



COLLEGE OF  
**LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES**  
OF ALBERTA

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# Policy

## **Actively Engaged Requirements for Registration and the Continuing Competence Program**

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Updated: March 12, 2021



**This document is linked to legislation:**

[Health Professions Act](#)  
[Licensed Practical Nurses Profession Regulation](#)

**This document is linked to other documents that direct expectations of professional behaviour or requirements for practice:**

[Standards of Practice](#)  
[Code of Ethics](#)  
[Competency Profile](#)  
[Conditions on a Practice Permit](#)  
[Substantial Equivalence](#)  
[Personal Declaration for Registration Requirements](#)  
[Continuing Competence Program](#)  
[Nursing Practice Self-Assessment Tool](#)

**This document is linked to related supportive documents:**

N/A

**REVISIONS and UPDATES**

Editorial Update December 2019

Editorial Update April 30, 2020

Revision March 12, 2021

*The legislative mandate of the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) is to serve and protect the public by ensuring its members deliver safe, competent, and ethical nursing care. A CLPNA Policy outlines requirements and expected behaviours that will be monitored and enforced.*

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|---------------|----------------|
| Approval Date | March 16, 2018 |
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| Approver      | Council        |



**INTRODUCTION** The College of Licensed Practical Nurses (CLPNA) is mandated to protect the public. Part of the CLPNA’s dedication to protecting the public includes ensuring all Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) meet practice requirements under the *Health Professions Act (HPA)*, the *Licensed Practical Nurses Profession Regulation (LPN Regulation)*, and the CLPNA’s Continuing Competence Program (CCP).

Additionally, LPNs are responsible for adhering to the CLPNA’s policy documents including the *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada*, *Standards of Practice on Restricted Activities and Advanced Practice*, and the *Code of Ethics for Licensed Practice Nurses in Canada*. These documents establish the foundation of LPN professionalism in the provision of practical nursing services.

This policy aligns with practice requirements set out in section 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation and the CCP.

**PURPOSE** The purpose of this policy is to establish and clarify the CLPNA’s interpretation of the criteria on “actively engaged.” This policy helps:

- applicable applicants (see definition below) meet the actively engaged requirement under s. 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation for general registration; and
- current regulated members demonstrate they are actively engaged by meeting the practice hour requirement in the CCP.

This policy does not apply to LPNs who have graduated from an Alberta practical nursing diploma program in the previous four years. Once an LPN has been graduated for four years, they must meet the actively engaged requirements.

Additionally, the policy does not apply to applicants for registration who have completed a refresher program approved by the Council.

**POLICY** Applicable applicants and current regulated members must meet actively engaged requirements to obtain a practice permit for initial registration or to renew a practice permit for the upcoming year.

### Actively Engaged Criteria

“Actively engaged” in the practice of practical nursing means the regular provision of practical nursing services to non-family members. Practical nursing services are outlined in Schedule 10 section 3 of the HPA outlined below.

In their practice, licensed practical nurses do one or more of the following:

- (a) apply nursing knowledge, skills, and judgment to assess patient needs,
- (b) provide nursing care for patients and families,
  - (b.1) teach, manage, and conduct research in the science, techniques and practice of nursing, and
- (c) provide restricted activities authorized by the regulations.

Nursing services encompass both direct nursing practice and/or roles that are linked to administration, management, education, and research. The CLPNA has a *Nursing Practice Self-Assessment Tool* to help LPNs assess if their practice meets the requirements for practical nursing.

As long as individuals are providing these services, they can count the hours as part of their initial application or registration renewal. Accordingly, when LPNs are on call or on a leave of absence (e.g. sick, vacation, and maternity/parental) these hours would not be included in the total number of hours worked in the registration year.

Council has approved the following criteria for consideration by the Registrar when determining whether an applicant has been actively engaged:

- provided one or more of the nursing services as described under Schedule 10 s. 3 of the HPA in accordance with their competence to non-family members; and
- provided nursing services for a minimum of 1000 practice hours in the last 4 years, whether paid or voluntary.



## Applicable Applicants

Section 3 of the LPN Regulation sets out the requirements for registration on the general register. Section 9 allows applicants who have not been educated in Alberta to register providing their qualifications are deemed substantially equivalent to the competence requirements in s. 3.

Section 3(2)(c) sets out the requirement for applicants for registration to “have been actively engaged in the practice of practical nursing in accordance with criteria approved by the Council.” The criteria approved by the Council are applied to assess whether an applicant meets the actively engaged requirement. The situations in which it is applied include:

- the assessment of applicants previously registered with the CLPNA whose permit has lapsed or expired;
- the assessment of applicants who graduated more than four years ago and have not engaged in nursing practice;
- as criteria in assessing the substantial equivalence of an internationally educated nurse; and
- as criteria in assessing the substantial equivalence of an applicant who is educated as a nurse in Canada but does not hold current registration as a practical nurse in another recognized Canadian jurisdiction.

In these situations, the practice hour requirement is calculated retroactively from the date the completed application is received by the Registrar.

Satisfying the criteria stated above means that the applicant has been actively engaged; however, these criteria are only a portion of the assessment for registration or reinstatement. The Registrar will also consider other requirements in the LPN Regulation and the CLPNA’s Bylaws (e.g. good character, English proficiency) for a submitted application. If an applicant has applied for and/or is being considered for a registration category other than general registration, they are also required to meet the requirements under that registration category.

If denied a practice permit, applicants can make a request for a review of the decision to the Registrar within 30 days of receiving the denial letter under s. 31 of the HPA. There is a \$350 fee for a review of the decision.

## Current Regulated Members

Starting in 2022, as part of the CCP, the CLPNA considers LPNs who have at least 1000 practice hours over the preceding four-year period as meeting the criteria for being actively engaged.

Practice hours worked during the registration year are declared on the Registration Renewal application. This declaration includes the hours the LPN expects to work until the end of the year. These hours are utilized toward ensuring ongoing competence as an LPN. The hours reported may be validated through the Continuing Competence Program Audit process.

LPNs who do not meet the practice hour requirement at the time of registration renewal may not be eligible for a practice permit in the upcoming registration year.

Exceptions to the practice hour requirements may be made in extraordinary circumstances where the applicant or regulated member can demonstrate that they have a characteristic protected from discrimination under the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and can demonstrate that the protected characteristic contributed to their inability to meet the requirements. Evidence may be required before an exception is made. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis to determine whether and how accommodation can be provided. Even when there is evidence of discriminatory impact, the applicant may or may not be eligible for registration.

If denied a practice permit renewal, LPNs can make a request for a review of the decision to the Registrar within 30 days of receiving the denial letter under s. 41 of the HPA. There is a \$350 fee for a review of the decision.



Under the CCP an LPN may be selected for a CCP audit. The CLPNA may deem the LPN as being unable to comply with the requirements of the CCP if:

- there is significant discrepancy in the number of practice hours declared at registration renewal and the audit documentation provided; or
- it is determined by the Registrar or Competence Committee that the position for which hours are reported does not fall within the CLPNA’s definition of practical nursing services.

The failure or refusal, whether intentional or unintentional, to comply with the requirements of the CCP is considered unprofessional conduct under the HPA.<sup>1</sup> If it is determined through the audit process that the LPN provided false information the LPN may also be referred to the Complaints Director.

### Practice Hours Transition

As noted above, the requirement for practice hours for currently regulated members comes into force in 2022. This requirement is being implemented over a three-year transition period ending at the end of the 2021 registration year.

| Transition Year | Calendar Year |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1               | 2019          |
| 2               | 2020          |
| 3               | 2021          |

During this transition period, the CLPNA may put a condition on a practice permit for LPNs with low practice hours. Typically, this condition involves meeting the practice hour requirement for the next renewal period. LPNs who apply for renewal with zero practice hours may be denied a practice permit during the transition period.

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> HPA, s 1(1)(pp)(vi)(A).

After the three-year transition ending in 2021, full compliance of 1000 practice hours in the previous four-year period is required when LPNs declare practice hours in 2022. The renewal in 2022 is an application for a 2023 practice permit.

**CONCLUSION** The document explains the CLPNA’s interpretation of the criteria on “actively engaged” for applicable applicants and currently regulated members.

All LPNs must fulfill the actively engaged requirement which includes 1000 practice hours over the preceding four-year period.

If after reading this document you have questions about being actively engaged in the practice of practical nursing, please contact the CLPNA’s Registration Team using [Ask CLPNA](#), or by phone at 780-484-8886 or 1-800-661-5877 (toll free in Alberta).