



## Iowa Board of Nursing

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To: Registered Nurses (RN) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN)  
Issued Emergency Licenses  
From: Kathy Weinberg, Executive Director  
Date: April 29, 2020  
Re: Guidance for Emergency RN and LPN Licenses

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### **Guidance for Nurses Issued an Emergency RN or LPN License**

#### **What is an emergency license?**

Governor Reynolds's March 22, 2020 Proclamation of Disaster Emergency authorized the Board of Nursing to issue emergency licenses to individuals who have completed sufficient minimum education but are unable to obtain a license through the normal procedures due to COVID-19 related hardships, such as the closure of NCLEX examination testing locations. The rules governing emergency licenses can be found at 655 Iowa Administrative Code rule 3.11. This license allows recent nursing graduates who are eligible to sit for the NCLEX exam, but are unable to take the test due to testing center closures, to begin practicing while they wait for the opportunity to take the NCLEX exam.

#### **When does the emergency license expire?**

There are two ways for emergency licenses to expire. First, if you take the NCLEX examination and you do not pass, your emergency license expires immediately. You may not continue to work on an emergency license after receiving a failing result. Second, this license will expire sixty (60) days after the expiration or termination of Governor Reynolds's March 22, 2020 Proclamation of Disaster Emergency. As of the date of this guidance document, the Proclamation has been extended until 11:59 p.m. on May 27, 2020. If the Proclamation is further extended, the emergency license will expire sixty days after the new end date.

#### **Are there any practice limitations for emergency licenses?**

An emergency license provides the same practice authority as a regular, single-state RN or LPN license issued by the Board. You may practice within your role to the same extent as a regular RN or LPN licensee, but may not practice in another state. Emergency licensees are also subject to the same regulations as regular licensees, and may be disciplined by the Board for any rule violations. Emergency licensees are encouraged to review 655 Iowa Administrative Code and consult with their employers to

ensure that they have sufficient education, training, and competence to perform their assigned duties.

**Once I pass the NCLEX exam, how do I get a regular RN or LPN license?**

NCSBN will notify the Board that you have passed the NCLEX examination. Once the Board receives confirmation of your passing result, the Board will issue you a non-emergency, single-state license to practice as an RN or LPN in Iowa. The license will be a single-state license until you successfully pass the criminal background check, pursuant to the Nurse Licensure Compact.

**How do I obtain a multi-state RN or LPN license?**

When you submitted your application for licensure, you were sent a criminal background check packet. In that packet was a waiver form and two fingerprint cards. In order to receive a multi-state license under the Nurse Licensure Compact, you must pass a criminal background check. Therefore, you must return the signed waiver form and two completed fingerprint cards to the Board office. Once the Board receives confirmation that you have passed the background check, your license will be switched from a single-state to a multi-state license. You will keep the same license number, but you will have the privilege to practice in states that are members of the nurse licensure compact.

**Do I have to use a different title or abbreviation when signing my name?**

No, you may use the titles “Registered Nurse” or “Licensed Practical Nurse,” or the “RN” or “LPN” abbreviations, after your name when you are practicing pursuant to an emergency license.

**How do validate or verify my emergency license to a potential employer or the public?**

All emergency licensees will be able to validate their licenses through IBON Online Services. Please visit the Board’s website at [nursing.iowa.gov](http://nursing.iowa.gov), and click “IBON Online Services” to access the Board’s online license verification tools.