



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Education**

September 18, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Virginia Board of Nursing Criminal Background Check Requirements**

As enacted by the 2015 Virginia General Assembly, effective January 1, 2016, the Virginia Board of Nursing shall require each applicant for licensure as a Registered Nurse (RN) and Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to submit a complete fingerprint-based criminal background check (CBC) to be processed at both state and federal levels. For more details refer to [Virginia Code § 54.1-3005.1](#). Further, the Virginia Board of Nursing requires the criminal background check to be completed by all applicants prior to taking the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), seeking endorsement, or reinstatement for the following reasons:

- First and foremost, the mission of the Virginia Board of Nursing is to protect the public.
- Second, while applicants are required to self-disclose criminal conviction histories, the Board has found that these self-reports are not always reliable. Since nurses are in a position of public trust in caring for sick and vulnerable patients, the Board of Nursing must ensure they are aware of all convictions of applicants.
- Third, the commonwealth of Virginia is one of twenty-four current participants in the [Nurse Licensure Compact \(NLC\)](#) which allows for nurses to practice in all 24 states on a multistate privilege authorized by their home state or base license. The NLC's goal is to remain consistent among all member states.

The Board of Nursing is encouraging nursing educators to provide this information to high school students, especially those students graduating in December 2015, as they will be the first cohort affected.

Under a separate cover, this information will be provided to career and technical education administrators and nurse aide program directors to ensure that all programs are in compliance.

If you have any questions, please contact Michele R. Green-Wright, specialist for health and medical sciences and related clusters, Office of Career and Technical Education, at [CTE@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:CTE@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone at (804) 225-3119.

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Links:

- [Career & Technical Education \(CTE\) - Health & Medical Sciences](#)
- [CTE Program Administration & Management](#)
- [Nurse Licensure Compact \(NLC\)](#)

