DHEC, LLR Announce Joint Order Granting Temporary Authorization to Practice for Nursing Graduates in Order to Boost Staffing at Health Care Facilities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELASE:
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COLUMBIA, S.C. — Today, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR)'s State Board of Nursing issued a joint order giving nursing graduates temporary authorization to practice so they may assist health care facilities in need of staffing assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some nursing graduates have been delayed in being able to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) that's required for official nurse licensure as testing facilitates were closed for several weeks. Nursing graduates can't begin employment with health care providers without a license. This joint order gives nursing school graduates a pathway to be able to work temporarily while waiting to take their exam.

"This joint order with the State Board of Nursing is a vital step towards making sure our hospitals, clinics and health care facilities have skilled, newly trained nurses available to assist South Carolinians during this prolonged public health crisis," **said Marshall Taylor, DHEC Acting Director.** "Through this joint effort with the State Board of Nursing and LLR, we're able to ensure that more help is on the way for the care and treatment of patients seeking medical care and treatment."

"LLR and its Board of Nursing appreciate SC DHEC working jointly with us to make this happen," **LLR Director Emily Farr said.** "We want to do everything we can to make sure that hospitals and other facilities have access to as many health care workers as possible during this public health emergency."

There are currently more than 85,000 nurses licensed in the state, and this joint order could impact approximately 200 current nursing graduates, making them employable by health care providers.

To view the joint order, visit the LLR website at ww.llr.sc.gov/nurse. For the latest COVID-19 news and updates, visit www.scdhec.gov/covid19

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