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**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM STUDENT/GRADUATE NURSES ABOUT the
NCLEX® EXAM, GRADUATE TEMPORARY PRACTICE PERMITS (TPP) and
AUTHORIZATION TO TEST (ATT)**

1. Do I need to complete my Child Abuse Education prior to applying for licensure by Exam (NCLEX®)?

NO, however, since a license cannot be issued until verification of this education is received by the Board, applicants are strongly encouraged to complete this education in advance of any application to the Board. Under section 6311 of the Child Protective Services Law (23 P.S. § 6311) all applicants for initial licensure are required to complete 3 hours of Department of Human Services-approved training in child abuse recognition and reporting requirements. Information on approved CE providers is available on the Board's website.

NOTE: When registering with the approved CE provider be certain to indicate that completion of child abuse education is for the purpose of licensure. Also, **ensure that your first and last names are identical** on both the child abuse education registration and your application for licensure. Processing delays occur when the names are not identical.

Upon completion of the child abuse education, the approved CE provider will electronically submit your verification to the Board. Paper copies are not accepted. **It may take up to 7 business days for the verification to be received by the Board. A license/TPP will not be issued until this verification is received.**

2. How do I apply for licensure by Exam (NCLEX®) and/or a Temporary Practice Permit TPP?

A. READ ALL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS so that you are capable of uploading **all required documentation, including the criminal history record check** (see Question 15), **with your application.** Also review the documentation required if you have a criminal charge or criminal conviction or have been disciplined in another state. You will be able to save a partially completed application, however it cannot be submitted without the required documentation uploaded and the fee paid.

B. Apply to the Board:

Step 1: Click on the link "Login" at <https://www.pals.pa.gov>

Step 2: Login with your "User ID" and "Password". If you do not have one, or have forgotten your information, follow the options on the menu.

Step 3: Once you are logged into your PALS dashboard. Click on "Apply for New License", located at the bottom of the page. The screens that follow will be a series of questions to assist with obtaining the correct application:

- Board/Commission** - Select State Board of Nursing
- License Type** - Select Registered Nurse or Practical Nurse
- Survey** - Please answer all questions on the survey to obtain the correct application and instructions.

PLEASE NOTE: You can apply for a Graduate Temporary Practice Permit by answering a question within the application. A fee of \$35.00 will be added to your account prior to payment.

C. Register with PearsonVUE Registration (test administrator) at www.pearsonvue.com/nclex and pay the \$200 fee. An email address is required to register. All correspondence from Pearson VUE will occur via email.

D. Ensure that your nursing education program submitted your nursing education verification form and/or transcripts.

3. How soon after I apply will my Authorization to Test (ATT) and TPP be issued?

The Board processes applications in the order in which they are received. Discrepancies may delay processing. Once the evaluation is complete and you are deemed eligible to take the examination by the Board, PearsonVue will E-mail your ATT.

Follow the directions on the ATT to schedule the NCLEX® at a Pearson VUE Test Center. Review the ATT to assure all information is correct as well as the start and end dates. Schedule early to avoid reduced seating availability.

4. **I did not receive my ATT, what should I do?**

Assure you have completed all required steps in the application process:

- a) Have you submitted an Application to the Board?
- b) Did you register with Pearson VUE?
- c) Did your nursing education program submit a nursing education verification form and/or transcripts (transcripts apply only to out of state graduates)?
- d) Did you check your spam and junk folder to assure correspondence from Pearson VUE was not received?

5. **Do I need to take my ATT to the test center on the day the exam is scheduled?**

NO, but candidates **MUST** present one form of [acceptable identification](#) that matches **EXACTLY** the first and last name provided at registration.

6. **Are there any specific rules for candidates taking the NCLEX®?**

- a) Candidates are required to thoroughly review and acknowledge the NCLEX Examination Rules prior to being seated for the examination. On the exam day at check-in, candidates are directed to read the [Candidate Statement](#) and provide an electronic signature, agreeing to the terms and conditions of the NCLEX®. In addition, and to ensure a high level of security, candidates are monitored at all times and recorded by both audio and video methods.
- b) If the ID presented on test day does not match the first and last name registered with, the candidate will not be admitted to test and will have to reregister and repay the examination fee.
- c) The validity dates on the ATT **CANNOT** be extended for any reason. If you have not tested in these dates you will have to reregister and repay the exam fee.

TEST RESULTS

7. **How long does it take to receive my test results?**

Official test results are mailed directly from the Board. Allow **30 days** to receive your official results.

- a) Candidates who **pass** will receive a paper license mailed to the address listed on your application. To verify a license has been issued go to www.pals.pa.gov/verify and click on license verification.
- b) Candidates who **fail** will receive a Candidate Performance Report (CPR) that includes a summary of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses based on the test plan. In accordance to Pearson VUE policies, they **"may cancel or place the candidate's results on "Hold" if there is a good faith basis to question the validity of the results for any reason or if there has been a violation of the NCLEX® examination candidate rules."**

8. **Does the Board participate in "Quick Results" through PearsonVue?**

Yes, however the results are **unofficial** and **only** the Board can release official results. Access NCLEX® "Quick Results Service" at www.pearsonvue.com/nclex and sign in with your user name and password and pay the required fee. All candidates must wait 2 business days after testing for these results.

9. **If I fail, can I retake the NCLEX® exam?**

Yes, presently, there is no restriction on the number of times a candidate for licensure can take the exam.

10. **If I fail, how long do I have to wait to retake the exam?**

You can apply to retake the NCLEX® at any time, however, there is an approximate 46- day lapse between examinations.

11. **If I fail the exam, can I still practice with my TPP?**

No. The TPP expires **immediately** upon notification of failure and is nonrenewable.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

12. **What documentation do I need to request testing accommodations?**

- a) In addition to answering "yes" to the question on the application, download the accommodation form at [Board's website](#), have it completed by an acceptable provider listed on the form and upload it with your application. Remember:

- b) A copy of an evaluation must be dated within **5 years** application submission.
- c) The accommodations requested must be specific (if extended time, specify the time, for example, 2 hours, separate room etc.)

13. What if I decide to withdraw my request for accommodations?

In order to withdraw a request, submit a written withdrawal requests.

14. How will a candidate know if testing accommodations are granted?

Accommodations will appear on the ATT as "**Accommodations Granted**". If a candidate did request accommodations and **DOES NOT** see the "Accommodations Granted" statement on their ATT they need to immediately contact 717-783-7142. Candidates receiving accommodations **MUST** call Pearson VUE at the number provided on their ATT and speak to an accommodations coordinator to schedule their exam. When speaking with the accommodations coordinator verify the specific accommodations requested, if any discrepancy is identified contact the Board. **Carefully review all the detail (Name, Test Dates etc.) on the ATT as soon as it is received.**

CRIMINAL/DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

15. What type of documentation needs to be submitted in support of an application?

All applicants must upload a recent Criminal History Records Check (CHRC) from the state police or other state agency for every state in which you have lived or worked for the past five (5) years. The report(s) must be dated within 90 days of the date the application is submitted. For applicants living or working in Pennsylvania, request your CHRC from the Pennsylvania State Police at <https://epatch.state.pa.us>. For applicants living or working in California and/or Arizona: Due to the laws of these states, the Board is not an eligible recipient of CHRC's from California and Arizona. In lieu of obtaining a CHRC from California or Arizona, please obtain your Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Identity History Summary Check, available at <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/identity-historysummary-checks>.

For individuals living and working in multiple (three or more) states during the past five (5) years, In lieu of obtaining individual state criminal background checks, you may elect to provide BOTH a state CHRC from the state in which you currently reside, AND your FBI Identity History Summary Check, available at the link noted above.

If YES" is selected for any legal question, upload:

- A detailed, signed and dated personal explanation explaining the action, its background and any rehabilitation.
- Copies of criminal Court documents.
- Certified copies of all disciplinary actions from the Boards that imposed action.

MISCELLANEOUS

16. Are there more informational resources available about NCLEX® that I can refer to?

Information can be found at the following website and is a valuable resource: <https://www.ncsbn.org/nclex.htm>

17. Is there a deadline for taking the NCLEX® for the first time?

Yes. Candidates must take the NCLEX® for the first time within one year of completing their nursing education programs. To take the NCLEX after this deadline, express permission must be granted from the Board based upon the candidates' demonstration that they were prevented from taking the examination by emergency, illness, military service, licensure in another state, or other good cause shown.

18. I am entering my senior year of a RN (baccalaureate, associate, diploma) nursing program, am I eligible to sit for the practical nurse exam now?

NO. In Pennsylvania, to be eligible to sit for the practical nursing licensure exam you must have completed an approved practical nursing program.

19. If my PN program is less than 1500 hours of education must I obtain more education or clinical training hours to determine my eligibility?

Yes. Applicants of programs with less than 1500 hours of education can remediate the deficient education through a combination of additional education and training totaling 1500 hours. Worked hours on a TPP can also be counted toward the 1500 hours. More Information can be found on the [Board Website](#).