organization of Nurse Leaders (ONL) Believes:

Becoming a compact state standardizes and unifies the nursing licensure process ensuring uniformity across states and across the country. Adoption of the compact achieves positive outcomes for patients and health care consumers that are essential to state and national efforts to transform the health care delivery system including:

Public safety

- A centralized licensure process for nurses provides greater assurance for public safety with uniformity in the licensing process along with timely and complete sharing of information among states.
- A standardized approach to nurse licensure including required background checks, improves public safety.

Access to timely health care and improved organizational onboarding processes

- Care coordination and continuity are critical aspects of health care quality. When nurses are able to practice across state lines, communication improves, and unnecessary, expensive, and burdensome medical visits decrease.
- Ending confusing and redundant licensure regulations between states.
- Facilitating hiring processes to enable organizations to onboard qualified nurses to care for patients across the health care continuum.
- Telemedicine practices can be fully implemented to improve access to health care for patients with mobility restrictions, those living in rural areas, or families with transportation challenges, when multi-state licensure is enacted.

Centralized oversight, streamlined processes, improved emergency preparedness

- Clarifying the authority to practice for nurses currently engaged in telenursing and interstate practice.
- Effective interstate communication on nursing licensure and enforcement issues to enhance patient safety and public protection.
- Ensuring earlier identification of nurses facing adverse actions in other states via the NURSYS database, only available for nurses with compact licenses.
- Decreasing financial expenses and mental burden for nurses who must apply and maintain nursing licenses in multiple states.
- Improving emergency preparedness by ensuring the availability and rapid deployment of qualified, licensed nurses in response to a disaster or statewide emergency.

The Organization of Nurse Leaders (ONL) Supports:

- Legislative efforts to implement the enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC)

Background and Additional Information

National Council of State Boards of Nursing

NCSBN is a not-for-profit organization whose U.S. members include the nursing regulatory bodies in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and four U.S. territories.

History

The first version of this licensing model was first implemented in 2000 and is known as the Nurse Licensure Compact. The eNLC is an improved entity that expands and strengthens the original Nurse License Compact (NLC).

Uniform License Requirements

Uniform License Requirements can be found: https://www.ncsbn.org/NLC_ULRs.pdf

For additional information and for details of how the enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact is being implemented, please visit the website of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. <https://www.ncsbn.org/nurse-licensure-compact.htm>