

South Carolina Board of Nursing
October 2005 Insert into the S.C. Nurse Newsletter

BOARD MISSION

The mission of the State Board of Nursing for South Carolina is the protection of public health, safety, and welfare by assuring safe and competent practice of nursing.

This mission is accomplished by assuring safe initial practice as well as continuing competency in the practice of nursing and by promoting nursing excellence in the areas of education and practice. The Board licenses qualified individuals as licensed practical nurses, registered nurses or advanced practice registered nurses. Complaints against nurses are investigated and disciplinary action taken when necessary. Schools of nursing are surveyed and approved to ensure quality education for future nurses.

ADMINISTRATOR RETIRES

Martha Summer Bursinger, RN, MSN, MEd, will retire effective October 2, 2005. Ms. Bursinger served as the administrator of the South Carolina Board of Nursing for five years. After 30 years in healthcare, 21 years of which were in nursing, she will continue her work in the health care arena in long-term care. Ms. Bursinger wishes to thank everyone at the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR), the Board staff, Board members, licensees and public who have made her time as board administrator a pleasant and memorable experience.

During the time Ms. Bursinger was administrator of the South Carolina Board of Nursing, the Nurse Practice Act was revised, passed legislatively, and has been fully implemented. Additionally, the Practitioner Remediation Enhancement Partnership (PREP) program has been implemented with many health care systems in the state actively participating in this patient safety effort. Also during her time as administrator, the Governor signed the Nurse Licensure Compact in May 2005. We now await acceptance by the Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators to begin implementation.

DISASTER RELIEF

The South Carolina Board of Nursing wishes to thank all licensed nurses who have participated in and are currently participating in the relief effort in the Gulf states as well as with evacuees here in our state. Every effort has been made to disseminate information to disaster relief groups regarding those who are willing to volunteer, those who have come to us in need of nursing positions, and to continue our mission to protect the public. The Board encourages nurses who have extra skills and preparation with disaster relief to go to our Web site and select Disaster Volunteers and follow the instructions. Keeping this data is crucial to being able to assist in any disaster relief effort. You may also elect to serve as a volunteer as you renew your license online in February 2006.

NURSE LICENSURE COMPACT

Governor Mark Sanford signed the Nurse Licensure Compact bill into law on May 26, 2005. The act must now be reviewed and approved by the Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators (NLCA). As we await approval by the NLCA, Board staff is working on an implementation plan to include when the multi-state licenses will be issued. The full text of this act can be viewed on the South Carolina Legislature Online Web site at

http://www.scstatehouse.net/sess116_2005-2006/bills/3142.htm. Be sure to visit our web site (www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/) periodically: for updates on the Compact and other important information.

RENEWAL TIME IS COMING!

Many nurses will be expecting to receive their renewal application in October 2005. The Board initiated biennial renewal in 2004. Those that renewed in 2004 and those who have received a license since that time have licenses that will expire at midnight on Sunday, April 30, 2006. You should receive your biennial renewal notice in February 2006.

There are more advantages to online renewal than just being able to renew while checking your email. The main advantage is convenience. The process takes just a few minutes of your time over the Internet as opposed to the time filing out the application, getting a stamp, and then mailing the application to us. The second advantage is the speed of processing. Your license is renewed as soon as your credit card clears and a printed license is mailed to you within five days as opposed to 7-10 days for processing and receipt through the mail. Within minutes of the printing of your renewed license, you or your employer may verify your new expiration date on the Licensee Lookup feature on our web site. Be sure to print out the confirmation page for your licensure file with copies of your continued competency documentation for this renewal period. Do not send copies of your continued competency information to the Board. Shortly after the renewal period, we will be randomly auditing 10% of South Carolina nurses. If you are selected for audit, you will receive a letter asking you to send in the documentation to verify competency.

Don't feel comfortable giving out your credit card information over the Internet? Our Web site uses state-of-the-art security technology. This is the similar technology used by major online groups and is very safe as proven by the increases in online sales over the past few years. Please keep your license and personal identification number (PIN) in a safe place, as you will be using this information each time you renew.

Employers are encouraged to allow their employees time to renew online on computers within the facilities. While we recognize that computers are not in all homes, most people access through work, friends or family as well in all local public libraries in South Carolina. We encourage you to take advantage of this wonderful timesaving opportunity just as many other states have already done or are in the process of doing.

Paper renewal applications will be available upon written request only. If you would like a paper renewal application instead of renewing only, please send in a written request along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Renewal Application Request, Board of Nursing, Post Office Box 12367, Columbia, SC 29211. Applications will be mailed within 5 - 7 business days of receipt of the written request.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON CONTINUED COMPETENCY

Q: *Are Continuing Education hours now mandated by the Board of Nursing?*

A: No, the Board of Nursing does not mandate continuing education hours (30 contact hours in 2-year renewal period). It is only one of the four options for continued competency now offered by the Board. The licensed nurse needs to select only one of these options.

Q: *What is a national nursing provider of continuing education?*

A: The ANCC (American Nurses Credentialing Center), National League for Nursing (NLN), any national specialty organizations such as Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWOHN) or Association of PeriOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) and other similar organizations are accepted providers of continuing education. A list of accepted providers can be found under Continued Competency Criteria on our Web site. <http://www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/>

Q: *Can Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) use their national certification in their specialty as proof of certification (option b of Section 40-33-40)?*

A: Absolutely. Since to be an APRN in South Carolina you have to have a masters and be nationally certified in your specialty. Certification or re-certification must be current during the renewal period.

Q: *Does a nurse have to sign my employer verification form?*

A: We know nurses have non-nursing employers, and that is fine as long as the employer is able to verify nursing competency.

Q: *Where do I get the Board approved employer verification form?*

A: It is on our Web site at www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/ and on the home page on the left hand side on the menu click "applications". The employer verification form is on the second page. Nurses need to be sure that their employer can, by their policies, complete and sign the form required by the Board to document practice hours. If they cannot, nurses may choose one of the other options.

Q: *Can I count taking one course in school as a nursing program under option (c) of Section 40-33-40?*

A: No. The key word in this option is "completion." You must complete all the coursework for the program before it can count toward your continued competency requirement. Now it is worth checking into to see if a specific course can be converted into contact hours. Check with the academic institution providing the course.

Q: *Do I have to send in all my paperwork with my renewal?*

A: No. Do not send any continued competency paperwork with your renewal. You just mark one of the four options. Shortly after renewal, we will be randomly auditing 10% of the nurses in South Carolina. If your name is selected, you will receive a letter asking you to send the documentation in to verify competency. By law, you will have five days to provide the documents. A licensee must maintain all documented evidence of compliance for at least four years.

RETURNED CHECKS

When submitting any fees to the Board of Nursing, please be certain there are sufficient funds in your account to cover your check and that the check has cleared before closing any account. Section 40-1-50(G) of the S.C. Code of Laws states that a license shall be suspended if a fee payment is made by a check that is subsequently returned by the financial institution unpaid and is not made good within 10 days of official notification. This suspension is exempt from the Administrative Procedures Act. Unpaid checks constitute a non-payment of license fees.

Notifications are sent to the address of record on the licensee's file. When a check is returned, replacement funds plus the returned check fee allowed by law, must be submitted in the form of a cashier's check or money order. The Board cannot provide any further licensure services until the returned check is made good. Notice of the suspension is sent to the licensee's employer(s) if the check is not made good within 10 days of official notification.

HAVE YOU MOVED?

Section 40-33-38 (C) of the Nurse Practice Act requires that all licensees notify the Board *in writing* within 15 days of an address change. So that you do not miss important information such as your renewal, please be sure to notify the Board whenever you change addresses. You may use the form included at the top of your license mailer or submit a letter including your name (as shown on your license), license number, former address and new address as well as your new telephone number and email address. You may also change your address on-line utilizing the address change form found on our Web site: www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/.

It is important for nurses who have elected to serve in the event of a disaster to provide the Board with updates on their contact information other than address. Current telephone numbers and email addresses will assist in contacting nurses in the event of a disaster. If our information is not current, a nurse may miss an opportunity to assist in a disaster situation.

BOARD VACANCIES

The Nurse Practice Act signed by Governor Sanford on May 11, 2004, established an additional lay member for the Board. There is one lay member vacancy on the Board of Nursing at this time. Lay members represent the public at large as a consumer of nursing services and may not be licensed or employed as a health care provider. No board member may serve as an officer of a professional health-related state association. If you are or know someone who is interested in this position, please submit a letter of request, along with resume to Boards & Commissions, Governor's Office, Post Office Box 11829, Columbia, SC 29211.

S.C. BOARD OF NURSING BOARD MEMBERS

Sylvia A. Whiting, RN, PhD, CS, Congressional District 1 –*President*
Suzanne K. White, RN, MN, FAAN, FCCM, CNAA, Congressional District 4 –*Vice-President*
Brenda Y. Martin, RNC, MN, CNAA, Congressional District 5 –*Secretary*
Carrie Houser James, RN, MSN, Congressional District 6
Mattie Smalls Jenkins, LPN, Region I, Congressional District 1
Rose Kearney-Nunnery, RN, PhD, Congressional District 2
C. Lynn Lewis, RN, EdD, MHS, Congressional District 3
Debra J. Newton, LPN, Region II, Congressional District 4
James P. Rogers, Esquire, Public Member
Vacant – Second Public Member [*See Section 40-33-10(A)*]

S.C. BOARD OF NURSING CONTACT INFORMATION:

Main Telephone Line	(803) 896-4550
Fax Line	(803) 896-4525
Email	Nurseboard@llr.sc.gov

Web site

www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/

LPN / RN / APRN Licensure

Telephone

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Fax Line

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Email

Nurseboard@llr.sc.gov

David Christian, III, Program Coordinator

Annette Disher, Program Coordinator

Edwina Garrett, Examinations

Theresa Richardson, Reinstatements

Brandi Risher, Endorsements

Michael Roland, Advanced Practice

Kathryn Spires, Verifications

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Dottie Buchanan, Administrative Assistant

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(803) 896-4533

Martha Bursinger, Administrator

bursingerm@llr.sc.gov

(803) 896-4550

OFFICE LOCATION/HOURS OF OPERATION

The Board of Nursing is located at Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, 110 Centerview Drive, Suite 202, Columbia, SC 29210. Directions to our office can be found on our Web site.

Our mailing address is South Carolina Board of Nursing, Post Office Box 12367, Columbia, SC 29211-2367.

Our normal business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for holidays designated by the State.

DESIGNATED STATE HOLIDAYS FOR REMAINDER OF 2005

Nov 11, 2005 Veteran's Day

Nov 24-25, 2005 Thanksgiving

Dec 26-27, 2005 Christmas

BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR REMAINDER OF 2005

Oct 18, 2005	Advisory Committee on Nursing
Oct 20, 2005	Nursing Practice and Standards Committee
Nov 17-18, 2005	Board Meeting
Nov 18, 2005	Advanced Practice Committee
Dec 8, 2005	Nursing Practice and Standards Committee
Dec 13, 2005	Advisory Committee on Nursing

VISIT US ON OUR WEB SITE: www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/

The Board of Nursing Web site contains the New Nurse Practice Act, Regulations, Advisory Opinions, Licensee Lookup, Disciplinary Actions and other information.