

- 1.9 DEMONSTRATION OF CONTINUED COMPETENCY BY PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT APPLICANTS FOR LICENSURE, LICENSURE PURSUANT TO THE OCCUPATIONAL CREDENTIAL PORTABILITY PROGRAM, REINSTATEMENT OF AN EXPIRED LICENSE, OR REACTIVATION OF A LICENSE**
- A. Basis: The authority for promulgation of these rules and regulations by the Colorado Medical Board ("Board") is set forth in sections 24-4-103, 12-20-204(1), 12-240-119, 12-240-106(1)(a), 12-240-120(1)(d), 12-20-202(2)(c)(II), and 12-240-141(5), C.R.S.
- B. Purpose: The purpose of these rules and regulations is to set forth the process by which a physician assistant may demonstrate continued competency for the purpose of complying with the statutory sections referenced above to obtain a Colorado physician assistant license; demonstrate qualifications substantially equivalent for licensure by endorsement in this state pursuant to the Occupational Credential Portability Program as set forth in section 12-20-202, C.R.S.; demonstrate at least one year of having practiced as a physician assistant in another jurisdiction with a scope of practice substantially similar to the scope of practice in this state for licensure by endorsement pursuant to the Occupational Credential Portability Program as set forth in section 12-20-202, C.R.S.; reinstate an expired license; or reactivate an existing Colorado physician assistant license. The Board finds that due to the significant differences between the nature of physician assistant practice and the nature of physician practice, it is necessary and appropriate to delineate different methods by which physician assistants and physicians shall demonstrate continued competency as required by the Medical Practice Act. The significant differences between the two types of practice include the requirements that all physician assistants must be supervised by a licensed physician in accordance with existing Board rules and regulations. The Board finds, however, that if a physician assistant has ceased clinical practice for two or more years, the nature of the physician assistant/physician supervisory relationship in and of itself cannot compensate for potential knowledge and clinical deficiencies, which may exist due to the lack of practice experience for such an extended period of time.

C. LICENSURE BY ENDORSEMENT PURSUANT TO THE OCCUPATIONAL CREDENTIAL PORTABILITY PROGRAM PURSUANT TO SECTION 12-20-202(3), C.R.S.

1. For the purpose of licensure by endorsement through the occupational credential portability program, "substantially equivalent experience or credentials" means the applicant holds a current, valid, and unrestricted license in another U.S. jurisdiction that requires qualifications substantially equivalent to the qualifications for licensure in this state; the applicant submits written verification they have actively practiced as a physician assistant in another jurisdiction for the last two years or has otherwise maintained continued competency as determined by the Board; and submits proof satisfactory to the Board and attests that they have not been and are not subject to final or pending disciplinary or other action by any state or jurisdiction in which the applicant is or has been previously licensed except that, if the applicant is or has been subject to action, the Board may review the action to determine whether the underlying conduct warrants refusal of a license pursuant to section 12-240-120, C.R.S.
2. To demonstrate continued competency for purposes of complying with section 12-20-202(3), C.R.S., a physician assistant may:
 - a. Submit proof satisfactory to the Board of active practice as a physician assistant in another jurisdiction for the one-year period immediately preceding the filing of the application. If the physician assistant has practiced as a physician assistant only for a portion of the one-year period immediately preceding the filing of the application, the Board may determine on a case by case basis in its discretion whether the physician assistant has adequately demonstrated continued competency to practice as a physician assistant;
 - a. Submit proof satisfactory to the Board of having held for at least one year a current and valid physician assistant license in another jurisdiction with a scope of practice that is substantially similar to the scope of practice for physician assistants as specified in section 12-240-107, C.R.S.
 - c. Submit to the Board the following: (a) proof satisfactory to the Board that the physician assistant has been out of practice as a physician assistant for less than two years; (b) proof of current certification by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, Inc. ("NCCPA"); (c) proof of 100 hours of continuing medical education within the past two years, including twenty-five hours of category I continuing medical education in the past twelve months; and (d) a written plan satisfactory to the Board, documenting the nature, extent, and duration of supervision that will be provided by the supervising physician to the physician assistant as the physician assistant makes the transition back into clinical practice; or
 - d. Submit to the Board proof of participation in numerous professional activities, including but not limited to: maintenance of certification (MOC) activities; successful completion of the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA); category 1 approved CME educational courses with relevance to practice; teaching/lecturing/mentoring activities; non-patient care hospital or organization committee participation, including quality, safety, pharmacy and therapeutics, peer review, tumor board or other clinically relevant activities; clinically applicable research; surveying on behalf of accreditation organizations; or volunteer medical care provided overseas or in other jurisdictions. The Board's Licensing Panel shall have discretion to consider an applicant's activities on a case-by-case basis and may determine an applicant has met continued competency through a combination of any of the above activities or other relevant professional activities.

D. REENTRY LICENSE

For those physician assistants who have been out of practice as a physician assistant for two or more years, (a) submit to the Board a personalized competency evaluation report prepared by a program approved by the Board, and (b) complete any education and/or training recommended by the program as a result of the evaluation prior to obtaining a license. In the discretion of the Board, the physician assistant may be able to receive a re-entry license prior to completing the education and/or training recommended by the program for the purpose of facilitating the completion of such education and/or training. All expenses resulting from the evaluation and/or any recommended education and/or training are the responsibility of the physician assistant and not of the Board.

The Board will consider an applicant to be ineligible for a reentry license if their period of inactive practice resulted from disciplinary action or unprofessional conduct. If a reentry license is issued, such a license is valid only for three years from the date of issue and is not renewable. Failure to complete the training requirements before the end of the three-year period will result in the reentry license being administratively inactivated.

In the discretion of the Board, the physician assistant may be issued a re-entry license for the specific purpose of completing the education and/or training requirements. The re-entry license is valid for a single period of time not greater than three (3) years from the date of issue. Failure to complete the education and/or training requirements before the end of the three (3) year period for the re-entry license will result in the re-entry license being administratively inactivated.

E. CONVERSION OF REENTRY LICENSE

When an applicant has timely and successfully completed the training requirements, the applicant shall apply to the Licensing Panel of the Board to convert the reentry license to full licensure by submitting a letter to the Licensing Panel with documents that clearly establish timely and successful completion of the training requirements. If the Board determines that the applicant is competent and qualified to practice as a physician assistant, the Board will convert the reentry license to a full license to practice as a physician assistant. If the Board determines that the applicant is not competent nor qualified to practice as a physician assistant, the Board may require further assessment, training, or period of supervised practice in its discretion.

F. EXPENSES

All expenses resulting from the assessment and/or any training requirements are the responsibility of the applicant and not of the Board.

G. REINSTATEMENT OR REACTIVATION OF A LICENSE

In support of any application for reinstatement or reactivation of a license to practice as a physician assistant, for the purpose of complying with sections 12-20-202(2)(c)(II), 12-240-120(1)(d), or 12-240-141(5), C.R.S., a physician assistant may demonstrate continued competency in accordance with the methods identified in Rule 29.2(A)(2), identified above.

H. Where appropriate, the Board may determine that demonstration of continued competency requires an additional or different approach. For example, due to the length of time the physician assistant has been out of practice, the Board may require a written plan documenting the nature, extent, and duration of supervision that will be provided by the supervising physician to the physician assistant as the physician assistant makes the transition back into clinical practice. This written plan may be in addition to the personalized competency evaluation and/or recommended education and/or training. The decision as to the method of determining continued competency shall be at the discretion of the Board.

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