

Actively Engaged Requirements for Registration

INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) has the authority under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to carry out its activities and govern Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)¹ in a manner that protects and serves the public interest. The CLPNA carries out its responsibility to protect the public by ensuring that LPNs meet the practice requirements under the HPA and the *Licensed Practical Nurses Profession Regulation* (LPN Regulation).

LPNs are responsible for adhering to the CLPNA's policy documents, including their standards of practice and *Code of Ethics of Licensed Practical Nurses* (Code of Ethics).

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the criteria for meeting the actively engaged requirements under section 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation and applies to LPNs or applicants who meet the requirements for general registration with the CLPNA.

This policy does not apply to:

- applicants who have graduated from an Alberta practical nursing diploma program less than four years ago;
- applicants who have completed a refresher program approved by the Council within the previous four years; or
- labour mobility applicants (individuals who hold a current practical nursing registration in another Canadian jurisdiction).

Note: An applicant is an individual seeking general registration with the CLPNA who is working to meet the requirements set by the regulatory college.

¹ In this document, "LPN(s)" has the same meaning as "regulated member(s)" in the *Health Professions Act*.

POLICY

Applicants and current LPNs must be able to demonstrate being actively engaged in the LPN profession as one of the requirements to obtain a practice permit for initial registration or to renew a practice permit for the upcoming year.

The “actively engaged” requirement is commonly referred to as a “practice hour” requirement. The actively engaged criteria outlined in this policy are also used for the *Standards of Practice on the Continuing Competence Program*.

Application Requirements

Applicants must demonstrate that they meet specific assessment criteria to be considered for registration as actively engaged LPNs. Section 3 of the LPN Regulation sets out the requirements for registration on the general register. Section 9 of the same regulation allows applicants not registered in a Canadian jurisdiction to meet the general register requirements through a substantial equivalence competence assessment, provided their qualifications are deemed substantially equivalent to the competence requirements in section 3 of the LPN Regulation.

Application Assessments

Section 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation stipulates that for an applicant to be registered, they are required to “have been actively engaged in the practice of practical nursing in accordance with criteria approved by the Council.” These criteria apply to all new applications, except for labour mobility applications, who are assessed under the *Labour Mobility Act*. Renewal applications are evaluated according to section 40(1)(b)(i) of the HPA and the *Standards of Practice on the Continuing Competence Program*.

Actively Engaged Criteria

“Actively engaged” means the individual has regularly provided practical nursing services to clients and non-family members. Practical nursing services encompass both direct nursing practice and roles that are linked to administration, leadership, education, and research. They are outlined in schedule 10, section 3 of the HPA:

“In their practice, licensed practical nurses do one or more of the following:

- (a) apply nursing knowledge, skills, and judgment to assess clients’ needs;
- (b) provide nursing care for clients and families;
 - (b.1) teach, manage, and conduct research in the science, techniques, and practice of nursing;
 - and
- (c) provide restricted activities authorized by the regulations.”

As long as the individual is providing these services within their role, the LPN can count the hours as part of their initial application or registration renewal. However, when an LPN is on call and not providing professional services or is on a leave of absence (e.g., sickness, vacation, and maternity/parental leave), these hours would not be included in the total number of hours worked during a registration year. The Council has approved the following criteria to be considered by the Registrar when determining whether an individual has been actively engaged.

The applicant has:

- (a) competently provided one or more of the nursing services as described under section 3 of schedule 10 in the HPA;
- (b) provided nursing services to clients and non-family members; and
- (c) achieved a minimum of 1,000 practice hours or “other equivalent practice experience” within the last four registration years, whether paid or voluntary.

For applications considered under section 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation, other equivalent practice experience includes successful completion of a Council-approved examination and/or education relevant to an LPN’s nursing practice. For education to be considered relevant, it must be formal education that can reasonably be linked to their nursing practice.

If an applicant does not have a minimum of 1,000 practice hours within the last four registration years but has completed an equivalent number of relevant education hours or a combination of practice and education hours that totals 1,000 hours, they may be considered to be actively engaged under section 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation.

Satisfying the criteria stated above means that the applicant has been actively engaged; however, this is only part of the requirements for registration or reinstatement. The CLPNA will also consider other requirements in the HPA, LPN Regulation, and the CLPNA’s Bylaws (e.g., good character, English language abilities) to determine eligibility for registration or renewal. If an applicant has applied for and/or is being considered for a provisional or courtesy registration, they must also meet the requirements for those specific registration categories.

Under section 31 of the HPA, if an applicant is denied a practice permit, they can request a review of the decision within 30 days of the letter being issued by the CLPNA. A fee may be charged for a review of the decision.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the practice hour requirement may be considered in extraordinary circumstances. For example, where the applicant or LPN can demonstrate:

- (a) that they have a characteristic protected from discrimination under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*,² and
- (b) the protected characteristic contributed to their inability to meet the actively engaged requirements.

Where the applicant or LPN can substantiate evidence of an adverse impact connected to a protected characteristic, the CLPNA will accommodate the application to the point of undue hardship, which may include approving the application despite the applicant or LPN not meeting the actively engaged criteria or approving the application subject to conditions. Where there is a significant shortfall in meeting the requirement, it may create a public safety concern, in which case the applicant may not be eligible for registration or renewal.

The CLPNA may request additional information about why an applicant was unable to meet the practice hour requirement. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis to determine whether an accommodation can be made.

CONCLUSION

This document clarifies the CLPNA's interpretation of the "actively engaged" requirement under section 3(2)(c) of the LPN Regulation. It outlines what activities count as professional services and situations when exceptions can occur.

Documents are updated frequently. For access to the most current version of related documents and resources, please visit the Knowledge Hub on registration@clpna.com.

If you have any questions, please contact the Registration Department, on the website, using [Ask CLPNA](#) under the "Contact" tab, or by phone at 780-484-8886 or 1-800-661-5877 (toll free in Alberta).

² [Alberta Human Rights Act](#)