

INTRODUCTION

Rules on requirements for relicensure for registered nurses in Louisiana were promulgated on December 20, 1990. Amendments were promulgated on March 20, 1995; March 20, 1999; July 20, 1998; March 20, 1999; May 20, 2001; and March 20, 2008.

These Rules mandate that all nurses must complete Louisiana State Board of Nursing (LSBN) continuing education (CE) requirements for relicensure/renewal annually. It places Louisiana among 36 other states who also mandate continuing education as a requirement for relicensure/renewal to ensure continued competence of nursing practice.

The Continuing Education (CE) - Nursing Practice Requirements for relicensure/renewal are implemented under the direction of the Nursing Consultant for Continuing Education, the Education Committee, the Executive Director, and Board Members. All nurses must comply with the continuing education requirements and agree to provide supporting documents to LSBN upon request.

Public forums were held throughout the State during 1989-90 for Louisiana nurses to determine the type of continuing education that would facilitate maintaining current nursing practice. Since some states have been legislatively mandated to institute continuing education requirements for relicensure, the Board supported this proactive approach by Louisiana nurses.

An update of information on **approved** Continuing Education - Nursing Practice Requirements for relicensure/renewal can be obtained:

- periodically in *The Examiner*, the official publication of the Louisiana State Board of Nursing, emailed to every active Louisiana licensed registered nurse throughout the United States; or
- by written request to the Board of Nursing office.

This brochure is an explanation of Continuing Education - Nursing Practice Requirements for relicensure/renewal. It should help you with the information you need. **Keep this document** for use as a reference whenever you have a question.

NURSING C.E. REQUIREMENTS

Nursing Continuing Education (C.E.)

Continuing education (C.E.) is a planned educational activity designed to update the nursing knowledge and skills of its participants beyond the entry level, or to prepare for practice in a different area of nursing.

Contact Hour

A nursing **contact hour is not** the same as a **CEU** (Continuing Education Unit). A contact hour is 60 minutes of participation in an educational activity which meets LSBN criteria. The conversion is:

1 CEU = 10 contact hours

If a continuing education (CE) certificate states it is awarding CEUs, the certificate must provide the conversion and show **both** the CEU quantity **and** contact hour equivalency on the certificate.

Nursing Practice/CE Requirements Annually

Full-Time = 5 contact hours

Part-Time = 10 contact hours

Unemployed/Inactive = 15 contact hours

Reinstatement = 15 contact hours per year

Endorsement/Initial licensure = none for the year of initial licensure

Nursing Practice

The "practice of nursing" is the performance, with *or without* compensation, by an individual licensed by the Board as a registered nurse, of functions requiring specialized knowledge and skills derived from the biological, physical, and behavioral sciences. The practice of nursing or registered nursing shall not be deemed to include acts of medical diagnosis or medical prescriptions of therapeutic or corrective nature. (*Nurse Practice Act, R.S. 37:913(13) and (14), which includes but is not limited to direct patient care, supervision, teaching, administration, and positions which require use of nursing knowledge, judgement, and skill.

Full-Time Nursing Practice

Full-time nursing practice is a *minimum* of **1600 hours of nursing employment annually**.

Home health, contract, self-employed or agency nurses, a minimum of 1600 hours annually (exclusive of travel), is recognized as full-time. Paycheck stubs along with a work log record should be maintained to document the nursing practice hours obtained.

Part-Time Nursing Practice

Part-time nursing practice is a minimum of **160 hours** but less than the 1600 full-time level **annually**.

Board Approved Continuing Education (C.E.)

Continuing education contact hours which have been approved either by another **U.S. Board of Nursing** or the **American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)** - Commission on Accreditation are acceptable for relicensure/renewal in Louisiana.

Current Certification in a nursing specialty area by a certifying body whose requirements have been approved by LSBN may be used in lieu of contact hours to meet the CE requirements for relicensure/renewal. A list of approved certifying organizations is available on the LSBN website.

Academic courses in a post secondary institution which are related to specific knowledge and/or technical skills required for the *practice of nursing* as specified in §3335.E., or which lead to an advanced degree, or to a certification in advanced nursing, may be used in lieu of continuing education contact hours.

Academic credits leading to a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing (BSN), acquired post licensure as a registered nurse, may be used to meet relicensure requirements, in the year the nursing coursework credit is obtained, for a maximum of four consecutive years.

One academic semester hour is equivalent to fifteen (15) contact hours of continuing education. An official transcript will be required to document the academic credit in nursing courses and hours awarded.

Example: 3 credit hours = 45 contact hours

EXAMPLES OF APPROVED C.E.

1. Academic courses (transcripts showing nursing coded courses required).
2. Certification by a nursing specialty organization **recognized by the LSBN** (see website for list).
3. C.E. provided by LSBN approved providers. *
4. C.E. **approved** by other US Boards of Nursing. *
5. C.E. **approved** through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) - Commission on Accreditation. *
6. Independent/Home Study C.E. through providers **recognized by LSBN**. *
7. State Nurses' Associations, such as Louisiana State Nurses' Association (LSNA) **which have been accredited by ANCC** to provide C.E. or to approve others to provide. *
8. Hospitals/Agencies within the State who are **approved providers** by LSBN. *

* With CE Certificates showing the accreditation

ANNUAL AUDIT

Every year a random selection of registered nurses licensed in Louisiana (even if residing out of state) will be subject to the audit process. C.E. certificates of completion and/or other LSBN accepted evidence documenting compliance with the relicensure/renewal requirements must be dated for that year. If selected, it is relevant to the status of your license that you comply with the audit promptly.

New licensees - (whether licensed by examination or endorsement) will not be required to earn CE during the year that they were initially licensed.

Example: If the date of initial RN licensure is June 2012, the licensee will not be required to obtain accredited nursing CE contact hours until after January 1, 2013 for the 2013 calendar year.

Information on the Audit process can be obtained:

- periodically in *The Examiner*, the official publication of the Louisiana State Board of Nursing, emailed to every active Louisiana licensed registered nurse throughout the United States; or
- by written request to the Board of Nursing office.

Please obtain written proof for each nursing continuing education offering and verify it meets LSBN CE requirements as outlined in this brochure if you plan to utilize it toward your CE requirements for annual relicensure/renewal. Continuing education must be completed and documented by the nurse prior to annual licensure renewal. Louisiana nursing licenses are calendar year licenses which must be renewed each fall for the next year. All licenses expire January 31st if not renewed, a late fee is charged for January renewals.

Record Keeping Requirements

Each licensee is responsible for **safe-keeping** of documents to verify compliance with the C.E. - Nursing Practice Requirements for relicensure/renewal for **five (5) years**. This information should be submitted to LSBN **only** when requested.

Office space does not allow record keeping of each licensee in Louisiana. Please submit only the information requested, not all you have acquired.

Example: Submitting copies of CE certificates of completion **and** of nurse specialty certification card **and** academic transcript.

Any one of the above can be used. Copies of all C.E. certificates acquired during that year need not be submitted if the nurse had completed more than required by LSBN.

Only certificates that represent the number of accredited nursing contact hours relative to the individual's verifiable nursing employment will need to be submitted if the nurse is selected for the CE audit.

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C.E. - NURSING PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS FOR RELICENSURE



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