



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
Board of Medical Examiners
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SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR A LICENSE TO PRACTICE

To obtain a permanent license to practice as a physician assistant in this State, an applicant shall comply with the following requirements as outlined in Section 40-47-945 of the Physician Assistant Practice Act.

A. LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

An individual shall obtain a permanent license from the board before the individual may practice as a physician assistant. The board shall grant a permanent license as a physician assistant to an applicant who has:

1. submit a completed application on forms provided by the Board;
2. pay the non-refundable application fee;
3. successful completion of an educational program for physician assistants approved by the Commission on Accredited Allied Health Education Programs or its successor organization;
4. successful completion of the NCCPA certifying examination and provide documentation that he or she possesses a current, active, NCCPA Certificate;
5. certification that he or she is mentally and physically able to engage safely in practice as a physician assistant
6. no licensure, certificate, or registration as a physician assistant under current discipline, revocation, suspension, probation, or investigation for cause resulting from the applicant's practice as a physician assistant;
7. good moral character;
8. submit to the Board any other information the Board considers necessary to evaluate the applicant's qualifications;
9. appear before a Board member or designee with his or her supervising physician and all original diplomas and certificates and demonstrated knowledge of the contents of this article;
10. successfully completed an examination administered on the statutes and regulations regarding physician assistant practice and supervision; and
11. Scope of practice guidelines must accompany the application.

B. REQUIRED SOUTH CAROLINA EXAMINATION

Applicants who have never been permanently licensed in South Carolina must take an examination on the statutes and regulations regarding physician assistant's practice and supervision. Applicants who fail this examination must retake and pass the exam before being assigned for an interview with a Board representative.

C. PHYSICIAN SUPERVISORS/SUPERVISING PHYSICIAN

The supervising physician is responsible for all aspects of the physician assistant's practice. The supervising physician shall identify the physician assistant's scope of practice and determine the delegation of medical tasks. The supervising physician or alternate supervising physician must be physically present at least seventy-five percent of the time the physician assistant is providing services. Supervision must be continuous but must not be construed as necessarily requiring the physical presence of the supervising physician at the time and place where the services are rendered, except as otherwise required for limited licensees. A supervising physician may not supervise more than two physician assistants. Only physicians with permanent South Carolina licenses may serve as supervising physicians. A physician who is on probation with this Board may not serve as a primary or alternate supervising physician.

D. ALTERNATE SUPERVISING PHYSICIANS

Alternate supervising physicians are responsible for the physician assistant in the absence of the primary supervising physician. Only physicians with permanent South Carolina licenses may serve as alternate supervising physicians. A physician who is on probation with this Board may not serve as an alternate supervising physician. The application must include the signature(s) of alternate supervisor(s). To add an alternate supervising physician at a later time, the alternate(s) must write this Board requesting to be added. The alternate(s) will be notified in writing of approval and may not begin serving as an alternate until he/she has received written approval from the Board.

E. CHANGE OF SUPERVISING PHYSICIAN

A new application and fee of \$25 must be submitted and approved before the physician assistant can begin working with a new primary supervising physician. The interview process is the same as that for licensure.

F. TERMINATION OF SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

If the supervisory relationship between a physician assistant and the supervising physician is terminated for any reason, the physician assistant and supervising physician shall inform the Board immediately in writing of the termination, including the reasons for the termination. The approval of the practice setting terminates coterminous with the termination of the relationship, and practice shall cease until a new application is submitted by a supervising physician and is approved by the Board.

G. SCOPE OF PRACTICE GUIDELINES

A physician assistant practicing at all sites shall practice pursuant to written scope of practice guidelines signed by all supervising physicians and the physician assistant. Copies of the guidelines must be on file at all practice sites. Sample scope of practice guidelines are available on the board website. The guidelines shall include at a minimum the:

- a) name, license number, and practice addresses of all supervising physicians;
- b) name and practice address of the physician assistant;
- c) date the guidelines were developed and dates they were reviewed and amended;
- d) medical conditions for which therapies may be initiated, continued, or modified;
- e) treatments that may be initiated, continued and modified;
- f) drug therapy, if any, that may be prescribed within the usual scope of the supervising physician's practice; and
- g) situations that require direct evaluation by or immediate referral to the physician.

H. TEMPORARY LICENSE

A temporary license, under certain circumstances, may be issued to applicants who meet all requirements for a permanent license and have filed a completed application. However, a "yes" response to questions on the application may require an appearance before the full committee/board before a temporary license can be issued.

I. INTERVIEW REQUIREMENT

An interview with an individual board member or board designee is required before a permanent license can be issued. When your application is complete and a temporary license issued, you will be sent information about the interview along with setting up the interview with a board member or board designee. Once approved for permanent licensure you may apply for prescriptive authority. (Insert 6)

J. ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

On-the-job training may be requested after a physician has supervised a licensed physician assistant for a period of at least six months, or a physician assistant has been licensed in South Carolina for at least one year. A request for on-the-job training must be requested on forms provided by the Board.

K. INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

1. **Fee** - A non-refundable application fee of \$134.00 is required with your application. Application will not be processed without the required \$134.00 application fee. Make check payable to **LLR-Board of Medical Examiners**. (Application fee and prescriptive authority fee is \$174.00)
2. **Prescriptive Authority application fee** is \$40.00 and must accompany the prescriptive authority application. (Insert 4) Only physician assistants with permanent licenses are eligible for prescriptive authority.
3. **Application documentation** - The application form is self-explanatory. It sets forth the required information that must be submitted with your application. An application will be considered incomplete until the following is furnished:
 - a. Completed application;
 - b. Certification of physician assistant education - Complete Insert 1 and mail to your physician assistant program.
 - c. Verification of license/certificates (Insert 2) - Verification form may be duplicated as needed. This Board must receive a verification of licensure directly from the State Board of each state in which you are now or have every been licensed/certified to practice as a physician assistant;
 - d. A copy of your current NCCPA Certificate.
 - e. Three letters of recommendations.
 - f. Scope of practice guidelines and supervision statement.
 - g. South Carolina Physician Assistant Examination (Insert 3)
 - h. Malpractice form completed, if applicable. (Insert 5)
4. **Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS)** - You may utilize the FCVS to have your physician assistant credentials verified to this Board. For application and information, contact the FCVS, at P.O. Box 619851, Dallas TX 75261-9850, telephone (888)-275-3287 or via email at fcvs@fsmb.org. Applications for the FCVS may be downloaded from the web at <http://www.fsmb.org>.
5. **Malpractice form (Insert 5)** – If applicable, complete and return the enclosed malpractice form with the requested information to the board if you have ever been named in a malpractice suit or settlement.
6. **Controlled substance registration** - Applications for both federal and state registration are available from the Narcotic and Drug Control Division, Dept. of Health and Environmental Control, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201, (803) 896-0634. Applicants who possess permanent licenses may apply for a controlled substance registration.
7. It is a violation of the medical practice act to practice as a physician assistant before being licensed by this board. Violators will be subject to substantial penalties.
8. A supervising physician may not supervise more than two physician assistants.
9. A physician assistant must clearly identify himself or herself as a physician assistant to ensure that the physician assistant is not mistaken or misrepresented as a physician. A physician assistant shall wear a clearly legible identification badge or other adornment at least one inch by three inches in size bearing the physician assistant's name and the words 'Physician Assistant'.
10. Allow 15 business days for processing before contacting the board regarding the status of your application. **You may check the status of your application by visiting the website at www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/medical.**