Issue
Conversions, modifications, and cancelations of face-to-face courses and experiential learning in nursing programs may require approval and flexibility by the state boards of nursing for the students to move forward in their academic program.

Impacted
The institutions providing the programs may need to seek approvals by the state boards of nursing to provide alternative instruction. Students may be required to participate in virtual labs, continue in extra academic terms, or may be able to obtain a temporary license to serve as a nurse due to emergency measures in several states.

Effective Dates
The effective dates are from the time institutions were required to convert courses and clinical sites closed until nursing students are able to participate in experiential learning, face to face courses, and participate in required competency testing (NCLEX) for nursing school graduates.

Background
When institutions were required to close their campuses and nursing students found their clinical sites closed, nursing students and institutions began attempting to determine how to move the student forward in their academic program and meet state licensing board requirements. The various state boards of nursing are addressing emergency planning guidelines and waivers with different thresholds for acceptability.

Upon review of state responses, some states boards of nursing are offering flexibility by waiving certain requirements for modality of didactic learning or permitting participation in simulation formatted clinical experiences. In New York, students in programs to become licensed in New York State to practice as a healthcare professional, may volunteer at the healthcare facility for educational credit as if the student had secured a placement under a clinical affiliation agreement, without entering into any such clinical affiliation agreement. Approximately half of the states are providing an opportunity for nursing students near the end of training or have not had the opportunity to complete state board testing (NCLEX) to obtain a temporary license to fill nursing shortages in those states.

Questions remain about the pre-license portability of education to obtain a temporary license in another state although many states are providing flexibility to nurses who are licensed to practice in another state depending on the state. Executive Orders in various states are providing post licensure portability of licenses in varying degrees and for varying health professions.
Recommended Action(s)

- **Requirement Review:** Students and Institutions should review state boards of nursing requirements.
- **Document Processes:** Institutions should maintain all documentation pertaining to how didactic learning objections are met and the clinical placement circumstances.

Resources

- **NCSBN - COVID-19 Information** see “Related Resources”
  - State Response to COVID-19 – updated periodically
  - Policy Brief: U.S. Nursing Leadership Supports Practice/Academic Partnerships to Assist the Nursing Workforce during the COVID-19 Crisis.
  - Changes in Education Requirements for Nursing Programs – updated periodically
- **ATA – COVID-19 (Coronavirus)** – See State Licensure Requirements & Policy Updates

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