

RENEWAL FAQ

Q: I haven't received my renewal notice, what do I do?

As a *courtesy*, renewal notices are sent out in January to the last address on Board of Nursing (BON) records*. The law does not require the Board to send out renewal notices and many courtesy notices are returned by the postal service each renewal cycle.

You may renew online using your same User ID and Password as you did during the last renewal. If you do not remember or do not have your User ID/ Password, **you may still renew**. Please go to <https://eservice.llr.sc.gov/OnlineRenewals/> and click on "Alternative Login I do not know my User ID/ Password" and complete the required security questions.

*Note: Section 40-33-38(C) of the South Carolina Nurse Practice Act requires that *all* licensees notify the Board *in writing* within 15 days of any address change.

Q: What are my options to document continued competency to renew my license?

There are four options available in the Nurse Practice Act to document continued competency for renewal; *however*, not all options may be available for each nurse or in every employment/ practice setting. *Prior to choosing an option*, it is wise to verify that the option is available for you, such as your employer signing your competency verification form. One of the competency options must be *completed and documented* between May 1, 2014 and April 30, 2016 and *prior* to renewing your nursing license in 2016.

The competency requirement for licensure can be found in Section 40-33-40 of the Nurse Practice Act Chapter 33 under Laws/Policies as well as on this home page of the Board's website. Further explanation of the options shown below can be found in the Competency Requirement Criteria also located on this Board of Nursing (BON) website home page.

- 1) Completion of 30 contact hours from a continuing education provider recognized by the Board. OR
- 2) Maintenance of certification or re-certification by a national certifying body recognized by the Board; OR
- 3) Completion of an academic program of study in nursing or a related field recognized by the Board; OR
- 4) Verification of competency and number of hours practiced as evidenced by employer certification on a form approved by the Board. *Please verify with your employer that they can / will sign this form before choosing this option as your continued competency demonstration.* There are no set number of hours you must practice nursing to use this option; however, you must practice enough hours that your employer can/ will sign the Employer Certification form. If your employer is unable to sign this form, you *must* choose one of the other options. This Employer Certification form is available on the BON website homepage.

You are not required to send competency documentation to the Board with your renewal. The Board conducts random continued competency audits throughout the year. Nurses chosen for audit will be sent a letter requesting submission of continued competency documentation within *five* business days of the request pursuant to §40-33-40(D) of the Nurse Practice Act.

Q: I renewed my license, why have I not received my license card?

As of November 2009, the Board no longer issues license cards.

You may access information regarding your licensure status in one of two ways:

1. SC Licensee Lookup Go to <http://www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/>, click on Licensee Lookup and choose Nursing. As you enter information, it is recommended that you enter a portion of the nurse's name (or only the license number, no letters e.g. R or PR, etc.) along with the 3 character code only. You will be provided with the nurse's name, city and state, license number as well as license type, date issued/ expires, license status and whether the license is multi-state or single state.
2. Licensees now have the capability through LLR's website to download and print a wallet card as a *courtesy* after the license has been issued, reinstated, or renewed and appears on Licensee Lookup. The card can be printed from your printer. You need Adobe Reader installed on your PC to view and print the card. For best results, use card stock instead of copy paper to print a more durable card. To print a wallet card, go to <https://eservice.llr.sc.gov/SecurePortal/Login.aspx>. Click on "Print License Card" and follow instructions.

This information can also be viewed and printed by employers or the public. Licenses are renewed/ processed during the normal business hours of 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for designated state holidays.

Q: How many hours do I have to work to renew my license?

There are no set number of hours a nurse must practice nursing to document continued competency for renewal. However, you must practice enough hours that your employer can verify your nursing competency. Not all employers will sign the Employer Certification form. Prior to choosing any continued competency option for renewal, it is wise to verify that the option is available for you.

Q: Is Company XYZ accepted for the continuing education option?

The Board does not approve individual continuing education courses. The Board accepts courses that are approved by organizations listed in the Competency Requirement Criteria (please refer to Section I of this document). The Competency Requirement can be found in §40-33-40 of the Nurse Practice Act under Laws/Policies or on Board of Nursing (BON) website homepage. The Competency Requirement Criteria is also available on the BON website homepage.

Q: What is the difference between CEU and Contact Hours?

Continuing education hours, continuing education units, and contact hours are all methods of measuring education hours. Below is the breakdown from the American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC). Remember that continuing education hours must be approved by or provided by an organization on the Board's Competency Requirement Criteria (Section I) to be used for licensure/ renewal. Continuing education is just one of the four options available to you to document competency.

1 contact hour = 60 minutes
1 CME = 60 minutes or 1.0 contact hours
1 contact hour = 0.1 CEU
1 CEU = 10 contact hours
(Reference ANCC)

Q: How can my employer verify that I have renewed my nursing license?

You may gain this information in one of two ways:

1. SC Licensee Lookup Go to <http://www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/>, click on Licensee Lookup and choose Nursing. As you enter information, it is recommended that you enter a portion of the nurse's name (or only the license number, no letters

e.g. R or PR, etc.) along with the 3 character code only. You will be provided with the nurse's name, city and state, license number as well as license type, date issued/ expires, license status and whether the license is multi-state or single state.

2. Licensees now have the capability through LLR's website to download and print a wallet card *as a courtesy* after the license has been issued, reinstated, or renewed and appears on Licensee Lookup. The card can be printed from your printer. You need Adobe Reader installed on your PC to view and print the card. For best results, use card stock instead of copy paper to print a more durable card. To print a wallet card, go to <https://eservice.llr.sc.gov/SecurePortal/Login.aspx>. Click on "Print License Card" and follow instructions.

Q: Where can I find the Board-Approved Employer Certification form?

The Employer Certification form approved by the Board for renewals can be found on the Board of Nursing (BON) website homepage at www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing. It is also available under Applications/Forms on this website. *Nurses need to be sure that their employer can, by their policies, complete and sign the Board required form required to document practice hours prior to choosing this option or renewing their license. If they cannot, nurses may choose one of the other options.*

Q: Are Continuing Education hours now mandated by the Board of Nursing?

No, the Board of Nursing does not mandate continuing education hours. It is only one of the four options for continued competency now offered by the Board.

The Nurse Practice Act provides options for licensees to demonstrate continued competency for maintaining their licenses.

Both the competency requirement and the competency requirement criteria may be found on the Board's web site homepage and this information may be a helpful resource to you.

Our web site is www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing. When the home page comes up, please choose the 2 listings Competency Requirement and Competency Requirement Criteria.

Q: Do I have to send in all my continued competency paperwork with my renewal?

You are not required to send competency documentation to the Board with your renewal. The Board conducts random continued competency audits throughout the year. Nurses chosen for audit will be sent a letter requesting submission of continued competency documentation within five business days of the request pursuant to §40-33-40(D) of the Nurse Practice Act.

Q: Can I count taking one nursing course in school as a nursing program under option C of Section 40-33-40?

No. The key word in this option is "completion". You must complete all the coursework for the nursing program before it can count toward your continued Competency Requirements. However, you may check Section I regarding nursing classes that you are taking towards an advanced degree in nursing.

Q: What is a national nursing provider of continuing education?

The Board accepts courses that are approved by organizations listed in the Competency Requirement Criteria (please refer to Section I of this document). The competency requirement can be found in §40-33-40 of the Nurse Practice Act under Laws/Policies or on Board of Nursing (BON) website homepage. The Competency Requirement Criteria is also available on the BON website homepage.

Q: Does a nurse have to sign my employer verification form?

It is understood that nurses have non-nursing employers or employers who have policies regarding who can sign this form. Someone other than a nurse may sign the form as long as they are able to verify the nursing competency for the individual nurse.

Q: Will my debit card work for online renewal payment?

If your debit card has the Visa/MasterCard logo on it, it will work with the Board's system. Your credit card/ debit card number cannot be seen by our office, only by your bank.

Q: I'm nervous about using my credit card online. How secure is your site?

Our agency utilizes state-of-the-art security systems to protect our nurses' information.

Q: I do not have a credit card. Is there another way for me to pay on-line?

Yes. You will be given the option to pay by credit card or by electronic check.

Q: I need some information about "inactive status".

If you are considering placing your South Carolina nursing license in an inactive status before it expires on April 30, 2016, please keep the following in mind.

- ❖ You must complete the Request for Inactive Status form found on the Board's website under Applications/Forms and submit it along with a \$15 check or money order before your license lapses at midnight on Monday, April 30th. If you do not renew, your license will be placed in a lapsed status on May 1st.
- ❖ You cannot practice nursing in the State of South Carolina on an inactive license. This includes volunteer nursing.
- ❖ When you place your license on inactive status, your Multi-state (Compact) status is also inactive.
- ❖ You can change your mind at any time and reactivate your license, but you will need to meet the continued competency requirements at that time. The requirements to reactivate are based on the amount of time your license is inactive.
- ❖ If you do not practice for five years or more, the requirement for reactivating your license is retaking the licensure examination or taking a refresher course.

You may want to consider keeping your nursing license active. Remember, to keep your license in an *active* status in South Carolina, you need to complete one of the following continued competency requirements during the licensure period:

- 1) completion of 30 contact hours from a continuing education provider recognized by the Board; **or**
- 2) maintenance of certification or re-certification by a national certifying body recognized by the Board; **or**
- 3) completion of an academic program of study in nursing or a related field recognized by the Board; **or**
- 4) verification of competency and the number of hours practiced as evidenced by employer certification on a form approved by the Board.

More information on continued competency requirements for renewal can be found in the Competency Requirement for Licensure and Competency Requirement Criteria, which are both located on the Board's website homepage at www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/.

Q: How can I check a license?

To check a nursing license, you may utilize one of or all of the following options:

SC Licensee Lookup Go to <http://www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/>, click on Licensee Lookup and choose Nursing. As you enter information, it is recommended that you enter a portion of the nurse's name (or only the license number, no letters e.g. R or PR, etc.) along with the 3 character code only. You will be provided with the nurse's name, city and state, license number as well as license type, date issued/ expires, license status and whether the license is multi-state or single state.

NURSYS QuickConfirm – go to <https://www.nursys.com/>

Click on QuickConfirm and follow instructions. You will be provided with the nurse's name, license type and number, licensure status, expiration date and disciplinary status.

Q: What are my options to document competency to renew my APRN license?

An APRN is required to hold a current specialty certification by a Board-approved credentialing organization for his/ her area of nursing practice to renew his/ her APRN license. Certification or re-certification must be current during the renewal period. A list of Board approved certifications is available at

<http://www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/Nursing/PDF/Board%20Approved%20Advanced%20Practice%20Certification%20Organizations.pdf>

You may check the status of your certification by going to Licensee Lookup on this website homepage. Certification renewals/ updates should be provided to the Board in an ongoing manner.

Q: What do I need to do to renew my APRN prescriptive authority?

Renewal Requirements

1. For renewal of prescriptive authority, twenty (20) contact hours of continuing education in pharmacotherapeutics related to the NP's, CNM's, or CNS's certification specialty must be obtained every two (2) years and documented upon Board request. For an NP, CNM, or CNS with controlled substance prescriptive authority, two (2) of the twenty (20) hours must be related to prescribing controlled substances. **Prior** to renewing your prescriptive authority in 2016, this continuing education must be *completed and documented* between May 1, 2014 and April 30, 2016.
2. The Board randomly audits renewal applications and, if requested, documentation of education in pharmacotherapeutics must be provided within the time specified in the request. Failure to timely comply will result in suspension of prescriptive authority and possible disciplinary action.

Educational Requirements

1. Contact hours may be obtained through courses taught in an approved program of study or through approved continuing education offerings.
2. For renewal applications, a maximum of fifteen percent (15%), or three (3) hours, may be obtained through approved alternative, natural, herbal or complementary pharmacotherapeutics education.
3. Renewal applicants selected for audit must provide the following evidence of pharmacotherapeutics education, as applicable:
 - a. Documentation of attendance either by official transcript or copies of certificates of continuing education attendance. Official transcripts must be sent directly from the educational institution to the Board of Nursing.
 - b. Documentation of continuing education approval by an authorized or accredited provider (i.e., national certifying organization, college or university, state regulatory body, national or state

professional organization). It is the responsibility of the NP, CNM, or CNS to assure that the documentation includes the number of hours received in any particular session or course.

c. A description of course content which is applicable to the APRN's specialty area(s) of practice.