



EXPANDING THE ROLE OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS IN CALIFORNIA

Physician Oversight in Other States

Twenty-eight states and the District of Columbia grant nurse practitioners (NPs) full practice authority, allowing them to practice and prescribe without formal physician supervision. California requires that nurse practitioners have a written collaboration agreement with a physician and is the only western state to have a requirement for physician oversight.

Most states with full practice authority for NPs allow them to practice without formal oversight immediately upon licensure. These states are Alaska, Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, plus the District of Columbia. Fourteen states with full practice authority require that NPs practice in collaboration with physicians or experienced NPs for a transitional period before they are allowed to practice and prescribe without formal oversight. Utah offers full practice authority upon licensure with the exception of prescribing Schedule II medications, for which the NP is required to have a consultation and referral plan with a physician for the first 2,000 hours of clinical practice or two years, whichever occurs first.

Summary of transitional oversight requirements:

- ▶ Among the 14 states with transitional oversight requirements, 7 have an oversight period of up to two years and/or 2,080 hours.
 - ▶ 5 states require oversight for more than 2,080 hours and/or for two to three years.
 - ▶ 2 states require oversight for five years and 9,000 hours.
- ▶ 7 of the states allow an experienced NP to provide formal oversight for a newly licensed NP.
- ▶ 8 states require that the transitional collaboration be formally documented and submitted to the state board that oversees NPs.
- ▶ 10 states require that a form be submitted to the state board to transition to full practice authority.
 - ▶ Documentation of collaborative hours does not require an overseeing physician or NP cosignatory in 3 states.
- ▶ 4 states do not require any application or submission to the board to transition to full practice authority.
- ▶ 1 state continues collaboration requirements for scheduled drugs after the transitional period to full practice authority is completed.

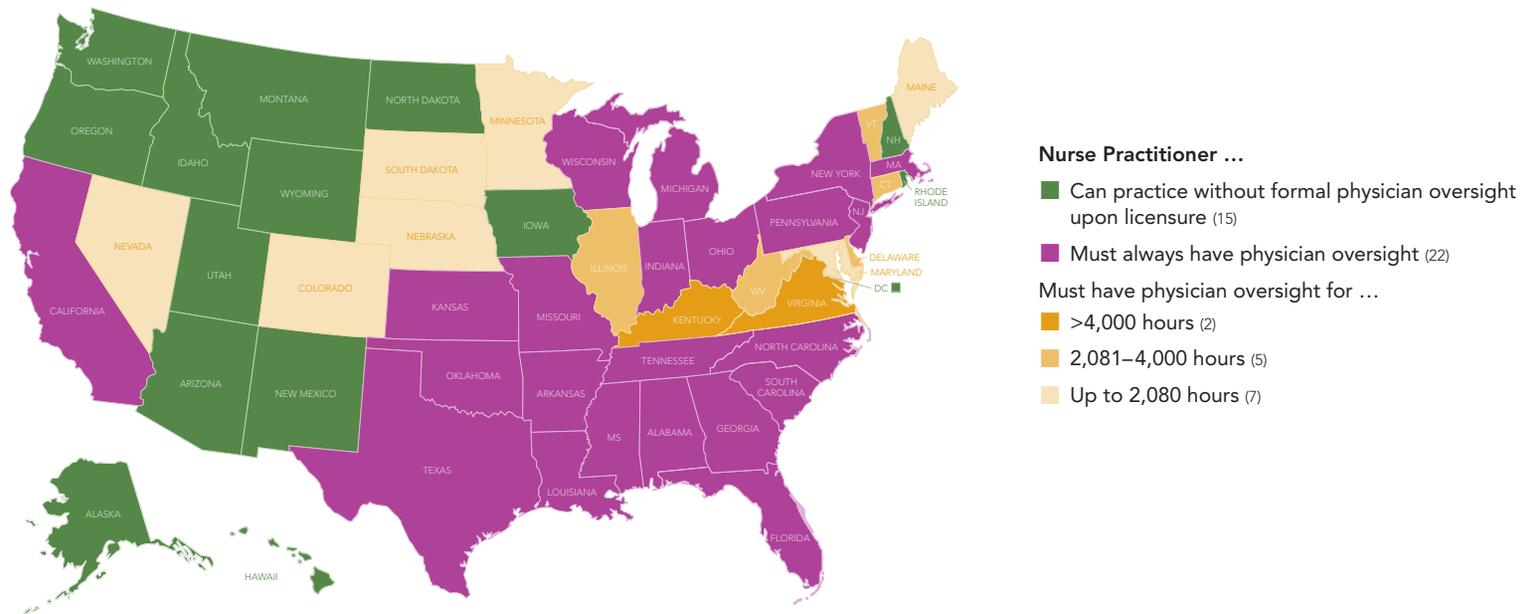
Table 1. Oversight Requirements for Nurse Practitioners to Advance to Full Practice Authority in Selected States

	TIME PERIOD	TYPES OF OVERSIGHT PROFESSIONALS	SPECIFICATIONS	PROCESS TO ADVANCE TO PRACTICE WITHOUT PHYSICIAN COLLABORATION/OVERSIGHT
Colorado	1,000 hours to obtain full prescriptive authority	Physician or prescribing NP	Mutually structured mentorship; no written agreement is specified.	When NP applies for prescriptive authority, the overseeing physician or NP attests that 1,000 hours have been completed. NP must develop and annually update a written "Articulated Plan" for safe prescribing.
Connecticut	Three years and 2,000 hours	Physician	For prescribing, a formal written collaborative agreement is maintained by the practice.	Must have documentation of having practiced for three years and 2,000 hours in collaboration with a physician and submit a notification of intent to practice without a collaborative agreement (signed only by the NP). NP must provide documentation of prior collaboration upon request for three years after ending the collaboration period.
Delaware	Two years and 4,000 hours	Physician	Formal signed collaboration form submitted to the state board.	Must submit written evidence of completion of hours and resubmit the written collaboration form; collaborating physician must complete form on Verification of Experience and Competency.
Illinois	4,000 hours	Physician	Formal written collaborative agreement maintained by the practice.	NP must complete 250 hours of continuing education, and clinical experience must be attested to by the NP and the collaborating physician or chair of the hospital accrediting committee. NP will receive a new "independent" license.
Kentucky	Four years	Physician	Formal signed collaboration form submitted to the state board.	NP automatically permitted to prescribe non-scheduled medications after four years of collaboration. NP must always have a specific collaboration to prescribe scheduled medications.
Maine	24 months	Physician or NP	Formal signed collaboration form submitted to the state board.	Supervising physician or nurse practitioner submits documentation of completion of the supervision requirement to the board. The NP then is issued a letteran "independent letter" that does not contain the 24-month supervisory clause.This is called the "independent letter."
Maryland	18 months	Physician or NP with three or more years of clinical experience	Mentor is named in the application for NP license.	NPs are automatically permitted to practice without a collaborative agreement after 18 months; no additional paperwork is required.
Minnesota	2,080 hours	Physician, NP, or CNS who provides care to patients with same or similar medical problems	Mutually agreed upon plan for the working relationship within a hospital or integrated clinical setting in which NPs and physicians work together.	NPs submit a Post-Graduate Practice Verification form, which is signed by a collaborating physician/NP, to verify completion of the 2,080 hours.
Nebraska	2,000 hours	Physician or NP	Formal signed collaboration form submitted with license application. Supervising NPs must have 10,000 hours of practice before serving as a supervisor.	No documents are filed when the supervision period ends.
Nevada	Two years or 2,000 hours to prescribe Schedule II	Physician	Formal written collaborative agreement maintained by the practice.	NPs are automatically permitted to practice without a collaborative agreement after two years or 2,000 hours; no additional paperwork is required.

Table 1. Oversight Requirements for Nurse Practitioners to Advance to Full Practice Authority in Selected States, *continued*

	TIME PERIOD	TYPES OF OVERSIGHT PROFESSIONALS	SPECIFICATIONS	PROCESS TO ADVANCE TO PRACTICE WITHOUT PHYSICIAN COLLABORATION/OVERSIGHT
South Dakota	1,040 hours	Physician or NP	Formal signed collaboration form submitted to the state board.	NP must submit a verification form to document the 1,040 hours. The form is signed by a representative of the NP’s employer.
Vermont	24 months and 2,400 hours	Physician or NP	Formal signed collaboration form submitted to the state board.	After completion of required collaboration hours, the NP submits an Attestation Form, which is signed only by the NP.
Virginia	Five years and 9,000 hours	Physician	Written or electronic agreement maintained by the practice.	After completion of required supervised hours, the NP submits one or more attestations, signed by the NP and the NP’s patient care team physician, specifying the hours of supervised practice completed. The autonomous NP must establish a plan for referral of complex medical cases and emergencies to physicians or other appropriate health care providers.
West Virginia	Three years	Physician	Formal signed collaboration form submitted to the state board.	NP must complete three years of supervised prescribing and complete additional education requirements in “pharmacology and clinical management of drug therapy.” Form for dissolving collaborative agreement, and a form regarding a change in prescriptive authority must be submitted.

Figure 1. Nurse Practitioner’s Level of Oversight Required, by State



Source (Table 1 and Figure 1): Author review of individual state Board of Nursing websites.

ABOUT THIS SERIES

This fact sheet is one of a series that examines the scope of practice of nurse practitioners (NPs) in California. Scope of practice laws establish the legal framework that controls the delivery of medical services.

In February 2019, the **California Future Health Workforce Commission** released a plan to address the state's shortages of primary care and behavioral health providers. One of the Commission's top recommendations was to maximize the role of nurse practitioners (NPs) and to expand their practice authority. California is one of 22 states — and the only western state — that restricts NPs by requiring them to work with physician oversight.

To see other publications in this series, visit www.chcf.org/npscope.

About the Author

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