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Multistate Licenses Explained for Nurses Video Transcript

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More info: <https://www.ncsbn.org/nurse-licensure-compact.htm>

Presenter

NCSBN Nurse Licensure Compact Department

Modern healthcare delivery requires that nursing care be dynamic and fluid across state boundaries. The Nurse Licensure Compact, or NLC, is an interstate agreement that authorizes RNs and LPNs, or VNs holding a multi-state license, to practice in any other state that has implemented the Compact. With a multi-state license, a nurse may practice in person, or via tele-help.

However, it's important to note that a nurse must be licensed, or have the privilege to practice in the state where the patient is located at the time nursing service is provided. A multi-state license isn't a national license. It's a state license issued by the Nursing Regulatory body in the nurse's primary state of residence, or PSOR, the state in which a nurse legally resides and can prove legal residence with a driver's license, voter registration, or similar documentation.

Because the NLC has uniform licensure requirements, all states can be confident that nurses practicing within Compact states have met a standardized set of requirements. The NLC enhances public protection, access to care, and nurse mobility. It reduces the time and expense of applying for multiple single state licenses and meeting continuing education requirements from different states.

As an example, let's imagine Taylor, a nurse who legally resides in a Compact state. Because she holds a multi-state license, she can practice without delay in any other Compact state without taking additional steps while maintaining legal residence in the state that issued her multi-state license. In Taylor's scenario, we can see how the NLC significantly expands a nurse's practice options and shortens the time to start practicing in another Compact state.

Let's take a look at other scenarios in which nurses are changing their primary state of residence. Amy currently lives in California, a non-Compact state, and would like to accept a job in Arizona, a Compact state. Before she can practice in Arizona, Amy must become licensed in Arizona. If she's making Arizona her new PSOR, she may be issued a multi-state license by proving legal residency and applying for licensure by endorsement in Arizona.

Nurses moving from non-Compact to Compact states will also be able to maintain the single state license in their former state of residence. Rosa, a nurse residing in Missouri, who holds a multi-state

license is changing her legal residence to Iowa. Both are compact states, so she can start practicing in Iowa because she has a multi-state license issued by Missouri.

But because she is changing her PSOR, she'll need to apply for licensure by endorsement in her new state, Iowa, immediately upon moving. It's important that she doesn't delay. She should not wait until her Missouri license expires. James is a nurse in Virginia, a Compact state. He's planning to accept a job and move to California, a non-Compact state.

James will notify the Virginia Board of Nursing of his change of address and will apply for licensure in California. Because he's changing his PSOR, his multi-state license, issued by Virginia, will be changed to a single state license, so he will no longer have the privilege to practice in all Compact states, unless he applies for individual single state licenses.

These scenarios are a broad overview of nurses permanently changing their home states. If you're planning to begin practice in another state, be sure to familiarize yourself first with the details of NLC requirements. The Nurse Licensure Compact expands career opportunities and mobility for nurses, while ensuring uniform licensure requirements across states.

Find more information and resources at ncsbn.org/nlc.