

**STATE OF UTAH**  
**DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING**

**MANUAL FOR NURSING EDUCATION**  
**PROGRAM APPROVAL**

**INTRODUCTION:**

Nursing education programs in Utah are required by statute (58-31b-601) to have initial and continuing approval from the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing (DOPL) in collaboration with the Utah Board of Nursing. The purpose of this manual is to present guidelines for nursing education program proposal development. The guidelines are designed to facilitate an effective and efficient process of decision making with regard to the approval of a proposed new nursing program. A three-step process is presented.

**STEP 1: LETTER OF INTENT**

Provide a complete written notification to DOPL a **minimum of one year prior** to the anticipated start-up date.

A LETTER OF INTENT to request provisional approval of a new nursing education program must contain the following elements:

**Feasibility Study**

The proposal for a new nursing education program and satellite extensions of existing programs should include the results of a feasibility study to assess program need and resources. The feasibility study should incorporate data and documentation from parent institution administration, external constituencies, consumers, and prospective faculty and students. The geographic area to be served should be clearly delineated.

The feasibility study should include the following:

1. Results of a needs assessment including identification of potential students and employment opportunities for graduates. Be specific to the state of Utah; don't just quote national trends or articles.
2. Documentation of community support for the proposed program.
3. The primary geographical area to be served by the proposed program.
4. The impact of the proposed program on the health care delivery system within the geographical area to be served.

5. An explanation of whether the proposed program overlaps the roles and responsibilities of another nursing program in the same geographical area.
6. Evidence of internal and external supports for the proposed program including financial, physical and human resources, clinical facilities, adequacy of potential experiences, and nurse mentors.
7. Documentation of the relationship of the proposed program to other programs in the parent institution. What other health-related programs are available at the school?
8. Documentation of the organizational structure of the proposed program and how it will articulate with the parent institution. Evidence of the parent institution's approval and support.
9. Who will provide the prerequisite and/or support courses for the proposed program?

## **STEP 2: PROPOSED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND CURRICULUM**

Provide notification to DOPL with complete written program description and proposed curriculum with relevant documentation, a minimum of **nine months prior** to the anticipated provisional approval and start-up date. DOPL reserves the right to return any documentation in Step 2 that is not complete.

### **Program Description**

With regard to the proposed nursing education program provide evidence of the following data:

1. The purpose and outcomes of the proposed nursing program are consistent with the Nurse Practice Act and Rules and other relevant state statutes.
2. The program meets the criteria for nursing education programs established in Section R156-31b-601 and 603.
3. The nursing education program is an integral part of a governing academic institution accredited by an accrediting body that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
4. The purpose and outcomes of the nursing program are consistent with generally accepted standards of nursing practice appropriate for graduates of the type of nursing program proposed.
5. The input of consumers has been considered in developing and evaluating the purpose and outcomes of the program.

6. The curriculum provides diverse didactic and clinical learning experiences consistent with the proposed program outcomes.
7. The qualifications of the nursing program administrator are clearly identified and articulated.
8. The qualifications for the nursing program administrator meet the requirements established in Subsection R156-31b-603(5).
9. Professionally and academically qualified nurse faculty are sufficient in number and expertise to accomplish program outcomes and quality improvement, the qualifications and numbers of faculty to accomplish program outcomes are clearly identified and articulated.
10. The qualifications for nursing faculty meet the requirements established in Subsection R156-31b-603(6).
11. The fiscal, human, physical, clinical and technical learning resources shall be adequate to support the program processes, security and outcomes.
12. Program information communicated by the nursing program shall be fair accurate, complete, consistent and readily available.
13. The program provides adequate supervised clinical practice which include development of skill in making clinical judgments, management and care of groups of clients, and delegation to and supervision of other health care providers.
14. The clinical experience shall be comprised of sufficient hours to meet these standards, shall be supervised by qualified faculty and ensure students' ability to practice at an entry level – faculty to student ratio in the clinical sites will be 1:10, except for the final capstone course which may utilize preceptors and be supervised by clinical faculty at a ratio of 1:15. The preceptors in the capstone course may only precept one student at any given time.
15. What nursing accrediting body will the program seek accreditation through, who has been appointed to be a mentor for accreditation purposes for the program?

### **Proposed Curriculum**

With regard to the proposed curriculum provide evidence of documenting the following:

1. The curriculum meets the standards established in Subsection R156-31b-603(3).
2. The curriculum of the nursing education program enables the student to develop the nursing knowledge, skills, and competences necessary for the level, scope and standards of nursing practice consistent with the level of licensure.

3. Faculty are adequately prepare to teach at the level of the program and are of sufficient number to ensure a 1:10 teacher/student ratio in the clinical setting – curriculum vitas shall be submitted for all faculty who have been hired, or who have accepted an offer of employment.
4. Adjunct clinical faculty employed solely to supervise clinical nursing experiences of students meet all the faculty qualifications for the program level they are teaching.
5. Clinical preceptors have demonstrated competencies related to the area of assigned clinical teaching responsibilities and will serve as a role model and educator to the student. Clinical preceptors may be used to enhance faculty-directed clinical learning experiences after a student has received clinical and didactic instruction in all basic areas for that course or specific learning experience. Clinical preceptors are licensed as a nurse at or above the level for which the student is preparing.
6. The nursing program implements a comprehensive, systematic plan for ongoing evaluation that is based on program outcomes and incorporates continuous improvement.
7. Faculty and students participate in program planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

Attach sample copies of the proposed program mission, philosophy, outcomes, curriculum plan (including prerequisite and nursing courses), sample nursing course syllabi and evaluation model.

### **Provisional Approval – Transfer of Credit Disclaimer**

An applicant accepted into a DOPL/Board of Nursing provisionally approve nursing education program must sign a disclaimer form indicating his/her knowledge of the provisional approval status of the program, and the lack of a guarantee that the program will achieve national nursing accreditation and full DOPL/Board of Nursing approval. The disclaimer must also contain a statement regarding the lack of a guarantee that the credit received from the provisionally approved program will be accepted or transferred by another educational facility. A sample disclaimer form can be found at the end of this manual.

### **STEP 3: SITE VISIT AND PRE-ACCREDITATION STATUS**

At the discretion of DOPL and the Board, a site visit will be conducted for the purpose of validating or clarifying the information contained in the Proposal. Guidelines for the site visit will be communicated to the institution should a site visit be deemed appropriate by DOPL and the Board.

A nursing education program that will be seeking accreditation from the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) must document pre-accreditation status before provisional approval will be granted by DOPL/Board of Nursing.

**ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

1. **Fees:**

- The educational program approval and initial site visit fee is **\$500.00**.
- The educational program approval and follow-up site visit fee is **\$250.00**.

2. **Laws and Rules:** The following applicable laws and rules are available on the Internet at [www.dopl.utah.gov](http://www.dopl.utah.gov):

- Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing Act
- General Rules of the Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing
- Nurse Practice Act
- Nurse Practice Act Rules

3. **Current Documents:** Applications, statutes, rules, and forms are occasionally changed. Go to [www.dopl.utah.gov](http://www.dopl.utah.gov) to ensure you have the most recent version of these documents.

4. **Minimum standards for nursing programs - Approval of nursing education programs - Unlawful conduct of nursing education program:** Available in section 58-31b-601 of the Utah Nurse Practice Act and sections R156-61b-601, 602, 603, 604, 605, and 606 of the Utah Nurse Practice Act Rules.

5. **Mail Complete Application to:**

**By U.S. Mail**

Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing  
Attn: Laura Poe  
P.O. Box 146741  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-6741

**By Delivery or Express Mail**

Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing  
Attn: Laura Poe  
160 East 300 South, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Lobby  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

6. **Telephone Numbers:** (801) 530-6789  
(866) 275-3675 – Toll-free in Utah

7. **Fax Number:** (801) 530-6511

**PROVISIONAL APPROVAL DISCLAIMER  
AND  
TRANSFERABILITY OF CREDITS DISCLAIMER**

**Nursing Education Program Provisional Approval**

The Utah Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing (DOPL) and Board of Nursing have provisionally approved the “X” Nursing Program.

Subsection R156-31b-602(3), Nursing Education Program Provisional Approval, of the Nurse Practice Act Rules, defines provisional approval as follows:

- (3) The division may grant provisional approval status to a nursing education program for a period not to exceed two years after the date of the first graduating class, provided the program:
- (a) is located or available within the state;
  - (b) is newly organized;
  - (c) meets all standards established in Sections R156-31b-601 and 603; and
  - (d) is progressing in a timely manner to qualify for full approval by obtaining accreditation from a nurse accrediting body.

Circumstances may occur that would prevent “X” Nursing Program from delivering a complete program of study under the “Provisional Approval” provided by DOPL/Board of Nursing.

“X” Nursing Program is seeking initial accreditation from the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). There is no guarantee that this program will achieve full NLNAC or CCNE accreditation.

**TRANSFER OF CREDIT**

Transferability of “X” Nursing Program Credit is at the discretion of the receiving institution and “X” Nursing Program makes no guarantees of transferability.

Transfer applicants wishing to apply for transfer credit into the Nursing Program must provide transcripts with the application. Transfer credit will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and credit will be awarded based on transcripts and proof of applicable course content (Transcript and syllabi).

Transfer credit will be considered only if prior credit was awarded by an institution that is accredited by an agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE).