



NPA Modernization: What You Need to Know

The Nurse Practice Act (NPA) has evolved incrementally over decades, resulting in a patchwork of statutes and administrative rules, some of which no longer align with or reflect current nursing standards or practices. House Bill (HB) 3044, which passed during the 2025 Regular Legislative Session, was designed to address this need for modernization; it made the statutory changes necessary to facilitate administrative rules updates.

During the [November 2025 board meeting](#), the Oregon State Board of Nursing made several changes to **11 of the 17 rule divisions** that make up the NPA to better align it with current practice standards, improve customer service, and eliminate unnecessary regulatory barriers. The changes go into effect on January 1, 2026. Below is a collection of commonly asked questions and answers regarding the upcoming changes.

QUESTIONS REGARDING CHANGES THAT TAKE EFFECT JANUARY 1, 2026

1. Q: Is my license expiration date going to change?

A: No. Existing license expiration dates will remain the same. New licenses and certificates issued after Jan. 1, 2026, will expire two years from the date the license was issued rather than the licensee or certificate holder's birthdate.

2. Q: How many CE hours do I need?

A: The number of continuing education hours required vary depending on whether you are applying for renewal or reinstatement of a license or certificate. Please review the Continuing Education Fact Sheet for [Renewal](#) or [Reinstatement](#) for timeframes and types of CE required.

3. Q: Do I still need to count my practice hours?

A: As of January 1, 2026, practice or work hours will no longer be required to assure competency.

4. Q: Can I take NCLEX instead of CE?

A: RN and LPN applicants have the option of showing competency by passing the NCLEX at the level of licensure sought. If you have passed the NCLEX within two years of submitting the application, continuing education is not required. If you have not taken and passed the NCLEX within the last two years but wish to challenge the NCLEX to show competency, you may request that with your application.

Pain Management and Cultural Competency continuing education are still required.

5. Q: Do I need to take Pain Management again?

A: All nurses are required to take the Pain Management CE at initial licensure and every 36 months thereafter.

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6. **Q: What is the Cultural Competency requirement?**

A: All license and certificate holders are required to complete two hours of CE related to cultural competency, every 48 months.

7. **Q: How do I show proof of my continuing education?**

A: Retain any records that demonstrate continuing education was completed. This may include certificates of completion, meeting agendas or objectives, or proof of attendance. You may upload these documents into your account in the [online Nurse Portal](#).

8. **Q: I'm a registered nurse (RN). Do any of the new rules affect my practice?**

A: Possibly. RN practice-related changes will only impact RNs who are employed by or contracted in two categories of settings. The practice-related changes expand the list of out-of-state licensed prescriber types from whom an RN may accept and execute a medical order.

An RN who is employed by a **public or private school, or by an education service district or a local public health authority, to provide nursing services at a public or private school**, may accept an order from a health care provider licensed to practice in another state or territory of the United States for a period of not more than 90 days. RNs in the identified employment situations are directed to access OAR 851-045-0062 which identifies minimum standards which must be met to exercise this practice authority.

An RN who is employed by or contracted with a **long-term care facility or an in-home care agency** may execute a medical order from a health care provider licensed to practice in another state or territory of the United States for not more than 90 days. RNs in the identified employment or contractual situations are directed to access OAR 851-045-0063 (1) through (2) which identifies minimum standards which must be met to exercise this practice authority.

9. **Q: I'm a licensed practical nurse (LPN). Do any of the new rules affect my practice?**

A: Yes. As of January 1, 2026, the Oregon-licensed physician associate's treatment plan has been added to the list of health-related plans that can provide clinical direction of LPN practice. This expansion is based on the newly NPA-defined health care provider.

LPNs are directed to access OAR 851-0045-0050 (1) through (4) which establish minimum standards related to LPN scope in the practice of nursing and identify the provider types whose plans can provide clinical direction of LPN practice.

QUESTIONS REGARDING CHANGES THAT TAKE EFFECT JANUARY 1, 2028

Q: It says I can fold my cultural competency and pain management CE into the total CEs required. So, if I count them, does that mean I only have to get 17 more hours of CE to renew?

A: That is correct. The one-hour pain management CE and two-hour cultural competency CE count towards the 20 total CE hours needed for on-time renewal.