

ASSEMBLY, No. 2194

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 7, 2022

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman NANCY F. MUNOZ

District 21 (Morris, Somerset and Union)

SYNOPSIS

Requires newly licensed registered professional nurse to attain baccalaureate degree in nursing within 10 years of initial licensure as condition of renewal of license.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning educational requirements for registered
2 professional nurses and amending P.L.1947, c.262.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. Section 4 of P.L.1947, c.262 (C.45:11-26) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 4. a. Qualifications of applicants. An applicant for a license to
10 practice professional nursing shall submit to the board evidence in
11 such form as the board may prescribe that said applicant: (1) has
12 attained his or her eighteenth birthday; (2) is of good moral
13 character, is not a habitual user of drugs and has never been
14 convicted or has not pleaded nolo contendere, non vult contendere
15 or non vult to an indictment, information or complaint alleging a
16 violation of any Federal or State law relating to narcotic drugs; (3)
17 holds a diploma from an accredited 4-year high school or the
18 equivalent thereof as determined by the New Jersey State
19 Department of Education; (4) has completed a course of
20 professional nursing study in an accredited school of professional
21 nursing as defined by the board and holds a diploma therefrom.

22 Notwithstanding anything herein contained, any person who
23 possesses the educational and school of professional nursing
24 qualifications for registration required by the law of this State at the
25 time of his or her graduation from an accredited school of
26 professional nursing shall be deemed to possess the qualifications
27 (3) and (4) prescribed hereinabove in this subsection.

28 Notwithstanding anything herein contained, any person who
29 shall have qualifications (1) and (2) and shall have graduated from a
30 school of professional nursing, which need not be an accredited
31 school, shall be deemed to have qualifications (3) and (4) upon
32 complying with such reasonable requirements as to high school and
33 school of nursing studies and training as the board may prescribe;
34 provided, however, that such person shall make application in form
35 prescribed by the board within 1 year from the effective date of
36 **[this act]** P.L.1947, c.262 (C.45:11-23 et seq.) and shall
37 satisfactorily complete such reasonable requirements and
38 successfully pass the examinations, which examinations shall be
39 limited to subject matters in the curriculum required by the board at
40 the time of the applicant's graduation, provided for in subsection b.
41 hereof, within 2 years after the date of the filing of such application.

42 b. License.

43 (1) By examination. The applicant shall be required to pass a
44 written examination in such subjects as the board may determine,

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 which examination may be supplemented by an oral or practical
2 examination or both. Upon successfully passing such examinations
3 the applicant shall be licensed by the board to practice professional
4 nursing.

5 (2) By **【indorsement】** endorsement without examination. The
6 board may issue a license to practice professional nursing without
7 examination to an applicant who has been duly licensed or
8 registered as a registered or professional nurse by examination or by
9 original waiver under the laws of another State, territory or
10 possession of the United States, or the District of Columbia, or any
11 foreign country, if in the opinion of the board the applicant has the
12 qualifications required by **【this act】** P.L.1947, c.262 (C.45:11-23 et
13 seq.) for the licensing of professional nurses, or equivalent
14 qualifications.

15 c. Fees. An applicant for a license **【by examination shall pay to**
16 **the board at the time of application a fee of \$25.00 and at the time**
17 **of each application for re-examination a fee of \$20.00. An**
18 **applicant for a license without examination shall pay to the board at**
19 **the time of application a fee of \$15.00】** shall pay a fee established
20 by the board by regulation.

21 d. Nurses registered under a previous law. Any person who on
22 the effective date of **【this act】** P.L.1947, c.262 (C.45:11-23 et seq.)
23 holds a subsisting certificate of registration as a registered nurse
24 issued pursuant to the provisions of the act repealed by section 22
25 of **【this act】** P.L.1947, c.262 (C.45:11-22) shall be deemed to be
26 licensed as a professional nurse under **【this act】** P.L.1947, c.262
27 (C.45:11-23 et seq.) during the calendar year in which **【this act】**
28 P.L.1947, c.262 (C.45:11-23 et seq.) shall take effect, and such
29 person and any person who heretofore held a certificate of
30 registration under the act hereby repealed as aforesaid shall be
31 entitled to a renewal of such license as in the case of professional
32 nurses licensed originally under **【this act】** P.L.1947, c.262
33 (C.45:11-23 et seq.).

34 e. Title and abbreviations used by licensee. Any person who
35 holds a license to practice professional nursing under **【this act】**
36 P.L.1947, c.262 (C.45:11-23 et seq.) or P.L. , c. (C.)
37 (pending before the Legislature as this bill) shall during the
38 effective period of such license be entitled to use the title
39 "Registered Nurse" and the abbreviation "R.N." **【The effective**
40 **period of a license or a renewal thereof shall commence on the date**
41 **of issuance and shall terminate at the end of the calendar year in**
42 **which it is issued, and shall not include any period of suspension**
43 **ordered by the board as hereinafter provided.】**

44 f. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section to the
45 contrary, a person who is initially issued a license to practice
46 professional nursing, beginning on or after the effective date of
47 P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill), shall be

1 required to attain a baccalaureate degree in nursing within 10 years
2 of initial licensure, in accordance with regulations adopted by the
3 board, as a condition of renewal of the license. If a licensee is not
4 able to attain the degree within 10 years of initial licensure, upon
5 application of the licensee in a form and manner determined by the
6 board, the board may grant a one-time conditional renewal of the
7 license, if the licensee agrees to meet the baccalaureate degree
8 requirement of this subsection within a period of no more than two
9 years.
10 (cf: P.L.1966, c.186, s.2)

11
12 2. This act shall take effect on the 60th day after enactment.
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15 STATEMENT
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17 This bill requires registered professional nurses (RNs) who are
18 initially licensed by the New Jersey Board of Nursing, on or after
19 the effective date of the bill, to attain a baccalaureate degree in
20 nursing within 10 years of their initial licensure. The bill authorizes
21 a licensee who is not able to attain the degree within a 10-year
22 period to request a one-time (up to two-year) extension of the
23 requirement in order to complete the degree.

24 The purpose of this bill is to encourage newly-licensed RNs to
25 advance their education in order to deliver the best quality of care
26 to patients in an increasingly complex health care environment.
27 Studies comparing patient outcomes with the educational
28 background of nurses demonstrate that in hospitals with higher
29 proportions of nurses educated at the baccalaureate level or higher,
30 surgical patients experienced lower mortality and failure-to-rescue
31 rates.

32 Under the provisions of this bill, RNs will continue to be able to
33 enter the nursing profession through associate degree and diploma
34 nursing programs. These new nurses will then have 10 years to
35 advance their professional education and complete a baccalaureate
36 degree in nursing. The requirements of the bill will not affect
37 nurses who received their nursing license prior to the effective date
38 of the bill, although it is the sponsor's intent that currently licensed
39 nurses also seek to advance their education and training.

40 The bill also deletes obsolete language concerning licensure fees
41 and duration of licenses, which is now provided for in chapter 1 of
42 Title 45 of the Revised Statutes.