

# Certain Restrictions and Licensing Requirements for Health Care Professionals Suspended

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The Pennsylvania Department of State has effectively suspended a number of regulations and licensing restrictions applicable to many medical practitioners in the state during the coronavirus emergency.

Certain requirements applicable to nurses, nurse-midwives, physicians, retired health care professionals and continuing education have been waived and/or suspended.

A list of all the suspended/waived requirements and restrictions, organized by practitioner can be found [here](#).

One of the more important changes is the suspension of the institutional-license requirement that limits qualified medical doctors to practicing at no more than two affiliated facilities. The change is intended to increase the number of practitioners available to respond to COVID-19.

Medical doctor licensees who are in active/retired status for less than four years can submit a reactivation application to the department with a suspension of the continuing education requirements.

Restrictions applicable to physician assistants practicing under the state Board of Osteopathic Medicine relating to oversight by supervising physicians, written agreements and substitute supervising physicians have also been suspended.

With respect to nurses, additional waivers during this time mean that:

- Temporary nursing practice permits and graduate permits will be extended beyond one year and extension fees will be waived.
- Registered nurses will not have to apply for extensions of their RN graduate or temporary permits. All temporary and graduate permits that normally would expire during the next 90 days will be automatically extended for an additional 90 days.
- Practical nurses will not have to apply for extensions of their PN graduate or temporary permits. All temporary and graduate permits that normally would expire during the next 90 days will be automatically extended for an additional 90 days.
- Registered nurses, certified registered nurse practitioners (CRNPs) and certified nurse specialists (CNS) can continue to care for patients if their licenses are currently "in renewal" and set to expire on April 30. These licenses will be extended for an additional three months until July 31.

Additionally, the Pennsylvania Department of State is suspending:

- Certain pharmacy regulations
- Requirements related to collaborative agreements and licenses for certified nurse midwives
- Some licensing requirements related to psychology, social work, marriage and family therapy and professional counselors
- Restrictions on distance-learning for continuing-education requirements for certain licensed professionals

The department is also expediting licenses for practitioners that are licensed outside Pennsylvania.

Health care officials and administrators should be familiar with the suspended regulations and take advantage of these suspensions to increase their staff of available medical professionals as necessary to respond to the coronavirus emergency.

If you have questions on any of these new regulation and license relaxations, please [contact me](#) or anyone in the [Barley Snyder Health Care Industry Group](#).

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