

Gov. Evers Relaxes Health Care Provider Licensing Requirements

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On Friday, March 27th, Governor Evers and Wisconsin Department of Health Services (“DHS”) Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm signed Emergency Order #16 relaxing a variety of licensing requirements and administrative hurdles health care practitioners typically face before practicing in the State of Wisconsin. Below is a summary of the major provisions of the order.

- **Interstate Reciprocity.** Certain practitioners with valid, current licenses in other states may practice in Wisconsin under such license without first obtaining a license from the Department of Safety and Professional Services (“DSPS”). This interstate reciprocity applies to a variety of professional licenses including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, respiratory care practitioners, perfusionists, physician assistants, and more. Additional conditions are placed on the reciprocity including that the practice must be necessary for an identified health care facility to continue to safely deliver health care services and that the practitioner must notify DSPS within 5 days of first practicing within Wisconsin and must apply for a temporary or permanent license within 10 days of first practicing within Wisconsin.
- **Out-of-State Physician Telemedicine.** Physicians providing treatment within Wisconsin via telemedicine need not be licensed by the Wisconsin Medical Examining Board provided any such physician has a valid license issued by another state or by Canada; is not under investigation; and does not have any restrictions or limitations placed on their license by any state or jurisdiction.
- **Physician Assistants.** Physician Assistants (“PAs”) ordinarily may not practice beyond the expertise of a supervising physician or podiatrist. Also, PAs ordinarily may not delegate a task assigned by a physician or podiatrist to another health care professional. The order suspends both of these restrictions and directs PAs to practice and delegate to the extent of their experience, education, training, and capabilities. The order also doubles the number of PAs that a physician or podiatrist may supervise at any one time, increasing the number from 4 to 8 on-duty PAs.
- **Nurses.** The order extends the duration of temporary nursing licenses until the end of the emergency or 6 months after availability of NCLEX and extends the time limit for renewing an existing license.
- **Recently Lapsed Licenses.** The order directs DSPS to identify providers with recently lapsed licenses and to work with DHS to coordinate outreach regarding renewal options. The order lifts various licensing requirements including continuing education credit requirements, renewal fees, and more for a number of different licensed professions including physicians, psychologists, pharmacists, and more.

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