



NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF
CONSUMER AFFAIRS

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**Temporary Emergency Licensure of Foreign Physicians
Supporting New Jersey's COVID-19 Response**

Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

April 17, 2020

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Providers are encouraged to check the Division of Consumer Affairs [website](#) for additional information.

The State of New Jersey COVID-19 Information Hub is [here](#).

The NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Information Hub for Health Care Providers is [here](#).

Coronavirus disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) is the disease caused by a new coronavirus first detected in humans in December 2019. The State of New Jersey has implemented extraordinary measures to combat the spread of the disease, including through actions taken by Governor Philip D. Murphy to expand the capacity of New Jersey’s healthcare system to meet increased demand.

On April 1, 2020, Governor Murphy signed Executive Order No. 112, which makes it easier for physicians licensed in countries other than the United States to become licensed as physicians in New Jersey on a temporary, emergency basis. On April 16, 2020, the Division of Consumer Affairs launched the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program, and the Division is now accepting applications from foreign physician licensees for temporary emergency licenses to practice medicine in New Jersey.

This document includes basic information foreign physician licensees need in order to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program to help their fellow New Jersey residents during the current emergency arising from COVID-19.

Those who are eligible—experienced physicians who are licensed in good standing in other countries—can apply on the Division of Consumer Affairs website [here](#). The Division has waived application fees, so it is free to apply, and aims to process each application promptly.

After obtaining licensure, physicians will be directed to the Department of Health’s [portal](#) for healthcare professionals who are willing and able to support New Jersey’s response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department of Health will work to connect you with opportunities where your skills are most needed. You will need to input your new license number and other basic information into that portal.

If you are interested in joining this fight, read our Frequently Asked Questions below and then [apply here](#).

Q: I hold a medical license in another country. Do I qualify for a temporary emergency license to practice medicine in New Jersey under the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program?

To qualify for a license under the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program you must:

- 1) Reside in the United States;
- 2) Be a United States citizen, legal permanent resident or otherwise legally present and authorized to work in the United States;
- 3) Hold a medical license in good standing in a country other than the United States;
- 4) Have practiced clinical medicine under that license for at least five (5) years during your career;
- 5) Have practiced clinical medicine under that license at some point during the last five (5) years; and
- 6) Limit your practice under your temporary emergency license to providing in-person clinical medical services in a facility licensed by the New Jersey Department of Health, including but not

limited to field hospitals and long-term care facilities, or another location designated as an emergency health care center by the Commissioner of Health.

Q: How is the application process for the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program different from the non-emergency application process for physicians licensed in other countries?

The application process for licensure by the Board of Medical Examiners ordinarily requires foreign licensed physicians to obtain an Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (“ECFMG”) certificate; pass all three steps of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (“USMLE”); have completed two years of an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (“ACGME”) approved residency in their specialty in the United States and have a contract for a third year; undergo a criminal history background check; carry malpractice insurance; and pay a fee.

Under the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program, the Division is waiving the usual application fee, so it is free to apply. The Division also is waiving certain of the ordinary requirements for examination, education, post-graduate education, and medical malpractice insurance coverage.

Instead of the ordinary application, applicants will submit an abbreviated electronic certification containing contact, licensure, practice, and criminal and disciplinary history information. The Division will verify the information submitted and notify each applicant whether their application has been accepted.

Q: How can I apply?

Please [click here](#) to complete an application. You will be required to submit the following and certify its accuracy:

- 1) Your authorization to work in the United States;
- 2) Your license number in a country other than the United States;
- 3) Certification that your license in that country is in good standing;
- 4) Certification that you have held that license and engaged in the clinical practice of medicine for at least five years;
- 5) Certification that you have practiced clinical medicine during the last five years;
- 6) Information about your education, training, work history, and specialty, and whether you hold an ECFMG certificate;
- 7) Your resume or curriculum vitae;
- 8) Information about any criminal history, licensing disciplinary history, and history of complaints, grievances, or malpractice claims involving your practice of medicine;
- 9) Certification that you plan to provide in-person clinical medical services in a facility licensed by the New Jersey Department of Health, including field hospitals and long-term care facilities, or

another location designated as an emergency health care center by the Commissioner of Health;
and

10) Certification that you understand the limited scope and duration of the temporary emergency license.

Q: My license is in suspended status due to a disciplinary order entered in my country of licensure. Can I still participate?

You are not eligible for the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program if your ability to practice is currently restricted in any way in any country where you have been licensed.

In addition, if you have ever been disciplined by the authority that regulates your current medical license or practice of medicine, regardless of whether your ability to practice is currently restricted, you will be required to submit documentation sufficient to indicate the subject, circumstances, and resolution of the matter.

Applicants for the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program are required to submit information that may result in the denial of their application, as a matter of the Division Director's discretion. Such information also may delay the Division's processing of an application.

Q: I have been arrested, charged, or convicted of a crime. Can I still participate?

You may not be eligible for the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program if you have been arrested or convicted of certain crimes in any country. If you have a criminal history and you still wish to have the Board of Medical Examiners consider your application, you will be required to submit documentation sufficient to indicate the subject, circumstances, and resolution of the matter.

Applicants for the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program are required to submit information that may result in the denial of their application as a matter of the Division Director's discretion. Such information also may delay the Division's processing of an application.

Q: How long will it take to get a license, and what will my license look like?

If your application is complete and you qualify for licensure, the Division's goal is to provide you with a license promptly. Your license will come in the form of an email confirmation with a license number stating that your license is active. You will not receive a paper license, but your license number will be displayed as "active" on the Division's licensure look-up system.

Processing may take longer for some applicants than others. This is due in part to the time that it may take to verify information about your education and past medical practice at institutions abroad.

Q: Will I be able to prescribe controlled dangerous substances ("CDS") under the authority of my temporary license?

CDS registration requirements have *not* been waived for holders of licenses issued pursuant to this program, and holding such a license will not qualify individuals to obtain a CDS registration. Therefore, holders of temporary emergency licenses under this program will not be permitted to prescribe controlled dangerous substances.

Q: Will my application for (or participation in) the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program affect my immigration status? Does my current visa allow me to participate?

The Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program does not change federal immigration laws. The Division is not able to address individuals' unique circumstances, so we encourage you to carefully consider whether your individual circumstances will allow you to participate in the program, and how your participation in the program could affect you and your family. The Division recommends that you discuss your options with others who are able to provide you with individualized advice.

Q: I am undocumented. Am I eligible for the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program?

Only individuals who are legally authorized to work in the United States are eligible for the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program.

Q: What are the potential financial consequences of becoming licensed?

Entering practice – on a paid or voluntary basis – may have significant financial consequences for you and your family. These may include, but may not be limited to, consequences affecting your tax obligations, pension, and benefits. The Division is not able to address individuals' unique circumstances, so we encourage you to carefully consider the potential impact on you and your family and to discuss your options with others who are able to provide you with individualized advice.

Q: I don't have medical malpractice liability insurance or other insurance. Should I get coverage?

The Division recommends that you secure suitable insurance, although it is not required as a prerequisite to reactivating your license. Certain healthcare professionals involved in the response to COVID-19 may have some protections from liability under state law, but the protections are limited, and may not cover any of the costs that you incur in defending yourself in litigation.

Q: How long will my license be valid?

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Licenses issued under this program will remain valid until the end of the Public Health Emergency declared by Governor Murphy in Executive Order No. 103. Licensees are also subject to individual disciplinary actions by the Board of Medical Examiners or Division for misconduct or other legal violations. As agreed to by applicants during the application process, those who hold a temporary emergency license are permitted to provide care only in person and in a facility licensed by the New Jersey Department of Health, including field hospitals and long-term care facilities, or another location designated as an emergency health care center by the Commissioner of Health. Therefore, providing medical care outside such a setting may be a basis for a Board or Division disciplinary action.

Q: Will the Division arrange for employment or volunteer opportunities?

Physicians licensed under the Temporary Emergency Foreign Physician Licensure Program are expected to provide in-person clinical medical services in a facility licensed by the New Jersey Department of Health, including but not limited to field hospitals or long-term care facilities, or another location designated as an emergency health care center by the Commissioner of Health.

Neither the Division of Consumer Affairs nor the Board of Medical Examiners is arranging for employment or volunteer opportunities. However, the Department of Health has created a portal to match providers with opportunities to support the State's response to COVID-19. After obtaining your license, be sure to visit the Department of Health's portal for interested healthcare professionals [here](#).