

BOARD PREPARES FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS ON RENEWAL

The mission of the Nevada State Board of Nursing is to protect the public's health, safety and welfare through effective regulation of nursing. This mission is at the core of all Board policies and steers the decision making process. One of the many ways the mission is supported is during both initial and renewal processing of applications for licensure/certification (licensure).

In 1994, the Board began fingerprinting all initial applicants for licensure for criminal background checks. In addition, all nurses and nursing assistants must answer the following screening question on initial and renewal applications submitted to the Board: "Have you ever (or, Since your last renewal have you...) had a criminal conviction, including a misdemeanor or felony, or had a civil judgment rendered against you?" Statistics suggest that during the past five years statistics approximately 10% of all initial nurse applicants, and 22% of all initial CNA applicants have a positive criminal background. These are the known numbers based on the criminal background results and self-reports to the Board. How many applicants should be reporting positive criminal backgrounds on renewal applications is a question that up to now cannot be answered. Beginning in approximately September 2010, the Board will require renewal applicants identified by the Board to complete a criminal background. The Board will begin with those who were initially licensed/certified by the Board prior to January 1, 2000. However, eventually all renewal applicants will be subject to criminal background checks periodically as directed by the Board. Please review the following questions and answers for more details.

How will I know I need to fingerprint for the Board?

Board staff will send a notice to your address of record.

But if I don't receive a notice, how will I know I need to do this?

You must check the Board's on-line license verification system at www.nursingBoard.state.nv.us. If your license or certificate was only renewed for six-months, you should contact the Board immediately for further instructions and information.

Will my license or certificate remain active during this process?

Your license or certificate will only be renewed for six months to allow for processing of the criminal background report. Fingerprint immediately when noticed to avoid a lapse.

Can I ask for an extension of the six-month renewal?

No. The six-month renewal will not be extended except under **very** limited and restricted circumstances.

Can I just submit my fingerprints now and be done with this requirement?

No. We want to ensure that each applicant is given adequate time for the Criminal History Repository and the FBI to complete the report, and for Board staff to receive and process the information. As such, only those identified by the Board will be accepted to complete this requirement.

What if I realize now that I did not answer the question regarding criminal convictions correctly on previous applications?

The Board will review each criminal background to determine if there has been a violation of the Nevada Nurse Practice Act that may subject the applicant to discipline. The following documents must be submitted to the Board:

- Copies of all court documents to include what you were charged with, what you were found guilty of, or pled guilty or no contest to, and the court requirements you had to complete and evidence that you completed them;
- A letter from your parole officer if applicable;
- A **detailed** (who, what, where, when, why) letter of explanation regarding the arrest, the conviction and court outcome; and
- A letter of reference from your current or last employer.

Do I need to come to a Board office to complete my fingerprints?

No, but you must have your fingerprints completed utilizing the code numbers provided by the Board. You may go to any provider authorized to submit fingerprints to the Department of Public Safety. It is strongly recommended that whenever possible you choose a site that has the ability to submit your fingerprints by LiveScan. To see a list of private and law enforcement fingerprint sites visit www.nvrepository.state.nv.us/fingerprints.shtml.

Who pays for the cost of processing fingerprints?

All fingerprint fees are the responsibility of the licensee/certificate holder. Fees for electronic submission of fingerprints vary by site. There is a total fee of \$50 for prints captured electronically at a Board office. Fingerprint fees for hard cards submitted to the Board for processing are \$51.25.