



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB1323

Introduced 1/28/2025, by Sen. Javier L. Cervantes

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

225 ILCS 65/60-5
225 ILCS 65/60-10

Amends the Nurse Practice Act. Makes changes to the requirements for a registered professional nursing education program in provisions concerning the establishment of a new program, program policies, faculty members, training and development, the program's curriculum, the program's use of simulation, the accreditation process, approval by the Board of Nursing, and the program closure process. Makes a conforming change. Provides that the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation may, without hearing, rescind the license of any person who obtain a license after completing a program or obtaining credit from a program that does not meet the requirements of the provisions regarding registered professional nursing education programs. In provisions concerning nursing licensure by examination, removes the provision regarding the good standing period for professional nursing programs on probationary status.

LRB104 07551 AAS 17595 b

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7 (Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2028)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 approval
17 of a registered professional nursing education program is to
18 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 determines have met established

1 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 Board of the intention to establish a new program.
13 The Board must approve the proposed program upon the
14 successful completion of the following process and a site
15 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 a program director; and

16 (H) a proposed timeline for initiating the
17 program.

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

22 (A) employment of a qualified director;

23 (B) development of a comprehensive program
24 curriculum;

25 (C) submission of the program's ongoing systematic
26 evaluation plan;

1 (D) establishment of policies for student
2 admission, progression, retention, and graduation; and

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

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

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

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

18 (3) The program must hold students responsible for
19 professional behavior, including honesty and integrity,
20 while in the program of study, as outlined in the
21 program's policies, procedures, or student handbook.

22 (4) The administrator of the program must (i) hold a
23 graduate degree in nursing, (ii) have a minimum of 2 years
24 of clinical nursing and nursing education experience,
25 (iii) hold a current, active, and unencumbered license as
26 a registered nurse in this State, (iv) have institutional

1 authority and administrative responsibility over the
2 program, and (v) be responsible for submitting the Board's
3 annual report, consisting of aggregate program data as
4 determined by the Board, by the provided deadline.

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

7 (1) possess the requisite academic and experiential
8 qualifications; and

9 (2) hold either:

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

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

17 A faculty member who does not hold a graduate degree in
18 nursing, but who holds a bachelor's degree in nursing, may
19 teach didactic nursing, clinical, lab, or simulation
20 experience courses if the faculty member obtains a waiver from
21 the Division of Professional Regulation. A faculty member who
22 does not meet the requirements of paragraph (2) of this
23 subsection but who obtains a waiver to teach shall be
24 supervised by a faculty member with a graduate degree in
25 nursing. No more than 20% of a program's faculty may have a
26 waiver at one time.

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

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

10 (2) Newly hired faculty members must be mentored by
11 experientially prepared colleagues.

12 (3) Faculty members must participate in ongoing
13 professional development.

14 (4) The program must provide access to faculty
15 development activities.

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

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

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

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

26 (3) have didactic and clinical content that prepares

graduates to practice safely, utilize the nursing process in a variety of clinical settings, and meet the holistic needs of diverse individuals, families, communities, and populations across the life span;

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

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

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

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

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

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

(h) A professional nursing education program shall not use simulation as a substitute for traditional clinical experiences for more than 50% of a course's total clinical hours. Programs may seek an exception to this subsection from the Board based on unique circumstances. A program that uses simulation must meet the following standards:

(1) The program must demonstrate that the simulation activities are linked to course or programmatic learning outcomes.

1 (2) The program must have short-term and long-term
2 plans for integrating simulation into the curriculum, a
3 method of debriefing each simulated activity, and a plan
4 to orient faculty to simulation.

5 (3) The program must develop criteria to evaluate the
6 simulation activities and allow students to evaluate the
7 simulation experience on an ongoing basis.

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

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

20 (k) If the Board obtains evidence at any time that a
21 registered professional nursing program does not comply with
22 this Act, the Board may perform an unannounced site visit.
23 Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, the
24 following:

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

1 (2) program administrator turnover of more than 3
2 administrators in 5 years, excluding interim appointments;

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

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

7 (5) loss of national programmatic accreditation.

8 ~~(a) All registered professional nurse education programs~~
9 ~~must be reviewed by the Board and approved by the Department~~
10 ~~before the successful completion of such a program may be~~
11 ~~applied toward meeting the requirements for registered~~
12 ~~professional nurse licensure under this Act. Any program~~
13 ~~changing the level of educational preparation or the~~
14 ~~relationship with or to the parent institution or establishing~~
15 ~~an extension of an existing program must request a review by~~
16 ~~the Board and approval by the Department. The Board shall~~
17 ~~review and make a recommendation for the approval or~~
18 ~~disapproval of a program by the Department based on the~~
19 ~~following criteria:~~

20 ~~(1) a feasibility study that describes the need for~~
21 ~~the program and the facilities used, the potential of the~~
22 ~~program to recruit faculty and students, financial support~~
23 ~~for the program, and other criteria, as established by~~
24 ~~rule;~~

25 ~~(2) program curriculum that meets all State~~
26 ~~requirements;~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

~~(2) The program curriculum must contain all applicable~~

1 ~~requirements established by rule, including both theory~~
2 ~~and clinical components.~~

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

6 ~~(e) Program site visits to an institution conducting or~~
7 ~~hosting a professional nursing program may be made at the~~
8 ~~discretion of the Nursing Coordinator or upon recommendation~~
9 ~~of the Board. Full routine site visits may be conducted by the~~
10 ~~Department for periodic evaluation. Such visits shall be used~~
11 ~~to determine compliance with this Act. Full routine site~~
12 ~~visits must be announced and may be waived at the discretion of~~
13 ~~the Department if the program maintains accreditation with an~~
14 ~~accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of~~
15 ~~Education and approved by the Department.~~

16 ~~(d) Any institution conducting a registered professional~~
17 ~~nursing program that wishes to discontinue the program must do~~
18 ~~each of the following:~~

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

21 ~~(2) Continue to meet the requirements of this Act and~~
22 ~~the rules adopted thereunder until the official date of~~
23 ~~termination of the program.~~

24 ~~(3) Notify the Department of the date on which the~~
25 ~~last student shall graduate from the program and the~~
26 ~~program shall terminate.~~

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

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

7 (1) ~~(e)~~ Out-of-State registered professional nursing
8 education programs planning to offer clinical practice
9 experiences in this State must meet the requirements set forth
10 in this Section and must meet the clinical and faculty
11 requirements for institutions outside of this State, as
12 established by rule. The institution responsible for
13 conducting an out-of-State registered professional nursing
14 education program and the administrator of the program shall
15 be responsible for ensuring that the individual faculty and
16 preceptors overseeing the clinical experience are academically
17 and professionally competent.

18 (m) To operate under this Act, a registered professional
19 nursing education program must maintain approval by the Board
20 in accordance with the following:

21 (1) A registered professional nursing education
22 program must complete and submit an annual evaluation
23 report to the Board and maintain programmatic
24 accreditation by a national accrediting body for nursing
25 education recognized by the United States Department of
26 Education.

1 (2) The Board shall review and analyze various sources
2 of information regarding program performance before
3 granting annual approval, including, but not limited to:

4 (A) previous Board survey visits and reports;

5 (B) annual report data;

6 (C) evidence of accreditation by a national
7 accrediting body for nursing education recognized by
8 the United States Department of Education;

9 (D) Board-recognized national accreditation
10 visits, reports, and other pertinent national
11 accreditation documents provided by the program; and

12 (E) results of ongoing programmatic evaluation.

13 (3) Annual approval shall be granted to a registered
14 professional nursing education program upon the Board's
15 verification that the program complies with the Board's
16 nursing education administrative rules and with this Act.

17 (n) If a registered professional nursing education program
18 loses its national accreditation, the program must do the
19 following:

20 (1) notify the Board within 30 days after the loss;

21 and

22 (2) immediately notify all enrolled students and
23 applicants of the loss of its national accreditation and
24 the corrective actions the program will take to regain the
25 accreditation.

26 The Board, upon receipt of the program's notice, shall

1 place the program on probationary status and issue the program
2 a warning letter that informs the program of the probationary
3 status and the corrective actions necessary to be in
4 compliance with this Act. The program must regain its national
5 accreditation status and correct the deficiencies identified
6 by the Board within 12 months, unless otherwise directed by
7 the Board. If the deficiencies are not corrected within the
8 specified time frame, the Board may withdraw the program's
9 approval status.

10 (o) The Board shall make the policies and procedures
11 related to probationary status transparent, and related forms
12 shall be readily available to program administrators on the
13 Board's website.

14 (p) The Board may withdraw its approval of a registered
15 professional nursing education program if, after proper notice
16 and an opportunity to be heard are provided, it determines
17 that:

18 (1) the program fails to meet the Department of
19 Financial and Professional Regulation's rules regarding
20 this Act;

21 (2) the program failed to correct the identified
22 deficiencies within the time specified by the Board; or

23 (3) there is evidence of fraud or dishonesty in the
24 program's application for program approval.

25 The Board may reinstate approval if the program submits
26 evidence of compliance with the nursing education rules and

1 this Act within the provided time frame.

2 (g) A registered professional nursing education program
3 denied approval or placed on probationary status may appeal
4 such a decision. All actions related to an appeal shall be in
5 accordance with due process rights.

6 (r) A registered professional nursing education program
7 may be closed due to withdrawal of Board approval or may close
8 voluntarily. In the event of closure, regardless of cause, the
9 program shall:

10 (1) make provisions to maintain the standards for
11 nursing education during the transition to closure;

12 (2) arrange for secure storage and access to academic
13 records and transcripts;

14 (3) develop a teach-out plan to assist students in
15 completing their nursing education; and

16 (4) provide written confirmation to the Board that the
17 teach-out plan has been implemented.

18 (s) During a declared state of emergency or a disaster
19 declared by the Governor, the Board may authorize an approved
20 registered professional nursing education programs to
21 implement mitigation efforts to address issues, including, but
22 not limited to, the availability of clinical placement sites,
23 the transition to virtual learning from in-person platforms,
24 and changes in the use of simulation. The program shall keep
25 records of any mitigation policies or strategies used and the
26 program shall include such records in its annual report

1 submitted to the Board.

2 (t) The Department may, without hearing, rescind the
3 license of any person who obtained a license after completing
4 a program or obtaining credit from a program that does not meet
5 the requirements of this Section. Such rescission shall not
6 constitute discipline as provided in Section 70-5 of this Act.
7 The Department may adopt rules to implement this subsection.

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

9 (225 ILCS 65/60-10)

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

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

12 (a) Each applicant who successfully meets the requirements
13 of this Section is eligible for licensure as a registered
14 professional nurse.

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

18 (1) the applicant has submitted a completed written
19 application, on forms provided by the Department, and
20 fees, as established by the Department;

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

1 (3) the applicant has successfully completed a
2 licensure examination approved by the Department;

3 (4) (blank);

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

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

15 (7) the applicant has met all other requirements
16 established by the Department by rule.

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

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

1 Licensure Examination preparatory class or a comparable test
2 preparatory program before taking a subsequent licensure
3 examination or the graduate may return to the institution of
4 higher education from which he or she graduated which shall
5 provide remedial educational resources to the graduate at no
6 cost to the graduate. Such an applicant must contact the
7 institution of higher education from which he or she graduated
8 prior to retesting.

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

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

1 application, and evidence of completion of the additional
2 course of education prescribed by rule.

3 (c) An applicant for licensure by examination shall have
4 one year after the date of notification of the successful
5 completion of the examination to apply to the Department for a
6 license. If an applicant fails to apply within one year, the
7 applicant shall be required to retake and pass the examination
8 unless licensed in another jurisdiction of the United States.

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

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

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

26 (3) He or she has submitted the required licensure

1 fee.

2 (4) He or she has met all other requirements
3 established by rule, including having submitted to a
4 criminal history records check.

5 (e) The privilege to practice as a license-pending
6 registered nurse shall terminate with the occurrence of any of
7 the following:

8 (1) Six months have passed since the official date of
9 passing the licensure exam as inscribed on the formal
10 written notification indicating passage of the exam. The
11 6-month license-pending period may be extended if more
12 time is needed by the Department to process the licensure
13 application.

14 (2) Receipt of the registered professional nurse
15 license from the Department.

16 (3) Notification from the Department that the
17 application for licensure has been refused.

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

22 (f) (Blank).

23 (g) (Blank).

24 (h) (Blank).

25 (i) (Blank).

26 (j) (Blank).

1 (k) All applicants for registered professional nurse
2 licensure have 3 years after the date of application to
3 complete the application process. If the process has not been
4 completed within 3 years after the date of application, the
5 application shall be denied, the fee forfeited, and the
6 applicant must reapply and meet the requirements in effect at
7 the time of reapplication.

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

21 (m) (Blank).

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