Iowa Board of Nursing
6200 Park Ave, Suite 100
Des Moines, IA 50321
515.281.3264
E-Mail: foreigneducated@iowa.gov
Website: nursing.iowa.gov

LICENSURE BY ENDORSEMENT
CHECKLIST FOR THE FOREIGN EDUCATED NURSE

See instructions for more detailed information.

- ❑ Licensure or registration as a nurse in the country or U.S. territory of origin, current country or U.S. territory of residence, or country or U.S. territory where educated

- ❑ Legal presence in the United States (U.S.). For example:
  - Social security number
  - U.S. visa
  - U.S. green card

- ❑ One of the following documents from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS):
  - The Credentials Evaluation Service (CES) Report
  - Visa Screen certificate or certificate verification letter verifying that a Visa Screen was issued
  - Certification program CGFNS certificate or certificate verification letter verifying that a certification program CGFNS certificate was issued

- ❑ One of the following English Proficiency Tests.
  - International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
  - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

- ❑ Verification of original state of licensure

- ❑ Completed online Iowa Board of Nursing application (social security number required) or paper application with the required fee payment

- ❑ Application must include mailing address and residential address (see definitions on detailed instructions)

- ❑ Fee payment must be in US dollars. All other payments will be returned.

- ❑ Two completed fingerprint cards and signed criminal history background waiver form

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FOREIGN EDUCATED NURSES
PART 1 - ENDORSEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LICENSURE IN IOWA
(Iowa Administrative Code 655 IAC 3.3; see also Iowa Code 147.3 and 152.7.

- Licensure or registration as a nurse in the country or U.S. territory of origin, current country or U.S. territory of residence, or country or U.S. territory where educated

- Applicants MUST provide a **Social Security Number**. If a Social Security Number (SSN) is **not** available, the applicant will need to submit the documentation that allows the individual access to the United States (for example, U.S. Visa). **Without an SSN you will be issued a single state license**.

- Foreign educated nurses are not eligible to receive a temporary license.

- Applicants MUST apply for the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) Professional report through CGFNS.com. CGFNS must submit **one of the following** directly to the Iowa Board of Nursing:
  1. The Credentials Evaluation Service (CES) Report
  2. Visa Screen certificate or certificate verification letter verifying that a Visa Screen was issued
  3. Certification program CGFNS certificate or certificate verification letter verifying that a certification program CGFNS certificate was issued

- An English Proficiency test must be completed in addition to the CES Professional Report:
  Submit documentation from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

  However, applicants shall be exempt from the IELTS or TOEFL examination when ALL of the following are met:
  - The native language is English
  - Nursing education was completed in a college, university or professional school located in Australia, Barbados, Canada (except Quebec), Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, or the United Kingdom
  - Language of instruction in the nursing program was English
  - Language of the textbooks in the nursing program was English

Contact information for CGFNS:

Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools
ATTN: CES Professional Report
3600 Market Street, Suite 400
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2651 USA

Customer Service:
Telephone: 215.222.8454

CGFNS Website: www.cgfns.org

The CGFNS Professional Report replaces the requirement of the school of nursing to submit the transcript directly to the Board of Nursing. **Do not request the school to send your transcript to the Iowa Board of Nursing**.

FOREIGN EDUCATED NURSES
PART 2 - ENDORSEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

IMPORTANT:

- If you have previously held a license in Iowa and are applying for the same level of license, you must reactivate that license; you are not eligible for endorsement. E-mail ibon@iowa.gov or phone 515.281.5535 to obtain the appropriate forms to **reactivate** your previously held Iowa license.

- If you hold a multi-state license in a state that is a member of the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC), you may continue to practice on a current compact license; however, it is highly recommended that you initiate the application for endorsement as soon as you have established an Iowa residency. **If you have an active license in a non-compact state, or an active single state license in a state where the NLC legislation is in effect, you may not practice until you have your license.**

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LICENSURE IN IOWA

(Iowa Administrative Code 655 IAC 3.3; see also Iowa Code 147.3 and 152.7.

1. Applicants must have held similar licensure in another state as documented by CGFNS.
2. Board approval of an applicant with a criminal history or a record of prior disciplinary action, regardless of the jurisdiction.
3. Passing the NCLEX examination as prescribed by the board.

APPLICATION PROCESS

NOTE: The application process must be completed within twelve (12) months from the date the application is initiated. After the 12 month period, the application will be archived and all other required documents may be destroyed. Once the application is archived, the applicant will be required to reapply, repay the application fee and may be required to resubmit documents.

After the requirements set forth in Part I have been met, the endorsement application can be submitted. The following items are required in order to obtain an Iowa nursing license by endorsement:

1. A completed application.
   a. If you hold a Social Security Number, you may apply online. Go to the board's website at https://nursing.iowa.gov, and click the link, "IBON Online Services" then click "Initial Applications" then "Apply for New License." A packet of other required materials and instructions will be sent to you automatically by ground mail after you have completed the online application and paid the endorsement fee.
   b. If you do not hold a social security number, call the board office at 515.281.5535 or send an e-mail to foreigneducated@iowa.gov and request a paper application.
   c. Address of Record: On the application, provide a **mailing** address where the IBON can send license information, including the license certificate and card. If it applies, provide a **residential** address if different than your mailing address. This is the address where you physically live.

2. Fee of $169, which includes the fee to conduct the criminal history background check.
   Important: The fee is not refundable. Fee payment must be in US dollars. All other payments will be returned.

3. Two completed fingerprint cards. These must be the cards you receive from the nursing board office; other fingerprint cards cannot be accepted. **All blanks on the fingerprint card must be filled in before they can be processed or they may be sent back, which may delay the licensing process.**

4. A signed criminal history background waiver form.

5. Information regarding any criminal convictions and out of state discipline must be submitted. You **must report all** criminal convictions and out of state discipline you have received. For criminal convictions report: **What** crime you were convicted of or plead guilty to, **when** the final disposition occurred, and **where** this occurred. For some cases you may be asked to submit the plea of guilty and/or sentencing order with your application. To avoid potential delays, it is recommended you submit these records when you apply. Deferred judgments, expunged convictions, sealed records, and other forms of agreed dispositions must still be reported. You do not need to report traffic charges, but you must report operating while intoxicated convictions.

6. Verification of original license. Iowa only requires verification from your original state of licensure. Printing an online verification through a board of nursing website is not sufficient.

   Apply online for original license verification at www.nursys.com.
   Exceptions: Some states will only accept a paper verification form and may charge a fee for their verification services. If you are endorsing from one of those states, you will need to send the "Verification of Original License" form from your packet to your original state. Discard the form if it is not needed.

CHECKING THE STATUS OF AN APPLICATION
It may require up to 8 weeks to process your application depending on the application volume and when the fingerprint cards, waiver form and transcript have been received. You may e-mail the endorsement staff at foreigneducated@iowa.gov to check the status of your application.

NAME OR ADDRESS CHANGES AFTER SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION
If you need to change your name or address before your Iowa license is issued, you must submit the change to the attention of the endorsement division, Iowa Board of Nursing in writing, by fax to 515.281.5535, or by email to foreigneducated@iowa.gov.

QUESTIONS
If you have any questions about the paperwork or the process, please call 515.281.5535 or email foreigneducated@iowa.gov.

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