



ABN E-NEWS

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Alabama Board of Nursing
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It's Never Too Soon to Get Ready for Renewal

Peggy Sellers Benson, RN, MSHA, MSN, NE-BC

In preparation for RN Renewal this fall, now is a good time to review the many changes ABN has made, which should simplify the application process for the more than 76,000 RNs currently licensed in Alabama.

1—License cards have been discontinued and replaced with permanent continuing education (CE) cards for each RN and LPN with a valid license in the state. As the CE cards never expire, ABN will not be issuing new cards upon renewal. Just hold onto the card you receive from us as we transition away from license cards. It will remain in force.

2 – Effective March 24, 2016, evidence of all CE hours earned from sources other than ABN-approved providers (ABNPs) must be uploaded and recorded in the Individual CE Record under [My Profile](#) on the ABN website. ABNPs will continue to record your CE hours for you; you should **NEVER** attempt to add CE hours earned from ABNPs to My Profile, as this will produce duplicate and corrupted records.

3—A number of changes were made to the Chapter 10 of the [ABN Administrative Code](#), which governs the way that you earn and record CE. We encourage all nurses to review [Chapter 10](#) to ensure that you are in compliance and prepared for Renewal.

Regular RN Renewal begins September 1 and ends November 30. Late Renewal will be available through the month of December, **but incurs a \$150.00 Late Renewal fee**, in addition to your license fee of \$75.00 and transaction fee of \$3.50. We strongly encourage you to complete your renewal during the Regular Renewal period, in order to avoid the unnecessary expense to you.

Preparing for Advanced Practice Renewal

Dawn Daniel, MSN, RN
Director—Advanced Practice

[My Profile](#) just keeps getting better. Following is a brief checklist of advanced practice nursing (APN) renewal items, all of which can be managed under My Profile:

APN Renewal for 2017-2018 requires the following:

- Renewal of the RN license (CE and fee of \$75.00 plus \$3.50 processing fee).
- Six (6) Pharmacology CE credits for CRNA, CRNP or CNM.
- Advanced Practice National Specialty Certification.
- Payment of APN renewal fee (\$50.00 per specialty).

Login to My Profile to ensure you are ready for RN renewal and APN renewal.


Check your CE. Ensure all certificates are uploaded and there are no duplicates.



My CE Record	
Current CE	
Current CE Hours:	12.00
Pharmacology Hours:	12.00
Required CE	
Required Courses Hours:	24
Required Pharmacology Hours:	6
Mandatory CE Needed:	N

Are there a total of 24 hours? Do six of these hours satisfy the Pharmacology requirements?

When does your Certification Expire?

Certification Details:					
Certify Organization	Specialty	Certification Number	License Type	Start Date	End Date
American Nurses Credentialing Center - CRNP	Adult – Gerontological Primary Care NP		CRNP	02/14/2014	02/13/2019

If the expiration date is **BEFORE** 12/31/2016, the Board has not received primary source verification of your recent recertification from your national organization. Submit your national recertification application now and request verification of recertification be sent to the ABN so you may complete RN and APN renewal before November 30. Remember, renewal in the month of December incurs an additional fee of \$150.00 and failure to renew your advanced practice approval will disqualify you from practice as an APN in Alabama.

Please feel free to contact ABN with any questions at abn@abn.alabama.gov or (334) 293-5200.

A New Direction: A Look at Our Progress

Peggy Sellers Benson, RN, MSHA, MSN, NE-BC

Just over 15 months ago, the Board adopted a vision of “A New Direction” for the ABN and for Alabama nursing in general. The vision was formed by my belief that we, as nurses, should set aside any differences and work toward a better future for our profession and, ultimately, for the best interests of patients in Alabama. The Board and I felt that this change should begin with a new approach to regulation, based on greater and more open communication between the Board and its licensees. I am pleased and proud to report that we have made more progress than I ever could have dreamed just a few short months ago and I would like to share a partial list of the changes we have made.

Elimination of License Cards

Last September, in response to a number of confirmed incidences of license card fraud, the Board voted to eliminate the cards and replace them with permanent CE cards for all Alabama nurses. The new CE card does not expire and remains with the nurse regardless of the status of the license, which allows even a nurse without an active license to continue to earn and record the CE credit necessary to reinstate when he or she eventually returns to practice. The transition has not been a quick or easy one, but it has gone extremely well and is very nearly complete.

Updated Standards of Practice

The Board recently revamped the practice standards located in [ABN Administrative Code](#) Chapters 6 (Standards of Nursing Practice) and 7 (Standards of Nursing Practice; Specific Settings). Regardless of your practice setting, it is your responsibility to understand and abide by your standards of practice. Please visit www.abn.alabama.gov and review these standards as often as possible. The most recent changes go into effect in September.

The New Look of www.abn.alabama.gov

Earlier this year, we launched a completely revamped website, which is designed to maximize ease of access for nurses and the public. I cannot tell you how proud I am of the new site. The overhaul was long overdue and I am certain visitors will be pleased with our efforts.

Alabama Nursing Resource Center

Concurrent with the website relaunch, the Board unveiled the [Alabama Nursing Resource Center \(ANRC\)](#), our one-stop shop for all things nursing in Alabama and around the world. The ANRC is constantly growing and includes links to hundreds of nursing and lifestyle resources worldwide. The Center also serves the Board’s CE development arm and ultimately will offer more than 24 free CE hours. The courses designed will focus on developments in the health care industry and on common practice lapses identified during the disciplinary process.

Greater Collaboration with Public Officials and Government Agencies

When I accepted the job of Executive Officer of ABN, one of my first priorities was to expand our engagement with Alabama’s constitutional officers, the Legislature, and, perhaps most importantly, with other agencies and regulatory boards, such as the Department of Public Health, Alabama Board of Medical Examiners (ALBME), and the Board of Pharmacy, whose roles directly impact both ABN and everyday nursing practice. The results have been amazing. Every day, we receive positive feedback from elected officials, regulators, and the public, complimenting the entire nursing community on the improvements we have made in working with them.

A New Direction: A Look at Our Progress

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Post-Graduate Research Opportunities and ABN Preceptorships

Through the ANRC, the Board is in the process of developing a program offering research opportunities to Masters and Doctoral students wishing to conduct research at the Board offices in Montgomery. These students also will be eligible for regulatory preceptorships.

Advanced Practice Loan Repayment Program

During the 2016 Regular Legislative Session, the Legislature adopted a proposal offered by Governor Bentley, Representative April Weaver, and Senator Greg Reed, which authorizes the Board to offer loans to graduate students who agree to practice for a period of time as CRNAs, CRNPs, or CNMs in areas of critical need around the state. We are in the final stages of the rule-making process and the Program should be up and running this fall.

Streamlining the Standard Formulary for CRNPs and CNMs

We have overhauled the Standard Formulary for CRNPs and CNMs to include all legend drugs and eliminate Specialty Formularies, simplifying the process for these APNs. Controlled substances remain under the purview of the ALBME, which issues the Qualified Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate (QACSC) for CRNPs and CNMs.

Demographic Data Refinement

Through a partnership with the Alabama Health Action Coalition (AL-HAC), ABN has developed a thorough data set collected from voluntary questionnaire responses during the Renewal process. This effort allows the Board, the health care industry, and public officials to identify trends and needs in current practice. Again, the questionnaire is voluntary and we appreciate the participation of each willing licensee.

Military Bridge Program

At its July meeting, the Board unanimously voted to approve a new education track that will allow qualified veterans of the United States Armed Forces with experience in the health care field to earn approval to test for the NCLEX-PN® exam, which would qualify them as fully Licensed Practical Nurses in Alabama. The program is slated to launch at select Alabama Community College System schools this fall.

Proactive Communication with Alabama Nurses

Above all, we have committed ourselves to engaging our licensees as openly and as often as possible. Virtually any time the Board makes a policy change or an operational decision that impacts you, we want you to know about it. That's why we ask you pay to attention to our regular List-Serv messages, this newsletter, and to our social media platforms. If some piece of news is important to the Alabama Board of Nursing, it almost certainly is important to you, the Alabama nurse.

As you can see, I am extremely proud of the progress that the agency has made these last several months and we are committed to continuing to move forward to make Alabama a national leader in nursing regulation and in nursing practice. As a nurse in this state for more than 37 years, I know that Alabama nurses are capable of doing great things for all Alabamians. I want to thank all of Alabama's nursing community for their contributions to public protection and health promotion and to invite you all to join us as we move forward together.



What's New in the ANRC
LaDonna Patton, MSN, RN, CEN
Director, Alabama Nursing Resource Center

With RN license renewal approaching, I want to bring your attention to some recently added FREE online CE courses that may be accessed through the Alabama Nursing Resource Center (ANRC). You may find these courses under the "Nursing CE" heading on the ANRC or through these links:

Alabama Eye Bank via MedEd Free CE (ABNP)
<http://alabamaeyebank.org/services-of-aeb/meded/>

Health Literacy for Public Health Professionals, a course by the CDC (non-ABNP).
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/gettrainingce.html>

One of the goals of the ANRC is to streamline access to information and communication for the public and nurses alike. To that end, other recent or planned additions to the ABN and ANRC web pages include:

ABN: a series of brief informational videos detailing the various ways to verify a nursing license, including written verification, license lookup, and the employer subscription service.

ANRC, under the "Public" heading: Health Literacy Partnership of Alabama and Health Literacy Resources, which may be found here: <http://www.abn.alabama.gov/alabama-nursing-resource-center/health-literacy/>

ANRC, under the "Nursing CE" heading: information on free (attendance) disaster training courses available through the Advanced Regional Response Training Center (ARRTC): <http://arrtc.com/>

ANRC, under the state "[Links](#)" heading: Naloxone Standing Order from the State Health Officer pursuant to Act 2016-307: <http://www.adph.org/pharmacyunit/assets/NaloxoneStandingOrder.6.23.16.pdf>

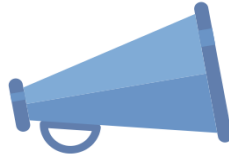
Dr. Natalie Baker Appointed to NCSBN Institute of Regulatory Excellence Committee

We are pleased to announce that ABN Board Member Natalie Baker, DNP, CRNP, has been appointed to NCSBN's FY 2017 Institute of Regulatory Excellence Committee. We know that she will do a wonderful job and represent Alabama well.

The Board and Board staff are well-represented at the national level. Dr. Baker joins ABN President Francine Parker, EdD, MSN, RN (Nursing Education Trends Committee), Executive Officer Peggy S. Benson, RN, MSHA, MSN, NE-BC (Standards Development Committee), and Director - Probation Monitoring and Compliance Cathy Boden, MSN, RN (Investigator Training Committee) in sharing her experience and expertise with peers around the country.

Vicki Hill Joins ABN Nursing Staff

Please join us in welcoming a new member of ABN's nursing staff. Vicki Hill, MSN, RN, has taken over a newly created Nursing Education Consultant position, where she will oversee approval and review of all LPN and proprietary ADN programs. Prior to coming to the ABN, Vicki served as the Director of Clinical Education for Baptist Health System in Birmingham. She has served on the faculty of Jacksonville State University and was the State Chapter Director for Kohl's ThinkFirst Alabama at Children's of Alabama for 11 years. Vicki holds bachelor's degrees in Health Promotion and Nursing and a master's degree in Nursing Education. She has worked as an RN in the fields of neonatal intensive care, pediatric, and obstetrical medicine.



ATTENTION RNs

You will notice a new section to your 2016 RN License Renewal survey. This 31 question survey will only take 5-10 minutes of your time and will greatly benefit nurses like you.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is the new section on RN licensing survey?

The voluntary section of questions at the end of the RN renewal survey is a standardized tool that will help the Board of Nursing collect information about the RN workforce.

Why does the Board need this information?

Right now, Alabama currently lacks nursing workforce data needed to influence policy; enhance diversity; forecast the nursing workforce supply and demand, including nursing education program planning; forecast for disaster planning; or identify nursing shortage areas versus overly saturated areas within the state. This is just a short list of reasons why this information is important to nurses and the public.

What are you going to do with this data?

The Board of Nursing is working with the Alabama Health Action Coalition (AL-HAC) to collect this information and publicize the survey's findings to public. Your response to this survey is critical for us to better plan for a healthier Alabama.

Are my answers anonymous?

Yes.

Why should I answer this survey?

Answering this survey will help the Board answer important questions like:

- Will Alabama have enough nurses in the future?
- How will retiring nurses affect this number?
- Are there areas in Alabama where we need more nurses?
- Is there an area with an over-saturated supply of nurses?
- Does the racial/ethnic, geographic and specialty of Alabama's nursing workforce match our population's health needs?

Who developed these questions?

The questions on this survey were developed by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing and the National Forum of Nursing Workforce Centers.

Were these questions asked on the LPN Renewal Survey in 2015?

Yes. A very similar list of voluntary, questions were included in the 2015 LPN License Renewal Survey.

How often will I be asked these questions?

You should expect these questions to be asked during each license renewal period.

www.al-hac.org

