



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2017 Wisconsin Act 135
[2017 Senate Bill 417]

**Enhanced Nurse Licensure
Compact**

2017 Wisconsin Act 135 ratifies and enters Wisconsin into the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (Enhanced Compact). The Enhanced Compact replaces the original Nurse Licensure Compact (Original Compact), which was ratified in Wisconsin in 1999. Under both versions of the Compact, a nurse, whether a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse, who is licensed in a state that has adopted the Compact (party state) may practice in any other party state without needing to separately obtain a license in that other party state.

Some key differences between the Enhanced Compact and the Original Compact include provisions relating to uniform licensure criteria, a party state's multi- or single-state licensure option, and Commission of Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators rule-making authority, described in more detail below.

Uniform Licensure Criteria

The Original Compact allowed each member state to set its own qualifications for licensure and renewal. Under the Act, the Enhanced Compact specifies uniform licensure criteria for all member states, which require the following:

- Graduation from an approved education program;
- Successful completion of a national nursing exam (currently, the NCLEX-RN or NCLEX-PN);
- Proof that the applicant is not currently subject to active discipline in another state, or enrolled in a nondisciplinary monitoring program approved by a licensing board (otherwise referred to as an "alternative program");
- Completion of a fingerprint criminal background check which reveals no prior felony convictions;

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

- Submission of a valid Social Security number; and
- Any other qualifications for licensure that the member state may impose.

Multi- and Single-State Licenses

Under the Original Compact, nurses in party states receive a license to practice from the home state and may then practice in other party states through a multi-state license privilege. The Enhanced Compact allows member states flexibility to issue either a multi-state license that receives multi-state license privilege, or a single-state license that does not receive multi-state license privilege.

Rule-Making and the Commission of Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators

The Original Compact was administered by party states through a group of “Compact Administrators,” which included one administrator from each member state. The Compact Administrators are required to share certain information with each other, and also have authority to develop uniform rules to facilitate and coordinate Compact implementation. These rules are then required to be promulgated by the state’s nurse licensing board.

The Enhanced Compact creates a new governing body called the Interstate Commission of Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators (Commission), which is also made up of one administrator from each state. The Commission has a number of duties, including prescribing uniform bylaws or enacting any rules that may be necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of the Enhanced Compact. Unlike the uniform rules that were created under the Original Compact, rules created by the Commission will be immediately binding on party states, and do not need to be separately promulgated by the state’s nurse licensing board. The rule-making process under the Enhanced Compact also includes a public comment period.

Effective date: Generally, the Act took effect on December 13, 2017. However, some provisions relating to the enactment of the Enhanced Compact take effect January 19, 2018, provisions relating to the repeal of the Original Compact take effect June 12, 2018, and provisions that cross-reference the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact take effect December 16, 2019.

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December 22, 2017

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