**PROPOSAL**

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**Title 10
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

 **Subtitle 27 BOARD OF NURSING**

**10.27.03 Nursing Education Programs**

Authority: Health Occupations Article, §§8-205 and 8-401, Annotated Code of Maryland

**Notice of Proposed Action**

[20-183-P]

The Secretary of Health proposes to amend Regulations **.01—.03**, **.05**, **.08**, **.09**, and **.11—.18** under **COMAR 10.27.03 Nursing Education Programs**. This action was considered the Board of Nursing at a public meeting held on July 22, 2020, notice of which was given by publication on the Board’s website at https://mbon.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx, pursuant to General Provisions Article, §3–302(c), Annotated Code of Maryland.

**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this action is to comply with the federal standards under Title VIII of the Public Health Services Act and maintain recognition by the United States Department of Education as a reliable authority on the quality of nursing education. These amendments are designed to clarify, reorganize, eliminate, and streamline existing language in order to reduce regulatory uncertainty and the overall regulatory burden on nursing education programs in Maryland.

**Comparison to Federal Standards**

There is no corresponding federal standard to this proposed action.

**Estimate of Economic Impact**

The proposed action has no economic impact.

**Economic Impact on Small Businesses**

The proposed action has minimal or no economic impact on small businesses.

**Impact on Individuals with Disabilities**

The proposed action has no impact on individuals with disabilities.

**Opportunity for Public Comment**

Comments may be sent to Jake Whitaker, Acting Director, Office of Regulation and Policy Coordination, Maryland Department of Health, 201 West Preston Street, Room 512, Baltimore, MD 21201, or call 410-767-6499 (TTY 800-735-2258), or email to mdh.regs@maryland.gov, or fax to 410-767-6483. Comments will be accepted through December 7, 2020. A public hearing has not been scheduled.

**.01 Definitions.**

A. (text unchanged)

B. Terms Defined.

(1) **[**“Approved”**]***“Approval”*means *the status granted to* a nursing education program that:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

*(2) “Articulation” means the process by which a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse who is enrolled in a nursing education program is given credit for previous nursing education.*

**[**(2)**]***(3)*(text unchanged)

**[**(3)**]***(4)*“Board-recognized nursing accreditation agency (BRNAA)” means a national *or regional* nursing education accreditation agency recognized by the:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

**[**(4)**]***(5)* (text unchanged)

**[**(5)**]***(6)*“Clinical *nurse* faculty” means an individual with at least a baccalaureate degree in nursing who is employed *by the program*solely for clinical learning of *nursing* students.

**[**(6)**]***(7)*“Clinical preceptor” means a registered nurse employee of a cooperating *clinical*agency acting to facilitate *and supervise* student learning in a manner specified in a signed written agreement between the *cooperating clinical*agency and the educational institution.

**[**(7)**]***(8)*(text unchanged)

**[**(8)**]***(9)***[**“Conditionally approved”**]** *“Conditional approval”*means a**[**program**]** *limited-time status*that:

(a) **[**Has**]***Is imposed by the Board if the Board finds evidence that the program has*failed to meet or maintain the regulations or requirements, or both, set by the Board; and

(b) **[**Is approved**]** *Allows the program to continue to operate* subject to the **[**school or**]** program conforming to the Board’s requirements and recommendations within a time period set by the Board.

**[**(9)**]***(10)*(text unchanged)

**[**(10)**]***(11)*“Cooperating *clinical* agency” means an agency that provides the facilities *and clinical resources* for clinical learning experiences in nursing, with the *nurse* faculty or the clinical **[**instructor**]** *nurse faculty*of the program responsible for the planning, **[**implementing**]** *implementation*,and **[**evaluating**]***evaluation* of these experiences.

**[**(11)**]***(12)* (text unchanged)

**[**(12) “Faculty” means an individual with a graduate degree in nursing who is employed to teach full or part time in a nursing education program.**]**

(13) (text unchanged)

*(14) “Generic student” means one who enters at the beginning of the nursing education program and plans to complete the entire curriculum.*

**[**(14)**]***(15)*“Initial approval” means **[**a newly established school or program that:

(a) Complies with the regulations of the Board; and

(b) Has not graduated its first class**]** *the approval period from the first admission of nursing students to the program through the first full implementation of the curriculum and graduation*.

**[**(15)**]***(16)—***[**18**]***(19)*(text unchanged)

*(20) “Nurse faculty” means an individual with a graduate degree in nursing who is employed to teach full-time or part-time in a nursing education program.*

**[**(19)**]***(21) Program.*

*(a)*“Program” means a **[**school or program of**]** registered nursing or licensed practical nursing*educational program.*

*(b) “Program” includes any of the following:*

*(i) A college;*

*(ii) A school;*

*(iii) A division;*

*(iv) A department;*

*(v) An academic unit; or*

*(vi) A program.*

**[**(20)“Recommendation” means a condition with which a schoolmay elect to comply.**]**

*(22) “Regional nursing education accrediting agency” means an accrediting agency that operates in a specific geographic region of the United States and accredits post-secondary institutions and primary and secondary schools.*

**[**(21)**]***(23)*(text unchanged)

**[**(22)**]***(24)*“Requirement” means a mandatory condition that a **[**school or**]** program meets:

(a) For the **[**school**]** *program*to be approved; and

(b) To ensure that graduates of the **[**school or**]** program are eligible to take the NCLEX-RN® and NCLEX-PN®.

**[**(23)**]***(25)*(text unchanged)

*(26) “Transfer student” means a student who is permitted to apply nursing courses completed at another institution to a nursing education program of study.*

**[**(24)**]***(27)*(text unchanged)

**.02 Approval of Programs Accredited by a Board-Recognized Nursing Accreditation Agency.**

A.—C. (text unchanged)

**[**D. The Board and the BRNAA may make concurrent visits.**]**

**[**E.**]***D*.—**[**G.**]***F.*(text unchanged)

**[**H.**]***G*. On a**[**regular**]** *periodic*basis, the Board shall compare its regulations to those of the BRNAA and the USDOE to ensure that the Board standards for programs are being met.

**[**I.**]***H*. (text unchanged)

**.03 Board Approval of Nonaccredited Programs.**

A. (text unchanged)

B. In institutions having both a licensed practical nursing education program and a registered nursing education program and when only one of the programs is accredited by a BRNAA:

(1) **[**The**]***Except as otherwise provided in Regulation .18 of this chapter,* *the* Board and the BRNAA shall conduct concurrent visits; and

(2) (text unchanged)

C. (text unchanged)

**.05 Administration and Organization.**

A. The controlling institution shall:

(1) Be accredited by the appropriate *national or* regional accrediting agency; and

(2) (text unchanged)

B. (text unchanged)

C. The program shall have comparable status with other academic units within the *controlling* institution.

D. The controlling institution shall provide the financial support and resources needed to operate a program which:

(1) Meets the **[**legal and educational**]** requirements of the Board; and

(2) (text unchanged)

E.—F. (text unchanged)

G. When the nursing program administrator changes, the administrative officer of the controlling institution shall submit written notification *to the Board* of the change indicating that the new program administrator meets the Board’s requirements.

**.08 *Nurse* Faculty and Clinical [Instructors] *Nurse Faculty*.**

A. Qualifications of Nurse Faculty.

(1)—(2) (text unchanged)

(3) Non-nurse faculty, or nurses not meeting the requirements for *nurse* faculty, may teach selected portions of the nursing curriculum that relate to their areas of expertise.

B. Waiver of Graduate Degree in Nursing Requirement for Nursing Faculty.

(1) (text unchanged)

(2) The petition for a waiver of the graduate degree in nursing shall include documentation that the institution has attempted to hire *nurse* faculty with graduate degrees and a summary of those efforts.

(3) The petition in §B(1) of this regulation shall include documentation verifying that the *nurse* faculty applicant for whom the waiver is requested has:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

(4) If the graduate degree in nursing is waived by the Board:

(a) The *nurse* faculty member for whom a waiver has been granted shall complete a minimum of 9 graduate credits in nursing within 24 months of the issuance of the waiver; and

(b) The program shall **[**document**]** *submit documentation to the Board* *of* completion of the required credits **[**to the Board**]** by the *nurse* faculty member within 24 months of the date when the waiver was granted.

(5) If the *nurse* faculty member fails to complete the 9 graduate credits required in nursing within 24 months of the granting of the waiver, the Board may withdraw the waiver.

(6) If the waiver has been withdrawn, the program shall require that the *nurse* faculty member cease functioning as *nurse* faculty. If the program fails to do so, the Board may take action under Regulation .17 of this chapter.

(7) Once the *nurse* faculty member for whom the waiver was granted has met the 9 graduate credit waiver requirements, that *nurse* faculty member is considered to have met the educational requirements of §A(2) of this regulation.

(8) The Board shall grant a waiver for a *nurse* faculty member:

(a) (text unchanged)

(b) Who is within a semester of graduation **[**from**]** *with*a graduate degree in nursing.

C. Qualifications of Clinical Nurse Faculty.

(1) (text unchanged)

(2) A program may not, in any academic year, fill more than 25 percent of the program’s full-time nurse faculty equivalent positions with clinical *nurse* faculty whose highest nursing degree is at the baccalaureate level.

D. Responsibilities *of Nurse Faculty and Clinical Nurse Faculty*.

(1) Responsibilities of the *nurse* faculty include participation in the planning, **[**implementing**]***implementation*, **[**evaluating**]***evaluation*, and **[**revising**]***revision* of the educational program.

(2) **[**Faculty**]***Nurse* *faculty* shall:

(a)—(c) (text unchanged)

(d) Maintain clinical skills in the *nurse* faculty’s area of responsibility;

(e) (text unchanged)

(f) Participate in the recruitment, selection, and promotion of *nurse*faculty *and the recruitment and selection of clinical nurse faculty*;

(g) Participate in peer evaluation of *nurse* faculty *and clinical nurse faculty* performance; and

(h) (text unchanged)

(3) Clinical nurse faculty shall:

(a) (text unchanged)

(b) Evaluate student performance *in clinical learning experiences*.

**.09 Faculty Policies.**

A. There shall be written personnel policies for **[**nursing**]** *nurse*faculty and clinical **[**instructors**]** *nurse faculty*that **[**are in keeping with**]** *conform* *to* accepted educational standards.

B. (text unchanged)

**.11 Faculty Development and Evaluation.**

A. There shall be a formal plan for orientation of new *nurse* faculty and clinical **[**instructors**]***nurse faculty*.

B. A program of faculty development shall be offered to encourage and assist *nurse*faculty members and clinical **[**instructors**]***nurse faculty* in their professional growth and development.

C. A variety of means shall be used to evaluate *nurse* faculty and clinical **[**instructors’**]** *nurse faculty’s*effectiveness of teaching within the classroom and clinical setting.

**.12 Resources, Facilities, and Services.**

A.—C. (text unchanged)

D. **[**Clinical Facilities**]***Cooperating Clinical Agencies*.

(1) The appropriate authorities shall approve *cooperating clinical agencies and all*facilities used for clinical learning experiences.

(2) (text unchanged)

(3)**[**Clinical**]***Cooperating clinical*agencies shall meet the following requirements:

(a)—(d) (text unchanged)

E. Written Agreements.

(1) Written agreements between the program and the cooperating *clinical* agencies shall specify the responsibility of the program to the *cooperating clinical*agency and the responsibility of the *cooperating clinical*agency to the program.

(2) Written agreements shall:

(a) Be developed jointly with the cooperating*clinical* agency;

(b)—(c) (text unchanged)

**.13 Curriculum.**

A.—C. (text unchanged)

D. The curriculum of all programs shall:

(1) (text unchanged)

(2) Provide didactic and clinical learning experiences that are diverse and consistent with program objectives, outcomes, or competencies**[**:**]***;* and

(3) Include:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

(c) Didactic and clinical instruction which includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

(i) (text unchanged)

(ii) Preventive, rehabilitative, and curative aspects of health care;*and*

(iii) (text unchanged)

(d)—(i) (text unchanged)

E.—J. (text unchanged)

K. Evaluation methods and tools used for measuring students’ knowledge, skills, and abilities shall be developed and implemented in order to **[**assure**]***ensure* satisfactory progression of students.

L. (text unchanged)

M. Clinical Preceptorships.

(1)—(2) (text unchanged)

(3) A bachelor’s degree in nursing is **[**preferred**]***recommended*.

*(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit any cooperating clinical agency’s registered nurses from assisting with clinical activities selected by the program’s nurse faculty or clinical nurse faculty.*

*(5) The program’s nurse faculty or clinical nurse faculty may not be required to be in the cooperating clinical agency’s facilities but shall be immediately available by telephone.*

**.14 Students.**

A. (text unchanged)

B. **[**It is recommended that students**]***Students* *shall* have:

(1) Membership on selected faculty committees*, as appropriate*; and

(2) (text unchanged)

C. (text unchanged)

*D. Each program shall have clearly defined written policies for the following:*

*(1) Admission of:*

*(a) Generic students;*

*(b) Transfer students; and*

*(c) Articulation;*

*(2) Oral and written English proficiency in reference to Health Occupations Article, §8-302(e), Annotated Code of Maryland, and COMAR 10.27.01.05;*

*(3) Withdrawals;*

*(4) Readmissions;*

*(5) Progression;*

*(6) Counseling and guidance;*

*(7) Representation on faculty governance;*

*(8) Graduation;*

*(9) Refund policies governing all fees and tuition paid by students; and*

*(10) Ethical practices for the performance of activities, including recruitment, admission, and advertising.*

*E. Each program shall have a written policy providing information to any student who may be subject to licensure denial under Health Occupations Article, §§8-308(c) and 8-316(a), Annotated Code of Maryland, and amendments applying to that citation. The information shall be provided before admission to the nursing education program.*

**.15 *Program* Evaluation.**

A. The faculty shall develop and implement a Board-approved evaluation plan for evaluating the total nursing education program **[**at least 3years**]** *not less than:*

*(1) Every 10 years for programs that are accredited by a BRNAA; and*

*(2) 5 years for programs without BRNAA accreditation.*

B. The evaluation plan shall include:

(1)—(2) (text unchanged)

(3) Student, graduate, faculty, cooperating *clinical* agencies, and administration participation;

(4) (text unchanged)

(5) Evidence that prior recommendations*from the Board* have been acted upon.

C.—D. (text unchanged)

**[**E. The Board shall review each program 3 years following a survey visit by means of an interim report submitted by the faculty of the program.

F. Following a review of the interim report, the Board shall:

(1) Determine if a survey visit is required at that time; or

(2) Approve the program for an additional 2 years.

G. The Board shall make a survey visit to a program not less than every 5 years.**]**

**.16 Annual Review.**

A. Annually, a program shall submit the following to the Board:

*(1) An annual report on the form that the Board requires;*

**[**(1)**]***(2)—***[**(3)**]***(4)*(text unchanged)

**[**(4)**]***(5)*A summary of practices followed in safeguarding the health and well-being of students; **[**and**]**

*(6) An audited fiscal report covering the previous 2 years, including a statement of income and expenditures; and*

**[**(5)**]***(7)*(text unchanged)

B. Annually*,* the Board shall:

(1) Review *each program’s annual report, supporting documentation, and*the licensure examination performance of first-time candidates from each program; **[**and**]**

(2) Notify each program achieving less than 90 percent of the national success rate**[**.**]***; and*

*(3) If necessary, conduct a survey or site visit, issue recommendations, place a program on conditional approval, or issue a formal notice of violation and withdraw approval in accordance with Regulation .17 of this chapter.*

*C. Approval may be reduced to conditional status for the following reasons:*

*(1) Noncompliance with this chapter;*

*(2) Failure to hire faculty who meet the qualifications as stated in Regulation .08 of this chapter;*

*(3) Noncompliance with the school’s stated philosophy, program design, objectives, or policies;*

*(4) Failure to submit records and reports to the Board in a timely manner;*

*(5) Failure to implement the approved curriculum;*

*(6) In accordance with §D of this regulation, failure to maintain the required passing rate on the licensing examination by first-time candidates;*

*(7) Failure to annually document that all faculty have current licenses; and*

*(8) Other activities or situations, as determined by the Board, that indicate a program is in jeopardy of violating statutory and regulatory requirements and standards.*

**[**C.**]** *D.*Unacceptable Performance *on Licensure Examination*.

(1) The Board shall issue a warning to a program when the pass rate of first-time candidates does not comply with **[**§B**]** *§B(2)* of this regulation.

(2) For the first year a program does not meet the requirements of **[**§B**]** *§B(2)* of this regulation and following the warning in **[**§C(1)**]** *§D(1)* of this regulation, the program shall, within 30 calendar days, provide to the Board:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

(3) Second Successive Year Not in Compliance.

(a) For the second successive year that a program is not in compliance with **[**§B**]***§B(2)* of this regulation, the program shall be placed on conditional approval and shall:

(i)—(ii) (text unchanged)

(b) The Board’s professional staff shall *conduct a survey*visit *to* the school and provide a report to the Board.

(4) If compliance with **[**§C(3) of this regulation**]** *the minimum licensure examination performance standard for first-time candidates* is not made by the program within 1 examination year from the date of conditional approval, approval may be withdrawn.

**.17 Removal from Approved List.**

A. Pursuant to Health Occupations Article, §8-404, Annotated Code of Maryland, at least 30 days before issuing a formal notice of violation of regulations to **[**an institution**]** *a program*, the Board shall notify the chief administrator of the *controlling* institution and the chief administrator of the nursing education program that the Board is considering issuing a formal notice of violation.

B. During the 30-day period, the Board shall provide the chief administrator of the *controlling* institution and the nursing education program with an opportunity to meet with representatives of the Board to discuss the Board’s proposed action against the **[**institution**]***program*.

C.—F. (text unchanged)

G. Approval may be **[**reduced to conditional status or**]** withdrawn for the following reasons:

(1)—(5) (text unchanged)

(6) Failure to comply with the Board’s requirements **[**with**]***within* the specified time **[**frame**]***frames*;

(7)—(8) (text unchanged)

(9) Other activities or situations, as determined by the Board, that indicate a **[**school**]** *program* is not meeting **[**legal**]***statutory and regulatory* requirements and standards.

H. (text unchanged)

**.18 New Programs *and Continuing Approval Requirements*.**

A. **[**Approval**]** *New Program* Requirements.

(1) An institution wishing to establish a nursing program shall submit to the Board:

(a) (text unchanged)

(b) Proof **[**of**]** *that the institution is accredited by the appropriate national or* regional**[**accreditation**]** *accrediting agency*;

(c)—(f) (text unchanged)

(2)—(4) (text unchanged)

B. **[**ApprovalProcess**]***New Program Review*.

(1) (text unchanged)

(2) The Board may:

(a)—(b) (text unchanged)

(c) Authorize a site visit *by the Board’s professional staff* and, following *a report of*the site visit *by the Board’s professional staff*, **[**approve**]***grant initial approval*, defer action, or deny the request.

(3) (text unchanged)

C. (text unchanged)

D. **[**Full**]** Approval.

*(1)*Following graduation of the first class, the Board shall evaluate the **[**school or**]** program for **[**full**]** approval, considering the:

**[**(1)**]***(a)*Report of a survey of the **[**school or**]** program by the *Board’s*professional staff, scheduled before graduation of the first class;

**[**(2)**]***(b)*(text unchanged)

**[**(3)**]***(c)***[**Demonstrated**]***Program’s demonstrated* continued ability to provide an educational program that meets the standards set by the Board.

*(2) Upon review of the survey report, the results of graduate performance on the National Council Licensure Examination, and an assessment of the program’s continued ability to meet the standards set forth in this chapter, the Board may:*

*(a) Grant approval;*

*(b) Place the program on conditional approval; or*

*(c) Withdraw initial approval in accordance with Regulation .17 of this chapter.*

*(3) Approval, if granted, shall be valid for not more than:*

*(a) 10 years for a program accredited by a BRNAA; and*

*(b) 5 years for a program without BRNAA accreditation.*

*E. Reapproval Requirements.*

*(1) The Board shall evaluate a program for reapproval:*

*(a) Every 5 years if the program is without BRNAA accreditation; and*

*(b) Not more than 10 years after approval is granted if the program has BRNAA accreditation.*

*(2) Evaluation of continuing compliance shall include the submission of a self-study report by the program and a survey visit by the Board’s professional staff. The self-study report shall be submitted to the Board no less than one month prior to the survey visit.*

*(3) If the program is accredited by a BRNAA, the reapproval survey visit may be made in coordination with a BRNAA visit.*

*(4) Unscheduled survey or site visits may be conducted at the discretion of the Board.*

*(5) A program that is accredited by a BRNAA and is subsequently placed on warning or whose accreditation by the BRNAA is withdrawn shall be scheduled immediately for a survey visit.*

*(6) During each survey or site visit, the nurse administrator of the program shall make the following information available:*

*(a) Data about the program, including the following:*

*(i) The number of students;*

*(ii) The legal body responsible for policy and support of the program;*

*(iii) The organizational chart; and*

*(iv) An audited fiscal report covering the previous 2 years, including a statement of income and expenditures;*

*(b) The nurse administrator’s job description;*

*(c) For each faculty member and clinical preceptor, the following:*

*(i) Job descriptions;*

*(ii) Selection policies;*

*(iii) Orientation plan;*

*(iv) Faculty organization by-laws;*

*(v) Number of full-time and part-time faculty and non-nursing faculty with academic credentials and assignments; and*

*(vi) Faculty-student clinical ratio;*

*(d) Degree plan;*

*(e) A copy of the current curriculum and course catalog with the date of last revision;*

*(f) The testing process with test analysis and the written test procedure;*

*(g) A description of education facilities, including classrooms, offices, libraries, and computers;*

*(h) A list of clinical facilities and cooperating clinical agencies;*

*(i) The number of students by classes; and*

*(j) The policies for students as listed in Regulation .14D of this chapter.*

*(7) During each survey or site visit, the nurse administrator shall make available the following:*

*(a) The program’s administrators, faculty, support services personnel, and students;*

*(b) Staff members of selected cooperating clinical agencies;*

*(c) Faculty minutes for at least the previous 3 years;*

*(d) Faculty and student handbooks;*

*(e) Student records;*

*(f) Policies and procedures;*

*(g) Curriculum materials;*

*(h) Cooperating clinical agency contractual agreements;*

*(i) Program evaluation plan and evidence of program effectiveness; and*

*(j) The program’s current catalog.*

*(8) Upon review of the survey report and the results of graduate performance on the National Council Licensure Exam, and an assessment of the program’s continued ability to meet the standards set forth in this chapter, the Board may:*

*(a) Grant reapproval;*

*(b) Place the program on conditional approval; or*

*(c) Withdraw approval in accordance with Regulation .17 of this chapter.*

*(9) Reapproval, if granted, shall be valid for not more than:*

*(a) 10 years for a program accredited by a BRNAA; and*

*(b) 5 years for a program without BRNAA accreditation.*

ROBERT R. NEALL
Secretary of Health