

NCLEX® for VisaScreen™ through NCSBN: Frequently Asked Questions

WHO IS REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A VISASCREEN?

Section 343 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) requires that certain health care professionals successfully complete a screening program (U.S. VisaScreen™) before receiving an occupational visa, such as the H-1B, H-2B, TN status, and permanent (green card) visas. VisaScreen: Visa Credentials Assessment, a program offered by the International Commission on Healthcare Professions (IHP), a division of The Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS), enables health-care professionals to meet this requirement by verifying and evaluating their credentials to ensure compliance with the government's minimum eligibility standards. CGFNS/IHP is currently the only provider recognized by the U.S. Federal Government to provide VisaScreen.

Under the final rules, certain nurses who are seeking temporary or permanent occupational visas as well as those who are seeking NAFTA status are required to first obtain a U.S. VisaScreen as part of the visa process. Canadian and Mexican workers who are already working in the U.S. are subject to this requirement. Although the final rule took effect September 2003, a grace period is in place until July 26, 2004. NCSBN does not determine requirements or eligibility for the VisaScreen. Information regarding new certification requirements for non-immigrant alien health care workers may be obtained from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) at: http://uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/Health_Cert.htm.

HOW DOES TAKING THE NCLEX® HELP TO FULFILL THE VISASCREEN REQUIREMENTS?

As part of the certification requirements the VisaScreen includes:

1. An assessment of the education of the applicant to ensure that it is comparable to a U.S. graduate in the same profession;
2. Verification that licenses are valid and unencumbered;
3. Successful completion of an English language proficiency examination; and,
4. **For nurses only**, verification that the nurse has either passed the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) licensure examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN®) or the CGFNS qualifying examination (an NCLEX-RN predictor examination). In the case of practical or vocational nurses, successful completion of the NCLEX-PN® examination is required.

NCSBN will continue to grant qualified candidates eligibility to take the NCLEX examination to aid in satisfying the VisaScreen requirements through September 30, 2005. Please note – The deadline for registering for the NCLEX examination through NCSBN is June 1, 2005. NCSBN NCLEX for VisaScreen Applications must be post-marked no later than July 1, 2005. The deadline for taking the NCLEX examination is September 30, 2005. The validity dates for the candidate's Authorization to Test (ATT) will be pro-rated to the September 30, 2005 deadline. Candidates failing to mail their applications by the July 1, 2005 deadline will be required to change the jurisdictions of their registrations to an appropriate board of nursing assisting with the VisaScreen. Candidates will be required to pay a \$50 fee for this correction.

HOW CAN I TAKE THE NCLEX FOR VISASCREEN?

With a State Board

If currently licensed candidates choose to apply to one of the following boards of nursing, the board may grant eligibility to the candidate to take the NCLEX examination to assist in the completion of the VisaScreen requirements. The following state boards of nursing will allow qualified candidates to take the NCLEX: **Arkansas, Maryland, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Hampshire and the Virgin Islands**. For more information on registering with a state board of nursing to take the NCLEX examination to assist in the completion of the VisaScreen requirements, please contact any of the above states through the following link before registering to take the NCLEX examination with Pearson VUE: http://www.ncsbn.org/regulation/boards_ofnursing_boards_of_nursing_board.asp.

With NCSBN

Starting April 5, 2004, through NCSBN's test service, Pearson VUE, currently licensed candidates may apply to take the NCLEX for VisaScreen purposes. To take the NCLEX for VisaScreen with NCSBN there is a two-step registration and application process:

1. Complete an NCLEX-RN or NCLEX-PN examination registration with Pearson VUE. The NCSBN NCLEX for VisaScreen Candidate Bulletin, which contains all the information necessary to register for the examination, and examination administration rules is available from the NCSBN Web site at http://www.ncsbn.org/testing/generalinformation_NCLEXfor_VisaScreen.asp. Candidates have two registration options:

- (1) On the Internet at <http://www.pearsonvue.com/nclex/>

or

- (2) By phone at 1.866.496.2539 (toll-free). Unlike NCLEX examination registration for licensure, candidates for NCLEX for VisaScreen will not have the option to register for the examination by mail. Each NCLEX examination registration costs **\$200.00 (U.S. Dollars)**.
2. After examination registration process with Pearson is complete, the applicant will be sent via mail an NCSBN NCLEX for VisaScreen application. This form must be

completed and returned to NCSBN with: a notarized copy of the information page from a valid passport, a copy of your completed ICHP/CGFNS VisaScreen application with CGFNS ID number, a current passport photo (no photocopies), and the application fee. In addition, your nursing license will be independently verified by NCSBN. Once these documents and information are received and validated, NCSBN will make you eligible to take the examination. The NCSBN NCLEX for VisaScreen application fee is **\$50.00 (U.S. Dollars)**.

HOW SOON CAN I TAKE THE NCLEX FOR VISASCREEN?

As soon as candidates receive their Authorization to Test (ATT) from Pearson VUE, they may schedule their examination appointment immediately. Candidates are guaranteed to receive an examination appointment within 30 days of the issuance of the ATT, however, most candidates will be able to schedule an appointment at a Pearson Professional Center within a week to 10 days.

WHERE CAN I TAKE THE NCLEX FOR VISASCREEN?

NCSBN will administer the NCLEX for VisaScreen purposes at any of the over 200 Pearson Professional Centers located around the United States and its territories.

WHERE WILL MY NCLEX EXAMINATION RESULT BE REPORTED?

Taking the NCLEX examination through NCSBN for the purposes of the VisaScreen, authorizes NCSBN to report candidate examination results to boards of nursing and any entity recognized by the U.S. Government, currently CGFNS/IHCP, to conduct certification requirement screening for non-immigrant alien health care workers. The deadline for registering for the NCLEX examination through NCSBN is June 1, 2005.

IF I DO NOT PASS THE NCLEX FOR VISASCREEN WHEN CAN I TAKE THE EXAMINATION AGAIN?

Candidates who do not pass the NCLEX for VisaScreen through NCSBN are eligible to take the examination again 45 days after their prior examination session.

IF I DO NOT PASS THE NCLEX FOR VISASCREEN, WILL I LOSE MY CURRENT STATE LICENSE?

Only the board of nursing that issued the candidate's license has the authority to make changes in the candidate's licensure status. Preliminary information from state boards of nursing indicates that failure of the NCLEX examination for VisaScreen purposes will not cause loss of a candidate's current license. Failure on the examination may influence, however, issuance of state licenses that may be applied for in the future. ***Because each situation is unique, candidates are advised to contact the Board where they are licensed to inquire about details.***

WHERE CAN I GET INFORMATION ON THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE VISASCREEN PROGRAM?

Currently, the U.S. government has recognized the CGFNS/IHCP organization as the only authorized provider of the VisaScreen for nurses. ***NCSBN does not determine requirements or eligibility for the VisaScreen.*** Information on eligibility for the VisaScreening process and rules regarding the IIRIRA can be obtained from USCIS at: http://uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/Health_Cert.htm. Additional information on the

CGFNS Qualifying Exam and the VisaScreen process can be found on the CGFNS Web site at: <http://www.cgfns.org/cgfns/index.html>.

WHERE CAN I GET INFORMATION ON THE NCLEX-RN?

Information on the NCLEX program, including the current NCLEX-RN Test Plan, can be found on the Testing Services portion of the NCSBN Web site at: <http://www.ncsbn.org/testing/index.asp>.

HOW QUICKLY WILL I KNOW THE RESULT OF MY EXAMINATION?

Candidates who take the NCLEX through NCSBN NCLEX for VisaScreen, or the following jurisdictions: Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota and New Hampshire, may access their "Unofficial" result via the NCLEX Candidate Web site or through the NCLEX Quick Results Service line (1.900.776.2539). Your "Unofficial" result will be available two business days after taking your examination. Cost for the Quick Results Service is \$7.95 via the Web, and \$9.95 via the phone. You will receive your official result through the mail in one to three weeks.

WHERE CAN BOARDS OF NURSING VERIFY MY RESULTS?

If you have applied to take the NCLEX for VisaScreen through one of the participating boards, those boards will receive your result through the mail or electronically once you've completed your examination. If you have applied to take the NCLEX for VisaScreen through NCSBN, examination results will be available to all boards of nursing through the standard results transmission process between NCSBN and state boards of nursing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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