



# STATE OF IOWA

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Governor Kim Reynolds  
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg

BOARD OF NURSING  
Kathleen R. Weinberg, MSN, RN  
Executive Director

To: Iowa Nursing Licensees  
From: Kathy Weinberg, Executive Director  
Date: May 11, 2021  
Re: Updated Information on Emergency Nursing Licenses and Background Checks

The following is an update on the Board of Nursing's licensure requirements and procedures in light of the April 30, 2021 Proclamation of Disaster Emergency.

## **A. Emergency Licenses.**

On April 30, 2021, Governor Reynolds issued another Proclamation of Disaster Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In section 69, Governor Reynolds extended the provision authorizing the Nursing Board to issue emergency licenses to nursing graduates who had not yet taken the NCLEX or national certification exam. The authority to issue emergency licenses was extended through May 30. However, the provision concluded with the following sentence: "Iowans should not expect that this suspension will be extended beyond May 30, 2021." Accordingly, the Nursing Board does not anticipate that its authority to issue emergency licenses will exist after May 30, 2021.

Significantly, the Board's rules provide that an **emergency license expires sixty (60) days after the expiration or termination of the Proclamation**, or upon receiving a failing result on the NCLEX or national certification exam, whichever is sooner. If the Proclamation authority indeed expires on or around May 30, 2021, emergency licensees must submit proof of passing the NCLEX or national certifying exam within 60 days of the expiration date. Failure to submit proof of passing the NCLEX or national certifying exam within 60 days of the expiration date will result in the license lapsing and the individual may no longer practice on that license.

If you have an emergency license and have not yet taken the NCLEX or national certifying exam, the Board strongly encourages you to begin making arrangements to sit for your exam and submit any outstanding application materials to prevent any break in your licensure.

## **B. Background Check Requirements.**

The April 30, 2021 Proclamation of Disaster Emergency also extended the provision temporarily suspending any administrative rules requiring completion of a criminal background check as a condition of obtaining a license to practice nursing. As with the emergency licenses, this provision similarly concluded with the following sentence: "Iowans should not expect this suspension will be extended beyond May 30, 2021." Accordingly, prospective LPN and RN applicants should plan to submit two completed fingerprint cards and a signed waiver form in order to be issued licenses.

If you applied for an LPN or RN license while the Proclamation was in effect and did not submit your background check materials, **you must return the fingerprint packet and signed waiver form to the Board within sixty (60) days of the expiration of the Proclamation.** Failure to complete your background check requirements within sixty days may result in your license being rescinded. The Board strongly encourages all individuals who have not yet completed their background checks to submit their fingerprint cards and signed waivers as soon as possible to prevent any break in licensure.