



## Georgia Enacts Nurse Licensure Compact Law

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On May 8, 2017, Governor Nathan Deal signed legislation that will make it easier for Georgia nurses to practice across state lines.<sup>1</sup> Senate Bill 109, which passed the Georgia legislature in March, will make Georgia part of the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). With the approval of the National Council of the State Boards of Nursing, Georgia nurses will be able to obtain a multistate license allowing them to practice and teach in any of the other 25 states that are currently parties to the NLC.<sup>2</sup>

Supporters of the bill, like state Senator Renee Unterman and Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle, touted the bill as a way to address Georgia's nursing shortage by streamlining the licensing process for nurses.<sup>3</sup> The new law may reduce administrative expenses for health care providers operating in multiple states—nurses who would otherwise have to obtain multiple licenses will now be able to utilize the NLC's reciprocity.

Georgia's law adopts the Enhanced NLC (eNLC), which incorporates policy changes and updates to the current NLC.<sup>4</sup> The eNLC sets eligibility and uniform licensure requirements for a multistate license, and it establishes the NLC governing body as a public agency known as an "Interstate Commission."

The Georgia law tracks the model language of the NLC (which reflects the 2015 eNLC updates). The Georgia law does clarify the definition of a "nurse" under the law ("a registered professional nurse or licensed practical nurse") for consistency with state law. The Georgia law also explicitly states that a nurse practicing in Georgia under a multistate license issued by another NLC party state is subject to all applicable requirements under Georgia's nursing licensure law, and that the article applies only to nurses "whose home states are determined by the Georgia Board of Nursing to have licensure requirements that are substantially equivalent to or more stringent than those of this state." However, as noted above, the eNLC aligns licensing standards in eNLC states.

Looking forward, twelve additional states have pending eNLC legislation, and nineteen states (now including Georgia) have enacted eNLC legislation.<sup>5</sup> The effective date of the eNLC is the sooner of 26 states enacting the eNLC, or on December 31, 2018.<sup>6</sup>

1 [https://gov.georgia.gov/sites/gov.georgia.gov/files/related\\_files/document/SB%20109%202017.pdf](https://gov.georgia.gov/sites/gov.georgia.gov/files/related_files/document/SB%20109%202017.pdf) (last visited May 15, 2017). Readers of the new law will note that it was passed as an addition to a compact for EMS personnel (the "Recognition of EMS Personnel Licensure Interstate Compact" or "REPLICA.")

2 <http://www.georgianurses.org/news/344274/Governor-Deal-signs-Nurse-Licensure-Compact-bill.htm> (last visited May 15, 2017).

3 [http://www.gwinnettdailyreport.com/local/political-notebook-senate-passes-unterman-bill-to-address-nursing-licensure/article\\_98cd353a-f2b4-52f8-bf6d-e31dadb9ae5c.html](http://www.gwinnettdailyreport.com/local/political-notebook-senate-passes-unterman-bill-to-address-nursing-licensure/article_98cd353a-f2b4-52f8-bf6d-e31dadb9ae5c.html) (last visited May 15, 2017).

4 [https://www.nursecompact.com/privateFiles/NLC\\_Key\\_Provisions.pdf](https://www.nursecompact.com/privateFiles/NLC_Key_Provisions.pdf) (last visited May 15, 2017).

5 <https://www.nursecompact.com/> (last visited May 15, 2017).

6 [https://www.ncsbn.org/Leader\\_to\\_Leader\\_NLC\\_Issue2017.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/Leader_to_Leader_NLC_Issue2017.pdf) (last visited May 15, 2017).

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