

Summary of Board Decisions

4/9/2020 Special Meeting

During a special meeting on Thursday, April 9, 2020, the North Carolina Medical Board (NCMB) took additional actions to ease some licensure requirements for Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners, who are jointly regulated with the North Carolina Board of Nursing. NCMB also extended the term of Limited Emergency Licenses, which are used by out-of-state and recently inactive clinicians to practice in North Carolina during a state of emergency, and approved a provision that will allow NCMB to be more nimble in response to Gov. Cooper's Executive Order #130. These and other actions provide flexibility to health systems and practices across the state addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board actions include:

- Authorized the extension of the expiration date of Limited Emergency Licenses issued during the declared state of emergency. These temporary licenses will now expire 30 days after the state of emergency is lifted.
- Approved an order allowing new Physician Assistant (PA) graduates who have not taken the required PANCE testing to be issued a temporary license. The license will be valid for up to six months and will allow a PA to practice under the supervision of an on-site physician.
- Approved several provisions related to Nurse Practitioners (NP) that mirror provisions approved for PAs. The North Carolina Board of Nursing (NCBON) is expected to approve the same orders, which are effective only during the current declared state of emergency. These provisions include:
 - Restrict prescribing of chloroquine, azithromycin and other medications to ensure that these drugs are available to patients who need them. The rule was requested by NC DHHS Secretary, Dr. Mandy Cohen, to reduce the occurrence of reported stockpiling or inappropriate prescribing of these medications.
 - Permit NPs that have inactivated professional licenses within the last two years to quickly reinstate their licenses. The temporary license will be jointly approved by NCBON and NCMB and will expire on August 1, 2020.
 - Allow recent NP graduates who have not taken the required testing to be issued a temporary license. The license will be valid for up to six months and will allow an NP to practice under the supervision of an on-site physician.
 - Allow NPs to be temporarily reassigned to a new practice area within the same facility to meet a critical need without formally notifying NCBON of the new practice setting. NPs can only be reassigned to perform medical tasks they are trained and competent to do and must have reasonable access to a physician

should a medical need arise. The NP must meet all other requirements, including conferring at least monthly with a physician to ensure meaningful supervision and quality assurance within the new practice setting.

- Reviewed Gov. Cooper's [Executive Order #130](#), which delegates authority to the state's healthcare licensing boards to temporarily waive or modify certain legal and regulatory constraints on the state's healthcare workforce. The order includes a requirement that physicians and PAs who are licensed in other states and want to work or are currently working in North Carolina to seek authorization from NCMB. Out-of-state physicians and PAs should apply for a Limited Emergency License at www.ncmedboard.org/crisis.
- Approved a recommendation to delegate authority to approve future emergency measures to the NCMB Executive Committee if a quorum of board members is not achieved.

NCMB is working in partnership with many stakeholders and working quickly to identify opportunities to support the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. NCMB will continue to publish information on these and other measures to address the crisis at www.ncmedboard.org/covid.