

SENATE, No. 1050

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 31, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE

District 19 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

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

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



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2

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:

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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 this
36 act and shall satisfactorily complete such reasonable requirements
37 and successfully pass the examinations, which examinations shall
38 be limited to subject matters in the curriculum required by the board
39 at the time of the applicant's graduation, provided for in subsection
40 b. hereof, within 2 years after the date of the filing of such
41 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.

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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 for the licensing of professional
13 nurses, or equivalent qualifications.

14 c. Fees. An applicant for a license ~~【by examination shall pay~~
15 ~~to the board at the time of application a fee of \$25.00 and at the~~
16 ~~time of each application for re-examination a fee of \$20.00. An~~
17 ~~applicant for a license without examination shall pay to the board at~~
18 ~~the time of application a fee of \$15.00】~~ shall pay such fees as shall
19 be established by regulation by the board or the Division of
20 Consumer Affairs in the Department of Law and Public Safety.

21 d. Nurses registered under a previous law. Any person who on
22 the effective date of this act holds a subsisting certificate of
23 registration as a registered nurse issued pursuant to the provisions
24 of the act repealed by section 22 of this act shall be deemed to be
25 licensed as a professional nurse under this act during the calendar
26 year in which this act shall take effect, and such person and any
27 person who heretofore held a certificate of registration under said
28 act hereby repealed as aforesaid shall be entitled to a renewal of
29 such license as in the case of professional nurses licensed originally
30 under this act.

31 e. Title and abbreviations used by licensee. Any person who
32 holds a license to practice professional nursing under this act shall
33 during the effective period of such license be entitled to use the title
34 "Registered Nurse" and the abbreviation "R.N." ~~【The effective~~
35 ~~period of a license or a renewal thereof shall commence on the date~~
36 ~~of issuance and shall terminate at the end of the calendar year in~~
37 ~~which it is issued, and shall not include any period of suspension~~
38 ~~ordered by the board as hereinafter provided】.~~

39 f. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section to the
40 contrary, a person who is initially issued a license to practice
41 professional nursing, beginning on or after the effective date of
42 P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill), shall be
43 required to attain a baccalaureate degree in nursing within 10 years
44 of initial licensure, in accordance with regulations adopted by the
45 board, as a condition of renewal of the license. If a licensee is not
46 able to attain the degree within 10 years of initial licensure, upon
47 application of the licensee in a form and manner determined by the

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1 board, the board may grant a one-time conditional renewal of the
2 license, if the licensee agrees to meet the baccalaureate degree
3 requirement of this subsection within a period of no more than two
4 years.

5 (cf: P.L.1966, c.186, s.2)

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7 2. This act shall take effect on the 90th day after enactment.

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10 STATEMENT

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12 This bill would require registered professional nurses (RNs) who
13 are initially licensed by the New Jersey Board of Nursing, on or
14 after the effective date of the bill, to attain a baccalaureate degree in
15 nursing within 10 years of their initial licensure. The bill authorizes
16 a licensee who is not able to attain the degree within a 10-year
17 period to request a one-time (up to two-year) extension of the
18 requirement in order to complete the degree.

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

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

35 The bill also deletes obsolete language concerning licensure fees
36 and duration of licenses, which is now provided for in Chapter 1 of
37 Title 45 of the Revised Statutes.