Arkansas State Board of Nursing
Important Reminders/Tips for Graduates
Spring 2024

We are reaching the time of year that many of you are preparing for graduation and are having students complete the application process. This message includes some important reminders to help the process go smoother for you and the applicant. **Please forward this message to your program instructors and others who may be dealing with your graduates**.

The direct link to Arkansas State Board of Nursing (ASBN) website is
https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/arkansas-board-of-nursing

Note: Important information is located throughout the website; however, two vital areas include the Licensing link and Education link on the left of the homepage.

- Program Director & Faculty Information is located by clicking the Education link (left of screen). **This is where you access the AOG Portal** and other resources.

  ➢ Direct link to AOG Portal: https://arsbn.boardsofnursing.org/aog

- **Remember that this site is an excellent resource for students**: www.nclex.com

Information for creating a Nurse Portal Account and submitting an Initial Application for Licensure is located on the homepage of the ASBN website (the blue boxes).

Nurse Portal Account

- Training videos are available from the home page under the "*Arkansas Nurse Portal How – To Videos*" link at the bottom of the page, or click on the direct link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI2R7ZZaYvo39O5U4UN_qZQ
    - ➢ Creation of an Arkansas Nurse Portal Account and Submission of Application
    - ➢ How to Create an Arkansas Nurse Portal Account with Existing License

- Students must create a Nurse Portal Account to submit an application. Access the ASBN homepage and click on the "*Arkansas Nurse Portal*" button. If a student already has an Arkansas nursing license, they should already have a Nurse Portal Account and will sign into the existing account.

  ➢ It is **VITAL** that students use a **PERSONAL** email account and **NOT** the school email account, when creating their Nurse Portal.

Application for Licensure

- Training videos are available from the home page under the "***Arkansas Nurse Portal How – To Videos***" link at the bottom of the page, or click on the direct link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI2R7ZZaYvo39O5U4UN_qZQ
  - ➢ Creation of an Arkansas Nurse Portal Account and Submission of Application

- Access the ASBN homepage and click on the "***Apply for Arkansas License or Certificate***" button. If a student already has an Arkansas nursing license, they should already have a Nurse Portal Account and will sign into the existing account.

- Go to the Application Information section and click on the "***Licensure by Examination for LPNs and RNs***" link.

  - ➢ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
    We usually have several applicants submit an incorrect application: a Retest/Rewrite application instead of the Initial Application for Examination or submitting BOTH applications. The incorrect application will not populate the applicant's name on the AOG Portal list and fees are nonrefundable.

- Students go to the "***Licensure Application for Examination Information"*** section, click on the applicable application link, read, and follow instructions.

- Anticipate processing time (from receipt of program approval and ALL applicant materials) to average 4 weeks.

- Application status will remain in a "Processing" status **until issuance of a license**, please share this with students as we have a huge number of calls asking why the application is in a "Processing" status. Again, it will remain in a "Processing" status until a license is issued.

- Some applicant applications are in an "On Hold" status, this typically means a required item is missing; a message is sent to the applicant via the message center regarding what is missing. The application may remain in "On Hold" status **even once all required items are submitted**. The applicant should understand that data entry is a manual process and updates are **not** immediately reflected in application status. Applicants need to monitor the portal account for updates.

- Staff may post messages to students before graduation – so applicants should check status and messages **OFTEN**.

- DO NOT upload "payment receipts" for Pearson VUE or Criminal Background Checks (CBCs) into a portal account and there is no need to message that these tasks have been completed. ASBN staff receives reports regarding Pearson VUE registrations and CBCs

and once updated, it reflects in student portal account. Remember we process VOLUMES of data that is manually entered into accounts <u>a task will not reflect an update immediately.</u>

- ➢ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
  Students MUST check and make sure that the nursing program information is correct. <u>**Stress**</u> that they must begin typing the program name into the <u>**FIRST field**</u> on the education page and then choose the correct program from the menu that appears. This automatically populates the correct program code into the application which sends notice to a program directors AOG portal.

  Students **DO NOT** type the program name in the field titled "Other". If they do, it WILL NOT populate the correct program code and the program director WILL NOT receive anything in the AOG portal. This drastically slows down application processing and is the MOST COMMON reason that an applicant does not appear on the AOG Portal list.

- ➢ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
  Students that are already licensed as an LPN MUST list the RN EDUCATION on the RN application. It is the RN EDUCATION that is the basis for licensure they are submitting.

  Many of these students submit an RN application but leave off the RN education and list their LPN license as the basis for licensure. If the student does not correctly list the RN EDUCATION, the program director WILL NOT receive anything in the AOG portal. This drastically slows down application processing.

- ➢ Students must enter their correct Primary State of Residence (PSOR) on their application. This is the state they have a permanent residence, pay taxes, have a voters registration card and/or driver's license.

  IMPORTANT: A license is not issued to an individual with a PSOR other than Arkansas. If the student has a PSOR in a compact state other than Arkansas, they should make application in that state.

  Exception: Graduates from Arkansas PN programs with a PSOR of LA should list their correct PSOR as LA; a single state Arkansas license can be issued on a one-time basis.

- ➢ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
  Students must enter correct information on their portal account, CBC system and ASBN and Pearson VUE applications. The information on these items should be

consistent: name (as identified on driver's license, marriage certificate, and/or birth certificate), birth date, social security number, etc.

Incorrect or inconsistent information will delay students' ability to schedule their test.

Workforce Expansion Act of 2021

- ASBN adopted rules to waive the initial licensing fee for individuals who are covered by the Workforce Expansion Act of 2021, and who submit application for initial licensure/certification.

- Information is located on our website under the Licensing tab and on the Program Director & Faculty Information page. Information includes what is waived, who qualifies, documentation that is and is not accepted and how to calculate poverty limits.

- The waiver request question is asked at the beginning of an application and students are required to upload supportive documentation.

  - **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
    Depending on the volume received for review, a waiver request alone may delay application processing. Submission of documentation or images that are not accepted results in a voided application.

    Federal Poverty Level: Documentation must be a most recent **Tax return**, preferably current year tax return. A W2 form, payroll stub, time sheet etc. is **NOT** accepted as documentation to determine federal poverty level.

    Benefit Documentation: Official documentation from the agency providing the benefits should be a **Benefit Verification or Notice of Action form**. Students can contact the Arkansas Department of Human Services or agency associated with benefit. Documentation must reflect **CURRENT** dates.

    *****A photo of an insurance card, outdate documents, pay distribution etc. is NOT accepted as documentation to determine eligibility of benefits.

Criminal Background Checks (CBC)

- Submission of CBCs is through a **SEPARATE** system from the Arkansas Nurse Portal. Students should submit the CBC application at the SAME time they submit the licensure application.

- Students access the ASBN homepage and click on the "*Criminal Background Check*" button, read, and follow instructions. **Stress** that students should print and follow the CBC Instructions.

- **Students should not call or message asking for the results of their CBCs**

  - ➤ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
    Students must **NOT** submit application for criminal background check before submitting a licensure application. Federal law stipulates, that we cannot process CBCs without an application already on file.

  - ➤ Arkansas residents are required to have fingerprints collected by digital, electronic means through LiveScan- they must use the CBC instructions for an Arkansas resident.

  - ➤ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
    Students must take the BON Search ID number with them to the Live Scan location. This is a number that is located on the CBC payment email. It is emailed to their personal email account- have them look in spam or junk mail or delete folder. It DOES NOT come from the Board; the email is from ARGovPay.
    If student cannot locate the email, have them go to our website www.arsbn.org. On the homepage select criminal background checks, scroll down to the bottom of the page, and select "resend confirmation email".

Pearson VUE Registration

- Students should register with Pearson VUE and pay the required testing fee <u>at the same time or before</u> submitting an application to ASBN.

- Students should not upload receipts or screen shots of Pearson VUE payment unless staff specifically ask them to do so.

  - ➤ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
    Once students graduate and their Affidavit of Graduation (AOG) is approved, a temporary permit is not issued, and students are not deemed eligible to test without the Pearson VUE registration being completed.

  - ➤ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
    Students are **strongly** encouraged to enter their Social Security Number (SSN) when registering with Pearson VUE. It is optional on the Pearson VUE site; however, our system links to Pearson VUE and uses the SSN as a secure identifier, so the registration does not automatically import without a SSN.

> ➤ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**
> <u>License applications are not processed if students have not registered with Pearson VUE and paid the required testing fee.</u> This is a very common reason that application processing is delayed.

Official Transcript   **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT**

- An official transcript <u>directly from the school</u> is required to issue a PERMANENT license (**not needed for temporary permit issuance or to deem eligible to test**). Students should request for the school to submit an official transcript via mail (or approved ASBN secure email address as provided by the Assistant Director) with required content (*Rules*, Chapter Six):
   - ➤ Dates of admission;
   - ➤ Date of separation/graduation from the program;
   - ➤ **Degree/diploma/certification awarded;**
   - ➤ Signature of program director, registrar, official electronic signature; and the
   - ➤ Seal of the school or printed on security paper <u>or an official electronic document</u>.

   - ➤ **ALERT: Potential PERMENENT LICENSE processing delay:**

Note: Once a student passes NCLEX, a permanent license IS NOT ISSUED if ASBN does not have an official transcript directly from the nursing program that includes ALL required content listed above. This last semester, many transcripts were received that DID NOT include the degree awarded. Students are referred to the program director or registrar.

       STRESS- students do not upload their own transcripts to their nurse portal account nor do we accept transcripts sent to us from third party agencies.

Note: Programs are strongly encouraged to upload the official transcript directly into the applicant portal account. The official transcript can be securely uploaded through the AOG portal when the applicant is reviewed and approved. **Many programs are effectively using this process.**

Investigations

- Students that check "yes" to having a prior criminal background history, need to review the documents on our website under the CBC page; these can assist them in answering their questions and submitting documents for the investigation.
   Direct link [ASBN - Criminal Background Checks Arkansas Department of Health](#)
   - ➤ Criminal Background Check Frequently Asked Questions
   - ➤ Criminal Background Information

- I open investigative cases before they graduate (if an application is on file) so certified court documents should be UPLOADED through their nurse portal account when they submit an application or as soon as possible.

    ➢ **ALERT: Potential application processing delay:**

    To conduct the investigation, court documentation is required; many students/graduates DO NOT upload their court documents when they make application. A message will be posted in their nurse portal account that will require document submission; many do not view the message until after graduation, this drastically slows down the review. Encourage students to monitor the message center and upload court documents.

- Additional Resource:
  Note: use direct link above to access CBC document resources.
  Program Director and Faculty Training Video "***What if an Applicant Marks Yes to an Eligibility Question***" is available on the Program Director & Faculty Information page located under the Education link (on the left of screen) or you can click on the following direct link
  https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/Traning_Presentation_Applicant_Marks_Yes.pdf

==**STRESS Reminders for students after they have submitted their application**==

ASBN receives more than 1200 applications during each graduation time. Applications are **manually** processed in as timely a manner as possible. There are many instances when a program director approves an AOG and within hours an applicant contacts ASBN to see why their application has not been processed. Application processing is not immediate nor is an entire program processed at one time; applicant patience is much appreciated.

- **MONITOR THE MESSAGE CENTER FOR UPDATES** rather than calling the ASBN.
  Please encourage students to **use the message center respectfully and responsibly**, many questions can be answered by reviewing instructions, referring to the website or accessing www.nclex.com. Staff are not able to reply to or message all applicants daily. When we need to get information to an applicant, it is posted to their message center.

- A temporary permit IS NOT issued before completion of a program or before the program director has submitted an Affidavit of Graduation. Students should monitor their portal account, once processed, status of a temporary permit is reflected in the nurse portal account.
    - ➢ We do not issue any paper licenses; verification of license status is checked from the ASBN homepage click on the "***Verify License or Certificate***" button.
    - ➢ Keep in mind that there can be a twenty-four-hour delay with Nursys update from the time a license is issued. However, the Arkansas registry is immediate.

2.5.24

- Review information on the ASBN website; we have worked diligently to assure valuable information is available. Encourage students to read through all information and research the website to answer any questions they may have.

Program Directors and Faculty

Please remember to access the Program Director and Faculty Information for resources. It is also encouraged that faculty share with students the "***State Licensure Process: Most Common Mistakes that delay Processing***". This is located under the Education link or you can click on the direct link
https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/Traning_Presentation_Most_Common _Mistakes.pdf.