Actively Engaged Requirements for Registration

INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) has the authority under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to carry out its activities and govern registrants[1] in a manner that protects and serves the public interest. The CLPNA carries out its responsibility to protect the public in part by ensuring that all Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) meet practice requirements under the HPA and the *Licensed Practical Nurses Profession Regulation* (LPN Regulation).

Additionally, registrants 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, Advanced Practice, and Supervision*; 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.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish and clarify the CLPNA's interpretation of the criteria on "actively engaged." This policy guides applicable applicants (see definition below) to meet the actively engaged requirement under section 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation for general registration. This policy does not apply to registrants and applicants who are not described as applicable applicants in this document. See the Applicable Applicant section for a more detailed explanation.

POLICY

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

The actively engaged criteria outlined in this policy are also used for the *Standards of Practice on the Continuing Competence Program.*

Note: the "actively engaged" requirement is commonly referred to as a "practice hour" requirement.

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[1] In this document, "registrant(s)" has the same meaning as "regulated member(s)" in the *Health Professions Act*".

Actively Engaged Criteria

"Actively engaged" in the practice of practical nursing means the regular provision of practical nursing services to clients and 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 patients' 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.

Practical nursing services encompass both direct nursing practice and roles that are linked to administration, management, education, and research.

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

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

(a) The applicant has competently provided one or more of the nursing services as described under section 3 of Schedule 10 in the HPA;
(b) the nursing services were provided to non-family members; and
(c) immediately prior to the registration year for which registration is sought, the registrant must have achieved a minimum of 1,000 practice hours within the last four registration years, whether paid or voluntary.

If an applicant cannot meet the criteria above but has been out of nursing practice for less than 10 years, they may meet their practice hours requirement by passing the Council-approved objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) for LPNs.

Satisfying the criteria stated above means that the applicant has been actively engaged; however, this is only part of the requirements for registration or reinstatement. The CLPNA will also consider other requirements in the HPA, 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.

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 section 3.

Section 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation stipulates that for an applicant to be registered, they are required 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 these criteria are applied include but are not limited to the assessment of:

- applicants previously registered with the CLPNA whose permit has been suspended or cancelled,
- applicants who graduated more than four years ago and have not engaged in nursing practice,
- substantial equivalence of an internationally educated nurse,
- substantial equivalence of an applicant who previously held registration in a Canadian jurisdiction, and
- 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 from the date the completed application is received by the CLPNA.

This policy does not apply to:

- applicants who have graduated from an Alberta practical nursing diploma program less than four years ago (an LPN who graduated more than four years ago must meet the actively engaged requirements),
- applicants who have completed a refresher program approved by Council within the previous four years, or
- labour mobility applicants (applicants who hold a current practical nursing registration in another Canadian jurisdiction).

Exceptions

Exceptions to the practice hour requirements may be made in rare and exceptional circumstances. For example, where the applicant or registrant can demonstrate (a) that they have a characteristic protected from discrimination under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*[2] and (b) that the protected

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[2] Alberta Human Rights Act

characteristic contributed to their inability to meet the requirements. Evidence may be required before CLPNA can make this exception.

Each case will be assessed on an individual basis to determine whether an accommodation can be made. Even if there is evidence of a discriminatory impact, the applicant may not be eligible for registration.

Under section 31 of the HPA, if an applicant is denied a practice permit, they can request a review of the denial decision within 30 days of the letter being issued. A fee may be charged for a review of the decision.

CONCLUSION

This document explains the CLPNA's interpretation of the criteria on "actively engaged." LPNs must log 1,000 practice hours over the previous four-year period to meet the actively engaged requirements.

Documents are updated frequently. For access to the most current version of related documents and resources, please visit the Knowledge Hub on clpna.com. If you have any questions, please contact the Registration Department, on the website, using Ask CLPNA under the "Contact" tab, or by phone at 780-484-8886 or 1-800-661-5877 (toll free in Alberta).