



## **Position Statement in Support of Pennsylvania Becoming Part of the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC)**

The Pennsylvania Organization of Nurse Leaders (PONL) is the state organization for nurse leaders and the voice of nursing leadership in Pennsylvania. PONL represents nurse leaders at all levels – chief nursing officers, directors, managers and others responsible for the delivery of safe, effective patient care. PONL functions as a networking and information vehicle for Pennsylvania nursing leaders and is the state affiliate of the American Organization for Nurse Leaders (AONL).

### **Nurse Licensure Compact**

Two million nurses, across the country, currently hold a multistate compact license, through Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) (NCSBN, 2019). Many professional organizations support NLC, including the American Organization for Nurse Leaders (AONL), PONL’s parent group.

The Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) allows Registered Nurses (RNs) to have one multistate license with the ability to practice in their home state and in other compact states (NCSBN/National Council of State Boards of Nursing, 2019). As of October 2019, thirty-four (34) states have enacted nursing compact licensure (NCSBN, 2019). The reason for the sharp increase in states joining the NLC is the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) adoption of the new “enhanced” RN Compact in May 2015.

Nurse Licensure Compact Legislation is advanced through state legislatures and signed by the state’s Governor. Pennsylvania is not currently a licensure compact state. However, PA State Representative Bridget Kosierowski (D, District 114) proposed [HB 1888](#) in fall 2019, and State Senator Lisa Boscola (D, District 18) and several colleagues proposed [Senate Bill 655](#) in spring 2019. Both of these bills, if passed, would allow Pennsylvania to join other licensure compact states.

### **How Does the Nurse Licensure Compact Work?**

The NLC functions similarly to state issued driver’s licenses: it is state-based, nationally recognized, and locally enforced. Multistate licenses are issued by the home state and permit RNs to practice in other compact (aka remote) states. Registered Nurses hold only one multistate license issued by the home state. The “enhanced” compact replaces the original NLC and has higher standards that include:

1. Required criminal background check (CBC, state and federal) on initial licensure;
2. Restriction from acquiring a multistate license if ever convicted of a felony;

In NLC states, RNs must meet NCSBN’s eleven (11) Uniform Licensure Requirements (ULRs) in their declared primary state of residence/ “home state”. The ULRs establish consistent standards for initial, endorsement, renewal, and reinstatement licensure needed and must be adopted by any compact state.

### **NCSBN’s Uniform Licensure Requirements (ULRs) requirements are:**

1. Meet the home state’s qualifications
2. Graduate from qualifying education program (or graduated from a foreign program verified by independent credentials review agency)
3. Passed English proficiency exam if foreign school graduate
4. Pass the NCLEX-RN®

5. Have no active discipline on a license
6. Submit to state/federal fingerprint-based criminal background check
7. Not be currently enrolled in an alternative program
8. Self-disclose participation in an alternative program
9. Have no misdemeanors related to practice of nursing as determined by the state board of nursing on a case-by-case basis
10. Have a valid U.S. Social Security number
11. Have no prior state or federal felony convictions

### **Advantages for Pennsylvania Becoming an NLC State**

- Increased access to care for all Pennsylvanians while maintaining public safety and protection.
- Nurses can practice in other NLC states without the time consuming and costly burdens of obtaining individual licenses in each state where they practice.
- Health care organizations can hire and onboard more efficiently/quickly across state boundaries, reducing lengthy wait times
- Hiring organizations can be more competitive
- Nurses who practice telehealth are able to practice nursing in all other NLC states without additional individual RN licenses
- Nurse educators are able to teach using distance/online learning without obtaining multiple individual state licenses
- Professional nurses are able to more swiftly and easily to respond to and provide nursing care in NLC states during disaster situations

### **Summary**

It is time for Pennsylvania to become a Nurse Licensure Compact State and join 34 other states. Registered Nurses will be able to practice in other states without incurring additional expense or delay in providing knowledge, skills, and professional experience during disasters, nursing shortages, telenursing, and online education. The enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact Uniform Licensure Requirements (ULRs) developed by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) in 2015 provide more rigor for multistate licensure. The mobility afforded by compact licensure makes it easier for RNs to practice in different states without the burden and delay of obtaining additional state licensure.

### **References/Resources**

- National Council of State Boards of Nursing, *Licensure Compacts*, <https://www.ncsbn.org/compacts.htm>, Chicago, IL, 2019.
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing, *Current NLC States and Status*, <https://www.ncsbn.org/nurse-licensure-compact.htm>, Chicago, IL, 2019
- Pennsylvania General Assembly, *Nurse Licensure Compact*, Regular Session 2019-2020, House Bill 1888, <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/billinfo.cfm?year=2019&sind=0&body=H&type=B&bn=1888>
- Pennsylvania General Assembly, *Nurse Licensure Compact*, Regular Session 2019-2020, Senate Bill 655; [https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/bill\\_history.cfm?year=2019&sind=0&body=S&type=B&bn=655](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/bill_history.cfm?year=2019&sind=0&body=S&type=B&bn=655)

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