

## SB 855 (2019) HEALTH AGENCY REPORTING

Agency/Board Name: Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN)

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Agency/Board website address: <https://oregon.gov/osbn>

License or certificate types/brief requirements:

The OSBN licenses or certifies the following: Registered Nurses (RN), License Practical Nurses (LPN), Nurse Practitioners (NP), Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), Certified Medication Aides (CMA)

Per ORS 676.040: All RNs and LPNs must have graduated from a nursing education program and if the applicant has graduated in another country the applicant is eligible if evidence is submitted that the education is equivalent to that provided by an accredited program in this country.

All NP, CNS and CRNA applicants must first be issued an RN license and the requirements of the ORS would apply.

The Board has approved five (5) international agencies to provide education equivalent documentation. The applicant must independently contact the agency of their choice to provide the required information and pay for the service. Once the report is completed, the agencies will send an original copy to the Board. Verification of equivalent education is not optional. If there is no ability to provide this information, statute does not authorize the Board to consider the application.

If the applicant has provided information that they have the minimum practice hours required under OAR 851-031-0010 or 0030 these hours must be verified by the foreign employer by providing a letter signed by the employer administrator and sent directly to the OSBN verifying the applicants level of practice, duties, and the total number of hours worked. If the situation within the country does not allow for receipt of this information, the full Board may authorize an exception on a case-by-case basis.

If the foreign applicant was previously licensed in their country and cannot meet the competency validation requirements then the applicant must obtain re-entry into practice through a re-entry program. At present there are only two (2) Oregon re-entry programs for the RN and LPN license and none for NP, CNS, or CRNA re-entry. The program developed for immigrants and refugees is limited in available slots and only available to those residing in the Portland metro area.

All applicants for license, regardless of location of nursing education must show evidence of passing the examination used by the Board to verify entry level competency. The Board utilizes the same entry level examination as all other 59 nursing regulatory boards in the US and in Canada and soon to be adopted by other countries of the United Kingdom. The test is the NCLEX® owned and administered by the

National Council of State Boards of Nursing. This test is an English version only examination and is available in numerous foreign countries through licensed testing sites.

All applicants, regardless of nationality and educational preparation must show English language proficiency. The OSBN issues general nursing licenses to all qualified applicants. There is no limitation on where a licensee may find employment or in what context of care an individual will be working. There is no indication that foreign educated nurses will limit their practice to their own cultural community.

#### **What Actions Has the Board Taken to Reduce Barriers:**

OAR 851-001-0030 allows those applicants without Social Security numbers to provide H1B visas, F1 visas, I-766 or any other current document authorizing the individual to work in the United States. The Board has specifically approved those who were brought into the US under DACA to be licensed. The Board has approved rules effective 1 January 2020 to allow the Tax ID number to also be used for application purposes.

The Board has approved the Occupation English Examination (OET), one of the first Boards in the country to do so. The OET is used in all of the United Kingdom as their English proficiency examination. This examination provides the test taker with scenarios involving healthcare in a context familiar to their practice. The Board continues to provide the option of the OET, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the English Language Testing System as options to allow the applicant to take the test they feel most suitable for their situation.

There are no other reduction of barriers planned. Board rule regarding licensure qualifications are based upon statutory requirements.

**Board President:** Kathleen Chin, MSN, Family Nurse Practitioner, Eugene