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## Fast-Track Regulation Agency Background Document

<b>Agency name</b>	Board of Nursing; Department of Health Professions
<b>Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) citation(s)</b>	18VAC90-27
<b>Regulation title(s)</b>	Regulations Governing Nursing Education Programs
<b>Action title</b>	Definition of full approval and criminal background checks
<b>Date this document prepared</b>	9/25/17

This information is required for executive branch review and the Virginia Registrar of Regulations, pursuant to the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA), Executive Orders 17 (2014) and 58 (1999), and the *Virginia Register Form, Style, and Procedure Manual*.

### Brief summary

*Please provide a brief summary (preferably no more than 2 or 3 paragraphs) of the proposed new regulation, proposed amendments to the existing regulation, or the regulation proposed to be repealed. Alert the reader to all substantive matters or changes. If applicable, generally describe the existing regulation.*

The Board has amended Chapter 27 to add a definition in section 10 for “full approval” of a nursing education program and to change the timing of a criminal background check for nursing students in section 70 from requiring the check prior to admission to prior to the clinical experience involving direct patient care.

### Acronyms and Definitions

*Please define all acronyms used in the Agency Background Document. Also, please define any technical terms that are used in the document that are not also defined in the “Definition” section of the regulations.*

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N/A

### Statement of final agency action

*Please provide a statement of the final action taken by the agency including: 1) the date the action was taken; 2) the name of the agency taking the action; and 3) the title of the regulation.*

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On September 19, 2017, the Board of Nursing amended 18VAC90-27, Regulations Governing Nursing Education Programs.

### Legal basis

*Please identify the state and/or federal legal authority to promulgate this proposed regulation, including: 1) the most relevant citations to the Code of Virginia or General Assembly chapter number(s), if applicable; and 2) promulgating entity, i.e., agency, board, or person. Your citation should include a specific provision authorizing the promulgating entity to regulate this specific subject or program, as well as a reference to the agency/board/person's overall regulatory authority.*

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Regulations are promulgated under the general authority of Chapter 24 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia. Section 54.1-2400 (6), which provides the Board of Nursing the authority to promulgate regulations to administer the regulatory system:

#### **§ 54.1-2400 -General powers and duties of health regulatory boards**

*The general powers and duties of health regulatory boards shall be:*

- 1. To establish the qualifications for registration, certification, licensure or the issuance of a multistate licensure privilege in accordance with the applicable law which are necessary to ensure competence and integrity to engage in the regulated professions.*
- 2. To examine or cause to be examined applicants for certification or licensure. Unless otherwise required by law, examinations shall be administered in writing or shall be a demonstration of manual skills.*
- 3. To register, certify, license or issue a multistate licensure privilege to qualified applicants as practitioners of the particular profession or professions regulated by such board.*
- 4. To establish schedules for renewals of registration, certification, licensure, and the issuance of a multistate licensure privilege.*
- 5. To levy and collect fees for application processing, examination, registration, certification or licensure or the issuance of a multistate licensure privilege and renewal that are sufficient to*

*cover all expenses for the administration and operation of the Department of Health Professions, the Board of Health Professions and the health regulatory boards.*

*6. To promulgate regulations in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) which are reasonable and necessary to administer effectively the regulatory system. Such regulations shall not conflict with the purposes and intent of this chapter or of Chapter 1 (§ [54.1-100](#) et seq.) and Chapter 25 (§ [54.1-2500](#) et seq.) of this title. ...*

In addition, there is statutory authority for the board to approve nursing education programs:

*§ 54.1-3005. Specific powers and duties of Board.*

*In addition to the general powers and duties conferred in this title, the Board shall have the following specific powers and duties:*

- 1. To prescribe minimum standards and approve curricula for educational programs preparing persons for licensure or certification under this chapter;*
- 2. To approve programs that meet the requirements of this chapter and of the Board;*
- 3. To provide consultation service for educational programs as requested;*
- 4. To provide for periodic surveys of educational programs;*
- 5. To deny or withdraw approval from educational programs for failure to meet prescribed standards; ...*
- 9. To approve programs that entitle professional nurses to be registered as clinical nurse specialists and to prescribe minimum standards for such programs; ...*

### Purpose

*Please explain the need for the new or amended regulation. Describe the rationale or justification of the proposed regulatory action. Describe the specific reasons the regulation is essential to protect the health, safety or welfare of citizens. Discuss the goals of the proposal and the problems the proposal is intended to solve.*

Hospitals and clinics that serve as settings for clinical training are better assured of the safety and welfare of their patients by having a more recent criminal background check rather than relying on the initial check at the time of a student’s application to nursing school. There may be as much as a two-year gap from the time an applicant to nursing school has a background check and the time he/she begins a clinical experience involving direct patient care. By requiring a background check prior to the clinical experience rather than prior to admission, any prior or subsequent criminal activity will be known and there is more protection for patient health and safety.

### Rationale for using fast-track process

*Please explain the rationale for using the fast-track process in promulgating this regulation. Why do you expect this rulemaking to be noncontroversial?*

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The action is intended to clarify the term “full approval” and to address the gap of time between the criminal background check conducted at the time of admission to a nursing education program and the time a student would begin his/her clinical experience. The action was recommended by the Nursing Education Informal Conference Committee and unanimously approved by the Board. It is beneficial to students, nursing programs, and clinical settings, so it should not be controversial.

### Substance

*Please briefly identify and explain the new substantive provisions, the substantive changes to existing sections, or both. A more detailed discussion is provided in the “Detail of changes” section below.*

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The Board has amended Chapter 27 to add a definition in section 10 for “full approval” of a nursing education program and to change the timing of a criminal background check for nursing students in section 70 from requiring the check prior to admission to prior to the clinical experience involving direct patient care.

### Issues

*Please identify the issues associated with the proposed regulatory action, including: 1) the primary advantages and disadvantages to the public, such as individual private citizens or businesses, of implementing the new or amended provisions; 2) the primary advantages and disadvantages to the agency or the Commonwealth; and 3) other pertinent matters of interest to the regulated community, government officials, and the public. If there are no disadvantages to the public or the Commonwealth, please indicate.*

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- 1) The primary advantage of the amendment is better assurance that nursing students providing direct patient care have had a recent criminal background check. There are no disadvantages.
- 2) There are no advantages or disadvantages to the Commonwealth.
- 3) The Director of the Department of Health Professions has reviewed the proposal and performed a competitive impact analysis. The Board is authorized under § 54.1-2400 to “promulgate regulations in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§2.2-4000 et seq.) which are reasonable and necessary to administer effectively the regulatory system.” There is no restraint on competition as a result of promulgating this regulation. The language is clarifying or less restrictive than the current requirements.

### Requirements more restrictive than federal

*Please identify and describe any requirement of the proposal which is more restrictive than applicable federal requirements. Include a rationale for the need for the more restrictive requirements. If there are no applicable federal requirements or no requirements that exceed applicable federal requirements, include a statement to that effect.*

There are no applicable federal requirements.

### Localities particularly affected

*Please identify any locality particularly affected by the proposed regulation. Locality particularly affected means any locality which bears any identified disproportionate material impact which would not be experienced by other localities.*

There are no localities particularly affected.

### Regulatory flexibility analysis

*Pursuant to § 2.2-4007.1B of the Code of Virginia, please describe the agency's analysis of alternative regulatory methods, consistent with health, safety, environmental, and economic welfare, that will accomplish the objectives of applicable law while minimizing the adverse impact on small business. Alternative regulatory methods include, at a minimum: 1) the establishment of less stringent compliance or reporting requirements; 2) the establishment of less stringent schedules or deadlines for compliance or reporting requirements; 3) the consolidation or simplification of compliance or reporting requirements; 4) the establishment of performance standards for small businesses to replace design or operational standards required in the proposed regulation; and 5) the exemption of small businesses from all or any part of the requirements contained in the proposed regulation.*

In order to address the issue of criminal background checks and assure that they occur immediately prior to clinical experiences with patients, the regulation must be amended.

### Economic impact

*Please identify the anticipated economic impact of the proposed new regulations or amendments to the existing regulation. When describing a particular economic impact, please specify which new requirement or change in requirement creates the anticipated economic impact.*

<p><b>Projected cost to the state to implement and enforce the proposed regulation, including:</b>  <b>a) fund source / fund detail; and</b>  <b>b) a delineation of one-time versus on-going expenditures</b></p>	<p>As a special fund agency, the Board must generate sufficient revenue to cover its expenditures from non-general funds, specifically the renewal and application fees it charges to practitioners or entities for necessary functions of regulation. All notifications will be done electronically. There are no on-going expenditures.</p>
<p><b>Projected cost of the new regulations or changes to existing regulations on localities.</b></p>	<p>There are no costs of the new regulation to</p>

	localities.
<b>Description of the individuals, businesses, or other entities likely to be affected by the new regulations or changes to existing regulations.</b>	Nursing students who are required to have a criminal background check prior to their clinical experiences.
<b>Agency’s best estimate of the number of such entities that will be affected. Please include an estimate of the number of small businesses affected.</b> Small business means a business entity, including its affiliates, that: a) is independently owned and operated and; b) employs fewer than 500 full-time employees or has gross annual sales of less than \$6 million.	The Board does not have an estimate of the number of students affected. There are currently 138 programs approved by the Board to provide education for practical and professional nursing.
<b>All projected costs of the new regulations or changes to existing regulations for affected individuals, businesses, or other entities. Please be specific and include all costs including:</b> a) the projected reporting, recordkeeping, and other administrative costs required for compliance by small businesses; and b) specify any costs related to the development of real estate for commercial or residential purposes that are a consequence of the proposed regulatory changes or new regulations.	There are no additional costs for students or the education programs, since the background check is a current requirement. The timing of the check is the issue addressed.
<b>Beneficial impact the regulation is designed to produce.</b>	It should result in less cost to nursing students as they would only be required to obtain one criminal background check. Hospitals and clinics that serve as settings for clinical training are better assured of the safety of their patients by having a more recent background check rather than relying on the initial check at the time of application to nursing school.

**Alternatives**

*Please describe any viable alternatives to the proposal considered and the rationale used by the agency to select the least burdensome or intrusive alternative that meets the essential purpose of the action. Also, include discussion of less intrusive or less costly alternatives for small businesses, as defined in § 2.2-4007.1 of the Code of Virginia, of achieving the purpose of the regulation.*

There are no alternatives to amended regulations. The amendments are intended to clarify the current regulations or to address an issue identified with the timing of a criminal background check for nursing students.

**Public participation notice**

*If an objection to the use of the fast-track process is received within the 30-day public comment period from 10 or more persons, any member of the applicable standing committee of either house of the General Assembly or of the Joint Commission on Administrative Rules, the agency shall: 1) file notice of*

the objections with the Registrar of Regulations for publication in the Virginia Register; and 2) proceed with the normal promulgation process with the initial publication of the fast-track regulation serving as the Notice of Intended Regulatory Action.

### Family impact

*Please assess the impact of this regulatory action on the institution of the family and family stability including to what extent the regulatory action will: 1) strengthen or erode the authority and rights of parents in the education, nurturing, and supervision of their children; 2) encourage or discourage economic self-sufficiency, self-pride, and the assumption of responsibility for oneself, one’s spouse, and one’s children and/or elderly parents; 3) strengthen or erode the marital commitment; and 4) increase or decrease disposable family income.*

There is no impact on the family or family stability.

### Detail of changes

*Please list all changes that are being proposed and the consequences of the proposed changes; explain the new requirements and what they mean rather than merely quoting the proposed text of the regulation. If the proposed regulation is a new chapter, describe the intent of the language and the expected impact. Please describe the difference between existing regulation(s) and/or agency practice(s) and what is being proposed in this regulatory action. If the proposed regulation is intended to replace an emergency regulation, please follow the instructions in the text following the three chart templates below.*

For changes to existing regulation(s), please use the following chart:

<b>Current section number</b>	<b>Current requirement</b>	Proposed change, intent, rationale, and likely impact of proposed requirements
10	Sets out definitions for words and terms used in the chapter	A definition for “full approval” is added to mean that compliance with regulations pertaining to nursing education programs has been verified. <i>The term is used in sections 150 and 160, so a definition is included to clarify the meaning.</i>
70	Sets out the requirements for admission of students in a nursing education program	Subsection D is amended to change the requirement for a criminal background check. Currently, applicants (except for high school students in practical nursing programs) are required to submit to a criminal background check prior to admission. The language is changed to require the check for students enrolled in a program prior to a clinical experience involving direct patient care.  <i>Hospitals and clinics where students are engaged in a clinical experience require a criminal background check prior to providing direct patient care. Typically, there is a gap of months or even years between the time a check was submitted prior to admission and the time of the clinical experience. Therefore, the clinical settings often require a second check to ensure that there has not been any criminal activity during that gap period.</i>

		<p><i>The primary purpose of a background check is patient safety, so the timing before the clinical experience is beneficial and more logical. The action would save nursing students and programs the expense and effort of two background checks for the same purpose.</i></p> <p><i>Included in the information a nursing education program is required to publish and distribute to applicants is "Information about implications of criminal convictions," so applicants who have criminal convictions know prior to enrollment and payment of tuition fees how those convictions may affect their ability to complete the program or the potential impact on employment. (See section 80)</i></p>
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