

655—3.4 (17A,147,152,272C) Licensure by examination.

3.4(1) Applicants shall meet qualifications for licensure set forth in subrule 3.3(1).

3.4(2) The board contracts with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. to use the NCLEX® for registered nurses and licensed practical nurses.

a. The NCLEX® is administered according to guidelines and passing standards established by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc.

b. NCLEX® results are reported as pass or fail.

c. Examination statistics are available to the public.

3.4(3) Application—graduates of approved programs.

a. The board shall:

(1) Provide information about licensure application to applicants, nursing education programs in Iowa, and others upon request.

(2) Determine eligibility of each applicant upon receipt of an application, fees, official nursing transcript, fingerprint cards and a signed waiver form.

b. The applicant shall:

(1) Submit a completed application for license by examination.

(2) Submit two completed fingerprint cards and a signed waiver form to facilitate a national criminal history background check. The fee for the evaluation of the fingerprint cards and the DCI and FBI criminal history background checks will be assessed to the applicant.

(3) Submit fee for application for license by examination plus the fee for evaluation of the fingerprint cards and the criminal history background checks as identified in the definition of “fees” in rule 655—3.1(17A,147,152,272C). All fees are nonrefundable.

(4) Register for the NCLEX® and submit registration fee to the national test service agency.

(5) Direct the nursing program to submit to the board an official nursing transcript denoting the date of graduation and diploma or degree conferred.

(6) Inform the board that the primary state of residence is Iowa or a noncompact state and provide a current street address and mailing address, if different.

(7) Submit a copy of the court document(s) with the license application if the applicant has a criminal history.

(8) Complete NCLEX® registration through the national test service agency within 12 months of board receipt of the application for license, fingerprint cards, signed waiver form, and fees. The board reserves the right to destroy documents after 12 months.

(9) Self-schedule the examination with an approved testing center.

(10) Applicants who do not test within 91 days of authorization from the national test service agency are required to submit a new application and fee to the board.

3.4(4) Application—individuals educated and licensed in another country.

a. The board shall:

(1) Provide information about licensure application to applicants and others upon request.

(2) Determine eligibility of each applicant upon receipt of:

1. Application for license by examination.

2. Two completed fingerprint cards and a signed waiver form to facilitate a national criminal history background check.

3. Application fee for license by examination plus the fee for evaluation of the fingerprint cards and the criminal history background checks as identified in the definition of “fees” in rule 655—3.1(17A,147,152,272C). All fees are nonrefundable.

4. Official nursing transcript denoting date of graduation validated by the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) International.

5. Validation of licensure/registration in the original country by CGFNS International.

6. Credentials Evaluation Service Professional report submitted by CGFNS International for licensed practical nurse and registered nurse applicants.

7. Verification of ability to read, write, speak and understand the English language as determined by the results of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE), or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for licensed practical nurse and registered nurse applicants. Applicants shall be exempt from the IELTS, PTE or TOEFL examination when the native language is English; nursing education was completed in a college, university or professional school located in Australia, Barbados, Canada (except Quebec), Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, or the United Kingdom; language of instruction in the nursing program was English; and language of the textbooks in the nursing program was English.

b. The applicant shall:

(1) Submit completed application for license by examination, including two completed fingerprint cards and a signed waiver form to facilitate a national criminal history background check.

(2) Submit fee for application for license by examination plus the fee for evaluation of the fingerprint cards and the criminal history background checks as identified in the definition of “fees” in rule 655—3.1(17A,147,152,272C). All fees are nonrefundable.

(3) Register for the NCLEX® and submit registration fee to the national test service agency.

(4) Direct CGFNS International to validate the official nursing transcript.

(5) Direct CGFNS International to validate licensure/registration in the original country.

(6) Complete the Credentials Evaluation Service Professional report application through CGFNS International for licensed practical nurse and registered nurse applicants.

(7) Complete IELTS, PTE or TOEFL requirements for licensed practical nurse and registered nurse applicants, unless exempt.

(8) Inform the board of primary state of residence and a current street address and mailing address, if different.

(9) Submit a copy of the court document(s) with the license application if the applicant has a criminal history.

(10) Self-schedule the examination with an approved testing center.

(11) Complete NCLEX® registration through the national test service agency within 12 months of board receipt of the application for license, fingerprint cards, signed waiver form, and fees. The board reserves the right to destroy documents after 12 months.

(12) Applicants who do not test within 91 days of authorization from the national test service agency are required to submit a new application and fee to the board.

3.4(5) Application—individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act shall be provided modifications during the NCLEX®.

a. The board shall:

(1) Notify applicants of the availability of test modifications for individuals with documented disabilities.

(2) Upon request, notify applicants of the process for obtaining board approval of test modification as defined in paragraph 3.4(5) “*b.*”

(3) Determine eligibility for test modification upon receipt of:

1. Written request from the applicant for test modifications during the NCLEX®.

2. Written documentation of the applicant’s disability and need for test modifications, including results of appropriate diagnostic testing, submitted by a qualified professional with expertise in the area of the diagnosed disability.

3. Written documentation of test modifications, if any, granted to the applicant while enrolled in the nursing education program.

b. The applicant shall:

- (1) Submit to the board a written request for specific modifications during the NCLEX®.
- (2) Obtain appropriate documentation supporting the request for accommodations, including results of appropriate diagnostic testing, submitted by a qualified professional with expertise in the areas of the diagnosed disability. Documentation could include recent reports, test results, evaluations and assessments of the candidate's need for accommodations due to a disability (physical or mental impairment) that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- (3) Direct the nursing program to submit to the board documentation of test modifications provided to the applicant while enrolled in the nursing education program, if any were granted.
- (4) Complete examination application requirements defined in subrule 3.4(3) or 3.4(4).

3.4(6) Reexamination.

a. An applicant who has graduated from an approved practical nurse program and has failed the NCLEX-PN® is eligible to take the NCLEX-PN® an indefinite number of times.

b. An applicant who has graduated from an approved registered nurse program and has failed the NCLEX-RN® is eligible to take the NCLEX-RN® an indefinite number of times.

c. An applicant who fails the NCLEX® and reapplies within 12 months for license by examination shall be required to complete an application for license by examination, submit the fee for application by examination, complete NCLEX® registration and submit a registration fee to the national test service agency.

d. An applicant who fails the NCLEX® and reapplies, after 12 months have passed, for license by examination shall be required to complete an application for license by examination, submit two completed fingerprint cards, a signed waiver form, and the fee for evaluation of the fingerprint cards and the criminal history background checks by the Iowa division of criminal investigation (DCI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), pursuant to rule 655—3.1(17A,147,152,272C), complete NCLEX® registration and submit a registration fee to the national test service agency.

e. Applicants for the examination who do not appear for the appointment or do not complete the examination will be required to complete the examination requirements defined in paragraphs 3.4(6) “*a*” to “*d*.”

3.4(7) Certificate of license by examination. Upon completion of the relevant qualifications for license by examination and passing of the NCLEX® as defined in these rules, the board shall issue a certificate of license by examination and a current license to practice as a registered nurse/licensed practical nurse. The board staff may issue a certificate of license prior to receipt of a report on the applicant from the DCI/FBI.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 147.36, 147.80 and 152.7(3).