

NLC

NURSE LICENSURE COMPACT
What Policymakers Need to Know

Background

- The NLC is an interstate compact allowing a nurse to have one license (issued by the primary state of residence) with the privilege to practice in other compact states (both physically and via technology). The NLC applies to registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical or vocational nurses (LPN/LVNs).
- A separate compact for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) will commence in 2016.
- Since it began in 2000, 24 states have joined the NLC. The NLC was modeled after the Driver's License Compact.
- The NLC provides that the nurse is held accountable for complying with the nursing practice laws and other regulations in the state where the patient is located at the time care is rendered.

Benefits of the NLC

- Clarifies the authority of nurses currently practicing telenursing or interstate practice;
- Licensure portability increases mobility for nurses;
- Improved state and facility access to licensed nurses during a disaster or other times of great need for qualified nursing services;
- Enables the states (within their sovereign capacity) to act jointly and collectively;
- Facilitates continuity of care for consumers through e-health;
- Reduces duplicative regulatory processes and allows state regulatory agencies to reallocate resources;
- Facilitates enhanced discipline and information-sharing among participating NLC states.

Public Protection Features of the NLC

Removal of Multistate Privileges: When a nurse with a multistate license is disciplined by a board of nursing, under most forms of discipline, multistate privileges are revoked and the nurse is restricted to practice in the home state only during the term of the board order if the nurse is still permitted to practice. This protects all other NLC states while the nurse is deemed unfit or unsafe to practice.

Flagging of Nurses Under Investigation: When an NLC state board of nursing, after finding an initial inquiry into a complaint to be reasonable and if proven true would indicate that the nurse may have committed a serious infraction or indicates that the nurse represents an immediate threat to the public, the licensee's record is flagged within the Nursys national database. The flag is only visible to other NLC state boards of nursing. Should the nurse relocate to another compact state and apply for licensure, the board will query Nursys database and learn that the nurse is under investigation. The

