

1 AN ACT concerning regulation.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Nurse Practice Act is amended by changing
5 Sections 60-5 and 60-10 as follows:

6 (225 ILCS 65/60-5)

7 (Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2028)

8 Sec. 60-5. Registered professional nursing education
9 programs. ~~RN education program requirements; out-of-State~~
10 ~~programs.~~

11 (a) The purpose of nursing education rules and regulations
12 is to ensure that graduates of nursing education programs are
13 prepared for safe and effective nursing practice. Early
14 intervention when standards are not met assists programs in
15 making improvements before warning signs are evident and
16 before sanctions are necessary. The purpose of Board and
17 Department approval of a registered professional nursing
18 education program is to do the following:

19 (1) promote the safe practice of nursing by
20 implementing standards for individuals seeking licensure
21 as registered nurses;

22 (2) grant regulatory recognition to nursing education
23 programs that the Board and the Department determine have

1 met established standards;

2 (3) ensure graduates meet the educational and legal
3 requirements for the level of licensure that the graduates
4 are seeking;

5 (4) facilitate graduates' endorsement to other states,
6 territories, and countries as appropriate; and

7 (5) provide the public and prospective students with a
8 published list of approved nursing programs that meet the
9 standards established by law and the Board's rules.

10 (b) To establish a new registered professional nursing
11 education program, the proposed program's administrator must
12 notify the Department of the intention to establish a new
13 program. The Department may approve the proposed program after
14 a recommendation from the Board, upon the successful
15 completion of the following process and a site visit:

16 (1) The proposed program must provide a feasibility
17 study that includes the following information to the
18 Board:

19 (A) governing institution approval and ongoing
20 support;

21 (B) evidence of adequate institutional financial
22 support that can be provided to the program on an
23 ongoing basis;

24 (C) availability of educational resources, such as
25 human resources, physical resources (including access
26 to a library), clinical resources, and technical

1 learning resources;

2 (D) evidence of the institution meeting the Board
3 of Higher Education's requirements and the
4 accreditation requirements by a national accrediting
5 body recognized by the United States Department of
6 Education;

7 (E) evidence of the nursing program actively
8 seeking pre-accreditation or candidate accreditation
9 from a national accrediting body for nursing education
10 recognized by the United States Department of
11 Education;

12 (F) evidence of adequate numbers of clinical
13 partnerships;

14 (G) availability of qualified faculty members and
15 employment of a program director whose qualifications
16 must meet the requirements set forth by the
17 Department; and

18 (H) a proposed timeline for initiating the
19 program.

20 (2) After the feasibility study has been submitted to
21 the Department, the proposed program must complete the
22 following program components and processes and submit
23 verification of completion to the Department:

24 (A) development of a comprehensive program
25 curriculum;

26 (B) submission of the program's ongoing systematic

1 evaluation plan;

2 (C) establishment of policies for student
3 admission, progression, retention, and graduation; and

4 (D) establishment of policies and strategies to
5 address students' needs, including those with
6 documented disabilities.

7 (c) Nursing education rules must be based on
8 evidence-based criteria and used to monitor the quality of a
9 registered professional nursing education program. All
10 registered professional nursing education programs must meet
11 the following requirements:

12 (1) The program must have written and published
13 criteria for student admission, progression, and
14 performance.

15 (2) The written policies and procedures of the program
16 must be reviewed and approved by the program's identified
17 governing body and be readily accessible according to
18 accreditation standards.

19 (3) The program must have policies in place that hold
20 students responsible for professional behavior, including
21 honesty and integrity, as outlined in the program's
22 policies or student handbook. Such handbook or policies
23 should be made available to the Department upon request.

24 (4) The administrator of the program must (i) hold a
25 graduate degree in nursing, (ii) have a minimum of 2 years
26 of clinical nursing and nursing education experience,

1 (iii) hold a current, active, and unencumbered license as
2 a registered nurse in this State, (iv) have institutional
3 authority and administrative responsibility over the
4 program, and (v) be responsible for submitting the
5 Department's annual report, consisting of aggregate
6 program data as determined by the Board, by the provided
7 deadline.

8 (d) Faculty members of a registered professional nursing
9 education program must meet the following criteria:

10 (1) possess the requisite academic and experiential
11 qualifications; and

12 (2) hold either:

13 (A) a graduate degree in nursing with at least 2
14 years of practical experience, if the faculty member
15 teaches didactic nursing courses; or

16 (B) a current, active, and unencumbered license as
17 a registered nurse in this State and a graduate degree
18 in nursing, if the faculty member teaches clinical,
19 lab, or simulation experience courses.

20 A faculty member who does not hold a graduate degree in
21 nursing, but who holds a bachelor's degree in nursing, may
22 teach didactic nursing, clinical, lab, or simulation
23 experience courses if the faculty member obtains a waiver from
24 the Division of Professional Regulation. A faculty member who
25 does not meet the requirements of paragraph (2) of this
26 subsection but who obtains a waiver to teach shall be

1 supervised by a faculty member with a graduate degree in
2 nursing. No more than 20% of a program's faculty may have a
3 waiver at one time.

4 (e) A registered professional nursing program must meet
5 the following training and development requirements:

6 (1) Faculty members must be oriented in accordance
7 with institutional policies and procedures. Orientation
8 may include basic instruction in teaching, adult learning
9 principles, learning assessment, curriculum development,
10 and other subjects included as appropriate to meet the
11 diverse needs of students and promote student learning and
12 success.

13 (2) Newly hired faculty members must be mentored by
14 experientially prepared colleagues.

15 (3) Faculty members must participate in ongoing
16 professional development.

17 (4) The program must provide access to faculty
18 development activities.

19 (f) To maintain enrollment in a registered professional
20 nursing program, students must meet health standards, criminal
21 background requirements, and other compliance standards as
22 required by the program's clinical affiliation agreements.

23 (g) The curriculum of a registered professional nursing
24 program must meet the following requirements:

25 (1) be built on a foundation of biological, physical,
26 social, and behavioral sciences;

1 (2) have a written systematic evaluation plan in
2 place;

3 (3) have didactic and clinical content that prepares
4 graduates to practice safely, utilize the nursing process
5 in a variety of clinical settings, and meet the holistic
6 needs of diverse individuals, families, communities, and
7 populations across the life span;

8 (4) combined with clinical experiences, prepare the
9 graduate to take the NCLEX-RN exam for licensure;

10 (5) have strategies that are in place to remediate
11 errors and near-misses in the clinical setting;

12 (6) meet the standards of the program's accrediting
13 body;

14 (7) have clinical affiliation agreements in place for
15 clinical experiences;

16 (8) have distance education methods that are
17 consistent with the accreditation and regulatory
18 standards; and

19 (9) provide direct care clinical experiences with
20 patients, as defined by accrediting and regulatory bodies.

21 (h) A professional nursing education program shall not use
22 simulation as a substitute for traditional clinical
23 experiences for more than 25% of a course's total clinical
24 hours. Programs may seek an exception to this subsection from
25 the Board and must follow the requirements set forth in the
26 "Guidelines for the Use of Simulation by Prelicensure Nursing

1 Programs" as published on the Department's website.

2 (h-5) The program must develop criteria to evaluate the
3 simulation activities and allow students to evaluate the
4 simulation experience on an ongoing basis.

5 (i) The program's resources must be sufficient to support
6 the program's needs to meet its mission, goals, and outcomes.
7 The program must provide accessibility resources to all
8 students, including those enrolled in distance education, and
9 institutional resources that assist students with academic and
10 financial challenges.

11 (j) A registered professional nursing program must be
12 accredited by a national accrediting body recognized by the
13 United States Department of Education. If the program has its
14 accreditation revoked, the program must submit a copy of the
15 notice of revocation from the accrediting body to the Board
16 within 30 days after receipt.

17 (k) If the Department obtains evidence at any time that a
18 registered professional nursing program does not comply with
19 this Act, the Department may perform an unannounced site
20 visit. The Department shall have the discretion to determine
21 if a complaint is unwarranted and not have to conduct a site
22 visit. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, the
23 following:

24 (1) complaints from students, faculty, or clinical
25 agencies;

26 (2) program administrator turnover of more than 3

1 administrators in 5 years, excluding interim appointments;

2 (3) unexplained nursing faculty turnover or cuts in
3 the number of nursing faculty;

4 (4) a pattern of NCLEX pass rates less than 75%, as
5 defined by rule; and

6 (5) loss of national programmatic accreditation.

7 The Department has the discretion to determine if a
8 complaint is unwarranted and if a site visit must be
9 conducted.

10 (1) No program shall be placed on probation until calendar
11 year 2026 NCLEX results can be measured. Any program with
12 NCLEX pass rates for calendar year 2026 less than 75% shall
13 receive a written warning of noncompliance from the Division
14 of Professional Regulation of the Department of Financial and
15 Professional Regulation pursuant to Title 68, Part 1300,
16 Section 340 of the Illinois Administrative Code, except the
17 Division may defer the written warning for an additional year
18 if the program is within a public university and 55% or more of
19 the university's total student population received Pell
20 Grants.

21 ~~(a) All registered professional nurse education programs~~
22 ~~must be reviewed by the Board and approved by the Department~~
23 ~~before the successful completion of such a program may be~~
24 ~~applied toward meeting the requirements for registered~~
25 ~~professional nurse licensure under this Act. Any program~~
26 ~~changing the level of educational preparation or the~~

1 ~~relationship with or to the parent institution or establishing~~
2 ~~an extension of an existing program must request a review by~~
3 ~~the Board and approval by the Department. The Board shall~~
4 ~~review and make a recommendation for the approval or~~
5 ~~disapproval of a program by the Department based on the~~
6 ~~following criteria:~~

7 ~~(1) a feasibility study that describes the need for~~
8 ~~the program and the facilities used, the potential of the~~
9 ~~program to recruit faculty and students, financial support~~
10 ~~for the program, and other criteria, as established by~~
11 ~~rule;~~

12 ~~(2) program curriculum that meets all State~~
13 ~~requirements;~~

14 ~~(2.5) measurement of program effectiveness based on a~~
15 ~~passage rate of all graduates over the 3 most recent~~
16 ~~calendar years without reference to first time test~~
17 ~~takers;~~

18 ~~(3) the administration of the program by a Nurse~~
19 ~~Administrator and the involvement of a Nurse Administrator~~
20 ~~in the development of the program;~~

21 ~~(4) the occurrence of a site visit prior to approval;~~
22 ~~and~~

23 ~~(5) beginning December 31, 2022, obtaining and~~
24 ~~maintaining programmatic accreditation by a national~~
25 ~~accrediting body for nursing education recognized by the~~
26 ~~United States Department of Education and approved by the~~

1 ~~Department.~~

2 ~~The Department and Board of Nursing shall be notified~~
3 ~~within 30 days if the program loses its accreditation. The~~
4 ~~Department may adopt rules regarding a warning process and~~
5 ~~reaccreditation.~~

6 ~~(b) In order to obtain initial Department approval and to~~
7 ~~maintain Department approval, a registered professional~~
8 ~~nursing program must meet all of the following requirements:~~

9 ~~(1) The institution responsible for conducting the~~
10 ~~program and the Nurse Administrator must ensure that~~
11 ~~individual faculty members are academically and~~
12 ~~professionally competent.~~

13 ~~(2) The program curriculum must contain all applicable~~
14 ~~requirements established by rule, including both theory~~
15 ~~and clinical components.~~

16 ~~(3) The passage rates of the program's graduating~~
17 ~~classes on the State approved licensure exam must be~~
18 ~~deemed satisfactory by the Department.~~

19 ~~(c) Program site visits to an institution conducting or~~
20 ~~hosting a professional nursing program may be made at the~~
21 ~~discretion of the Nursing Coordinator or upon recommendation~~
22 ~~of the Board. Full routine site visits may be conducted by the~~
23 ~~Department for periodic evaluation. Such visits shall be used~~
24 ~~to determine compliance with this Act. Full routine site~~
25 ~~visits must be announced and may be waived at the discretion of~~
26 ~~the Department if the program maintains accreditation with an~~

1 ~~accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of~~
2 ~~Education and approved by the Department.~~

3 ~~(d) Any institution conducting a registered professional~~
4 ~~nursing program that wishes to discontinue the program must do~~
5 ~~each of the following:~~

6 ~~(1) Notify the Department, in writing, of its intent~~
7 ~~to discontinue the program.~~

8 ~~(2) Continue to meet the requirements of this Act and~~
9 ~~the rules adopted thereunder until the official date of~~
10 ~~termination of the program.~~

11 ~~(3) Notify the Department of the date on which the~~
12 ~~last student shall graduate from the program and the~~
13 ~~program shall terminate.~~

14 ~~(4) Assist remaining students in the continuation of~~
15 ~~their education in the event of program termination prior~~
16 ~~to the graduation of the program's final student.~~

17 ~~(5) Upon the closure of the program, notify the~~
18 ~~Department, in writing, of the location of student and~~
19 ~~graduate records' storage.~~

20 (m) ~~(e)~~ Out-of-State registered professional nursing
21 education programs planning to offer clinical practice
22 experiences in this State must meet the requirements set forth
23 in this Section and must meet the clinical and faculty
24 requirements for institutions outside of this State, as
25 established by rule. The institution responsible for
26 conducting an out-of-State registered professional nursing

1 education program and the administrator of the program shall
2 be responsible for ensuring that the individual faculty and
3 preceptors overseeing the clinical experience are academically
4 and professionally competent.

5 (n) To operate under this Act, a registered professional
6 nursing education program must maintain approval by the
7 Department in accordance with the following:

8 (1) A registered professional nursing education
9 program must complete and submit an annual evaluation
10 report to the Department and maintain programmatic
11 accreditation by a national accrediting body for nursing
12 education recognized by the United States Department of
13 Education.

14 (2) The Board and the Department shall review and
15 analyze various sources of information regarding program
16 performance before granting annual approval, including,
17 but not limited to:

18 (A) previous Board survey visits and reports;

19 (B) annual report data;

20 (C) evidence of accreditation by a national
21 accrediting body for nursing education recognized by
22 the United States Department of Education;

23 (D) Board-recognized national accreditation
24 visits, reports, and other pertinent national
25 accreditation documents provided by the program; and

26 (E) results of ongoing programmatic evaluation.

1 (o) The Department shall make the policies and procedures
2 related to probationary status transparent, and related forms
3 shall be readily available to program administrators on the
4 Department's website.

5 (Source: P.A. 103-533, eff. 1-1-24.)

6 (225 ILCS 65/60-10)

7 (Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2028)

8 Sec. 60-10. RN licensure by examination.

9 (a) Each applicant who successfully meets the requirements
10 of this Section is eligible for licensure as a registered
11 professional nurse.

12 (b) An applicant for licensure by examination to practice
13 as a registered professional nurse is eligible for licensure
14 when the following requirements are met:

15 (1) the applicant has submitted a completed written
16 application, on forms provided by the Department, and
17 fees, as established by the Department;

18 (2) the applicant has graduated from a professional
19 nursing education program approved by the Department or
20 has been granted a certificate of completion of
21 pre-licensure requirements from another United States
22 jurisdiction;

23 (3) the applicant has successfully completed a
24 licensure examination approved by the Department;

25 (4) (blank);

1 (5) the applicant has submitted to the criminal
2 history records check required under Section 50-35 of this
3 Act;

4 (6) the applicant has submitted, either to the
5 Department or its designated testing service, a fee
6 covering the cost of providing the examination; failure to
7 appear for the examination on the scheduled date at the
8 time and place specified after the applicant's application
9 for examination has been received and acknowledged by the
10 Department or the designated testing service shall result
11 in the forfeiture of the examination fee; and

12 (7) the applicant has met all other requirements
13 established by the Department by rule.

14 An applicant for licensure by examination may take the
15 Department-approved examination in another jurisdiction.

16 (b-3) An applicant who graduates from a professional
17 nursing program in this State on or after January 1, 2024 (the
18 effective date of Public Act 103-533) ~~this amendatory Act of~~
19 ~~the 103rd General Assembly~~ and does not take the licensure
20 examination within 180 days after his or her degree is
21 conferred by the institution of higher education or fails the
22 licensure examination for a second time shall be required to
23 demonstrate proof of completion of a National Council
24 Licensure Examination preparatory class or a comparable test
25 preparatory program before taking a subsequent licensure
26 examination or the graduate may return to the institution of

1 higher education from which he or she graduated which shall
2 provide remedial educational resources to the graduate at no
3 cost to the graduate. Such an applicant must contact the
4 institution of higher education from which he or she graduated
5 prior to retesting.

6 (b-4) (Blank). ~~All professional nursing programs in~~
7 ~~probationary status on the effective date of this amendatory~~
8 ~~Act of the 103rd General Assembly and subject to a program~~
9 ~~revision plan shall be deemed in good standing for a period of~~
10 ~~3 years beginning on the effective date of this amendatory Act~~
11 ~~of the 103rd General Assembly. Prior to September 1, 2026, no~~
12 ~~professional nursing program shall be placed on probationary~~
13 ~~status for failing to reach a passage rate of less than 75%.~~

14 (b-5) If an applicant for licensure by examination
15 neglects, fails, or refuses to take an examination or fails to
16 pass an examination for a license within 3 years of the date of
17 initial application, the application shall be denied. When an
18 applicant's application is denied due to the failure to pass
19 the examination within the 3-year period, that applicant must
20 undertake an additional course of education as defined by rule
21 prior to submitting a new application for licensure. Any new
22 application must be accompanied by the required fee, evidence
23 of meeting the requirements in force at the time of the new
24 application, and evidence of completion of the additional
25 course of education prescribed by rule.

26 (c) An applicant for licensure by examination shall have

1 one year after the date of notification of the successful
2 completion of the examination to apply to the Department for a
3 license. If an applicant fails to apply within one year, the
4 applicant shall be required to retake and pass the examination
5 unless licensed in another jurisdiction of the United States.

6 (d) An applicant for licensure by examination who passes
7 the Department-approved licensure examination for professional
8 nursing may obtain employment as a license-pending registered
9 nurse and practice under the direction of a registered
10 professional nurse or an advanced practice registered nurse
11 until such time as he or she receives his or her license to
12 practice or until the license is denied. In no instance shall
13 any such applicant practice or be employed in any management
14 capacity. An individual may be employed as a license-pending
15 registered nurse if all of the following criteria are met:

16 (1) He or she has completed and passed the
17 Department-approved licensure exam and presents to the
18 employer the official written notification indicating
19 successful passage of the licensure examination.

20 (2) He or she has completed and submitted to the
21 Department an application for licensure under this Section
22 as a registered professional nurse.

23 (3) He or she has submitted the required licensure
24 fee.

25 (4) He or she has met all other requirements
26 established by rule, including having submitted to a

1 criminal history records check.

2 (e) The privilege to practice as a license-pending
3 registered nurse shall terminate with the occurrence of any of
4 the following:

5 (1) Six months have passed since the official date of
6 passing the licensure exam as inscribed on the formal
7 written notification indicating passage of the exam. The
8 6-month license-pending period may be extended if more
9 time is needed by the Department to process the licensure
10 application.

11 (2) Receipt of the registered professional nurse
12 license from the Department.

13 (3) Notification from the Department that the
14 application for licensure has been refused.

15 (4) A request by the Department that the individual
16 terminate practicing as a license-pending registered nurse
17 until an official decision is made by the Department to
18 grant or deny a registered professional nurse license.

19 (f) (Blank).

20 (g) (Blank).

21 (h) (Blank).

22 (i) (Blank).

23 (j) (Blank).

24 (k) All applicants for registered professional nurse
25 licensure have 3 years after the date of application to
26 complete the application process. If the process has not been

1 completed within 3 years after the date of application, the
2 application shall be denied, the fee forfeited, and the
3 applicant must reapply and meet the requirements in effect at
4 the time of reapplication.

5 (l) All applicants for registered nurse licensure by
6 examination who are graduates of practical nursing educational
7 programs in a country other than the United States and its
8 territories shall have their nursing education credentials
9 evaluated by a Department-approved nursing credentialing
10 evaluation service. No such applicant may be issued a license
11 under this Act unless the applicant's program is deemed by the
12 nursing credentialing evaluation service to be equivalent to a
13 professional nursing education program approved by the
14 Department. An applicant who has graduated from a nursing
15 educational program outside of the United States or its
16 territories and whose first language is not English shall
17 submit evidence of English proficiency, as defined by rule.

18 (m) (Blank).

19 (Source: P.A. 103-533, eff. 1-1-24; 103-686, eff. 1-1-25.)

20 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect on
21 September 1, 2026.