



**INSTRUCTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS SEEKING APPROVAL OF NEW  
PRELICENSURE REGISTERED NURSING PROGRAM  
(Business and Professions Code Section 2786;  
California Code of Regulations Sections 1421, 1422, and 1423)  
(Effective 10/21/10)**

**PURPOSE**

The Instructions specify the requirements and process for an institution seeking approval of a new prelicensure registered nursing program (program applicant) pursuant to Business and Professions Code (B&PC) section 2786. The document is incorporated by reference in California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 1421.

**STEPS IN THE APPROVAL PROCESS**

In accordance with B&PC section 2786(a), the program applicant must be an institution of higher education or affiliated with an institution of higher education (hereafter referred to as affiliated institution). Affiliated institutions must make an agreement with an institution of higher education in California in the same general location, i.e., within 50 miles, to grant degrees to students who complete the registered nursing program. Such written agreement must be made prior to seeking approval from the Board. A copy of this agreement must be submitted with the feasibility study, described in Step 2.

The institution of higher education offering the program or the institution of higher education granting the degree for the new affiliated institution must have the authority to grant an associate of arts degree or baccalaureate or higher degree to individuals who graduate from the nursing program. *An institution that wishes to start a new program must meet this requirement prior to submission of an application.*

**STEP 1 – Submit a Letter of Intent:**

Submit a letter of intent to the Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) at least one year in advance of the anticipated date for admission of students. The letter must specify the name of the institution seeking approval; contact person; type of nursing program, e.g., associate degree, baccalaureate degree, entry-level master's, etc., and its location; and proposed start date. The letter is to be addressed to:

Executive Officer  
Board of Registered Nursing  
P.O. Box 944210  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2100

The Board will acknowledge receipt of the letter of intent.

## **STEP 2 –Submit Feasibility Study**

Submit a feasibility study to the BRN documenting the need for the program and the program applicant's ability to develop, implement, and sustain a viable prelicensure registered nursing program. The feasibility study shall include the following:

- a) Description of the institution and the institution's experience providing nursing or other health-related educational programs. The description must include:
  1. History, organizational structure and programs (attach an organization chart), funding sources
  2. Accreditation status and history, (i.e., date of initial accreditation, denials, revocations, warnings) for the institution and any programs offered by the institution
  3. Type of nursing or other health-related programs including number: of students currently enrolled and graduates by program type; passage rate on any required certification or licensing examination for the past five years (as applicable); and status of the program with any state, regional, or federal agency
  4. If the applicant does not have a nursing program or other health-related programs, provide a statement related to the processes and resources it will utilize to start and sustain a prelicensure registered nursing program.
- b) Geographic area (community) served by the institution and a description of the community and its population.
- c) Description of the type of program being proposed (e.g., associate, baccalaureate, entry-level master's, etc.), the intended start date, projected size of the first class and enrollment projection for the first five years, and method for determining the projected enrollment.
- d) Information on the applicant pool and sustainability of enrollment for the proposed new prelicensure registered nursing program. Include data on existing nursing programs preparing students for licensure (vocational, associate, baccalaureate, or entry level master's) within a 50-mile radius. Include a statement on plans for promoting the proposed program.
- e) Description of proposed provisions for required subject matter and support areas, including faculty and resources. The proposed program must be at least two academic years, not less than 58 semester or 87 quarter units, and must include *all course areas* specified in CCR 1426. Consult CCR section 1426, Required Curriculum, for required subject matter. Support areas include such items as the library, skills learning lab, computer labs, simulation labs, and tutorial and counseling services.
- f) Budget projection that demonstrates initial and sustainable budgetary provisions for a full enrollment of the initial cohort. The projected budget demonstrates building of reserves to sustain the proposed program.
- g) Evidence of availability of clinical placements for students of the proposed program. Include a list of the clinical facilities that may be utilized for learning experiences and a description of any plans for future addition or expansion of health facilities. Provide a completed "Facility Verification Form" (EDP-I-01 Rev 3/10) for each health care facility that has agreed to provide clinical placement for students of the proposed program. When available, verification shall include the accommodations specifying shift and days.

**Note:** Clinical placements of the new program must take into consideration the impact on the use of the clinical facility by existing prelicensure registered nursing programs and must be coordinated with any process for clinical placement, such as consortium for regional planning.

Include a description of your collaboration and coordination efforts with any existing registered nursing programs and any regional planning consortium.

### **Affiliate Program Agreement with Institution of Higher Education**

An affiliate program must submit an agreement with an institution of higher education that has authority to grant an associate of arts degree or a baccalaureate or higher degree in nursing to individuals who complete an additional course of study approved by the board. The institution of higher education must be in California and within 50 miles of the nursing program. The agreement must include:

- 1) The type of degree to be conferred by the institution of higher education
- 2) The additional course of study required to obtain the degree
- 3) Process and procedures for nursing program students to enroll in the required courses
- 4) Approximate cost and timeframe for students to complete the requirements
- 5) Role and responsibility of the nursing program, institution of higher education, and the student
- 6) Resources available to students at the institution of higher education.

The program applicant may include any additional information that it believes might reasonably affect the Board's decision to accept the feasibility study.

### **STEP 3 – Review of Feasibility Study**

It is the responsibility of the program applicant to have staff or a consultant(s) who possess the requisite knowledge and expertise to complete a feasibility study that conforms to the requirements specified in the Instructions. Upon submission of the feasibility study, a BRN staff member will review the study, and will work with the planners of the proposed nursing program to clarify issues. Close communication with BRN staff must be maintained during this time period. The process for initial review usually takes three to four weeks. In the event the initial review time will exceed this time period, BRN staff will notify the program applicant of the approximate time for the initial review. Priority will be given to first-time applicants for program approval.

The following action will be taken:

- 1) If BRN staff determines that the feasibility study is complete and complies with requirements specified in these Instructions, staff will submit the feasibility study to the Education /Licensing Committee (ELC), (Step 4).
- 2) If the feasibility study is deemed incomplete, staff will notify the program applicant, in writing, of any deficiencies and a date for submission of a completed feasibility study. If BRN staff deems the revised feasibility study is complete, it will be submitted to the ELC (Step 4).
- 3) If staff deems the revised feasibility study incomplete, it will be returned to the program with a written notice of the deficiencies, and will not be submitted to the ELC. The ELC and Board will be notified, at a regularly scheduled meeting, of the name of the program applicant, the return of the feasibility study, and the deficiencies that resulted in the feasibility study being returned. If the applicant still wishes to start a prelicensure registered nursing program, the applicant must restart the process at Step 1.
- 4) If the revised feasibility study is returned because it is incomplete and the applicant still wishes to seek approval of a prelicensure registered nursing program, the applicant must restart at Step 1. The Letter of Intent must include a statement summarizing the BRN staff's reason(s) for not accepting the prior revised feasibility study and subsequent corrective action the applicant has taken.

#### **STEP 4 –Education/Licensing Committee Recommendation on the Feasibility Study**

When the feasibility study is deemed complete, it will be submitted to the Board’s Education/Licensing Committee for discussion and action at a regularly scheduled meeting. The meeting is open to the public, and there are opportunities for public comment. The BRN will notify the program applicant of the ELC meeting date at which the Committee will discuss and take action on the feasibility study. A representative of the program must be present at the ELC meeting to respond to any questions from the Committee regarding the feasibility study. The ELC will recommend to the Board the acceptance or non-acceptance of the feasibility study, or may defer action on the study to permit the institution time to provide additional information at a subsequent ELC meeting. If the ELC defers action, the program applicant will be notified in writing within ten (10) days of the deferred action, reason(s) for the deferral, and date for submission of any additional information and/or documents. The ELC considers the following criteria in determining its recommendation to the Board:

- 1) Evidence of applicant’s ability to initiate and maintain a prelicensure registered nursing program.
- 2) Evidence of initial and sustainable budgetary provisions for the proposed program.
- 3) Institution of higher authority to grant an associate of arts, baccalaureate, or higher degree.
- 4) For affiliated institutions, the agreement with an institution of higher education within 50 miles to grant an associate of arts degree or baccalaureate or higher degree to students completing the nursing program.
- 5) Evidence of availability of clinical placements for students of the proposed program.
- 6) Plans for administrative and faculty recruitment to staff the proposed program.

#### **STEP 5 - Board Action on the Feasibility Study**

The ELC’s recommendation on the feasibility study will be submitted for Board discussion and action at a regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Board meeting is also open to the public, with opportunities for public comment. The Board may accept or not accept the study, or may defer action on the study to provide the program applicant with an opportunity to provide additional information. The Board considers the criteria specified in Step 4 in rendering its decision.

The following action will be taken:

- 1) Within ten (10) days after the Board decision on the feasibility study, the Board will notify the program applicant in writing of its decision.
- 2) If the feasibility study is accepted, the program applicant may proceed to Step 6.
- 3) If the feasibility study is not accepted, the Board notice will include the basis for its decision.
- 4) If action on the feasibility study is deferred, the notice shall specify what additional information and/or documents are needed from the program applicant in order for the feasibility study to be deemed complete and a due date for submission of the materials. The revised feasibility study will be considered at regularly scheduled ELC and Board meetings after the due date for submission of materials. If the revised feasibility study is not accepted, the Board will notify the applicant in writing within ten (10) days; the notice will include the basis for the Board’s decision.
- 5) An applicant whose initial or revised feasibility study is not accepted, and who still wishes to seek approval of a prelicensure registered nursing program must restart with Step 1. The Letter of Intent must include a statement summarizing the Board’s reason(s) for not accepting the prior feasibility study and subsequent corrective action the applicant has taken.

## **STEP 6 - Appointment of Program Director**

Upon acceptance of the feasibility study, the program applicant shall appoint a director who meets the requirements of CCR section 1425(a).

## **STEP 7 - Self-Study Report and Site Visit**

Upon Board acceptance of the feasibility study, a BRN Nursing Education Consultant (NEC) will be assigned as the BRN liaison for the proposed program. The program director will have responsibility for preparing the self-study for the proposed program and coordinating the site-visit. At least six (6) months prior to the projected date of student enrollment the program applicant must submit to the NEC a self-study that describes how the proposed program plans to comply with all BRN nursing program-related rules and regulations. The attached *Preparing the Self-Study Report for Approval of Initial Prelicensure Nursing Program* (EDP-I-19 Rev 01/09) and *Criteria and Guidelines for Self-Study* (EDP-R-03 Rev 01/09) must be used to compile the self-study.

The NEC will review the report and notify the program director of any deficiencies, issues, or concerns with the self-study. Once the NEC has verified the self-study satisfactorily addresses the applicable rules and regulations, the NEC will schedule an on-site visit. The NEC will visit selected clinical sites the program plans to use as part of the on-site visit. Clinical site visits may be deferred depending on the start date of the proposed program. The NEC will complete a written report of findings.

## **STEP 8 – ELC and Board Actions related to Approval of the Proposed Program**

The NEC's written report is submitted to the Board's ELC for discussion and action at a regularly scheduled Committee meeting. The Committee may recommend that the Board grant or deny approval, or may defer action on the initial program approval to provide the program applicant a specified time period to resolve any problems and to resubmitted to the ELC. A representative of the proposed program must be present at the ELC meeting(s) to respond to any questions from the Committee.

The Board will take action at a regularly scheduled meeting following the ELC meeting. Representatives of the proposed program are encouraged to be present at the Board meeting(s) to respond to any questions. The action the Board may take includes the following:

- 1) Grant initial approval;
- 2) Deny approval;
- 3) Defer action on the approval to permit the program applicant a specified time period to resolve area(s) of non-compliance. After resolution of the area(s) of non-compliance, the proposed program must be submitted for Board action at another regularly scheduled meeting.

Any material misrepresentation of fact by the program applicant in any required information is grounds for not accepting the feasibility study or denial of initial approval.

## **STEP 9 - Certificate of Approval**

A certificate of approval will be issued by the BRN once the Board grants initial approval.

## **ABANDONMENT OF APPLICATION**

A program applicant who does not take any action to complete the application process within one year of submitting a Letter of Intent or receipt of notice of Board action not accepting the program's feasibility study shall be deemed to have abandoned the application.



**BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING**  
 PO Box 944210, Sacramento, CA 94244-2100  
 P (916) 322-3350 F (916) 574-8637 | [www.rn.ca.gov](http://www.rn.ca.gov)  
**Louise R. Bailey, MEd, RN, Executive Officer**

**FACILITY VERIFICATION FORM**

The nursing program must verify that clinical facilities offer necessary learning experiences to meet course/clinical objectives. The facility validates that clinical spaces for new students are available and the impact on existing clinical placements of nursing programs was reviewed.

Name of the School:	Name of Director/Designee:
	Telephone Number:
	E-Mail Address:
Name of health care facility:	Name of Director of Nursing/Designee:
Type of health care facility (Acute, OPD, SNF, etc.)	Telephone Number:
Average Daily Census for the agency:	E-Mail Address:
	Address of Facility:

	Medical-Surgical	Obstetrics	Pediatrics	Psych – Mental Health	Geriatrics
Type of units where students can be placed in the health care facility (Place X in the column)					
Average daily census for each area					
Average personnel staffing for the shift for a unit (Include number of RNs, LVNs, CNAs, separately)					
Number of students placed in the unit at any one time.					
<i>Identify shifts and days available for placement of students in the program</i>					

Provide the following information on all other schools utilizing your facility: **Attach additional sheets if needed.**

Schools	Category of students (RN, LVN, CNA, etc.)	Number of students	Days & Hours	Semesters (Fall, Spr.)	Units used

- This agency does not have spaces to offer clinical spaces to the new program.
- This agency intends to offer clinical placement(s) to this new program.

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Agency Representative completing this form

Date