Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy and Attorney General Grewal Announce Recent Graduates of Health Care Programs Can Now Join the Fight Against COVID-19 While Waiting to Take Licensing Exams

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Emergency Graduate Licenses Open Door for Thousands of Recent Grads to More Quickly Join New Jersey's Ranks of Nurses, Physician Assistants, Pharmacists, and Respiratory Care Specialists

TRENTON – Acting on a commitment to further expand New Jersey's health care workforce in response to COVID-19, Governor Phil Murphy and Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal announced today that recent graduates of nursing, physician assistant, pharmacy, and respiratory care therapy programs who have not yet been able to take and pass their licensing exams will be granted temporary emergency licenses. The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs will begin accepting applications for the emergency graduate licensure program today.

"From the onset of this crisis, our goal has been to eliminate any roadblocks that prevent qualified health care professionals from joining our frontline response efforts," **said Governor Murphy.** "Today's action allows thousands of recent graduates to quickly join teams on the ground currently fighting COVID-19."

"We cannot afford to have otherwise qualified healthcare professionals sidelined during the COVID-19 crisis waiting for an opportunity to take the exams they need to become licensed," **said Attorney General Grewal**. "We need them in the field as soon as possible to assist those who have been working around the clock to stop this pandemic."

"Recent graduates of nursing, pharmacy, physician assistant and respiratory care therapy programs will be welcome in our hospitals to assist patients and relieve frontline health care workers," **said Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli.** "It's a perfect match."

"This program is an example of our many efforts to increase the number of qualified healthcare professionals available to provide care for New Jersey residents during this emergency," **said Paul R. Rodríguez, Acting Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs**. "We are giving graduates an opportunity to put their years of training to use when they are needed most, during the peak of what may be the most serious healthcare crisis of their lifetimes."

The emergency graduate licensure program is open to individuals applying for licensure within six months of graduating from the following programs:

- Accredited registered professional nursing (RN);
- Practical nursing (LPN);
- Physician assistant;
- Pharmacy education and training located in New Jersey; and
- Accredited respiratory care therapy education and training located in any state.

Individuals will not be eligible for the emergency graduate licensure program if they have failed the relevant licensing examination and will be dropped from the program if they fail the exam after receiving an emergency graduate license.

With the exception of respiratory care therapists, graduates licensed through this program will be eligible to work only under supervision in an acute care facility licensed by the New Jersey Department of Health. Respiratory care specialists will also be authorized to work under supervision in field hospitals.

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The program will end automatically at the conclusion of the COVID-19 state of emergency and public health emergency. The Division may choose to end the program earlier if it determines that it is no longer necessary. In that case, the Division would give licensees 90 days to pass their examination and 120 days to obtain standard licenses.

The Division has waived application fees for the emergency temporary license.

Graduates can apply for a temporary emergency graduate license online on the Division's website (https://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/COVID19/Pages/Emergency-Graduate-Licensure.aspx).
For more information on the Division's program, please click here (https://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/COVID19/Documents/FAQ-Emergency-Graduate-Licensee.pdf).

Qualified health, mental health, and related professionals interested in volunteering can visit: www.covid19.nj.gov/volunteer (https://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/COVID19/Documents/FAQ-Emergency-Graduate-Licensee.pdf)

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