

TENNESSEE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

665 Mainstream Drive, Nashville, TN 37243

Licensure Regulation Questions

Q: How do I renew my license?

A: You can renew online or by paper renewal application. To renew online, please visit <https://apps.tn.gov/hlrs/>. To renew using the paper renewal application you receive in the mail, please complete the paper renewal application and return it along with the required renewal fee to the address specified on the renewal notice. If you lose the paper application you received in the mail, you can contact us at 615-532-4384 for a generic renewal notice to be e-mailed to you.

Approximately ninety (90) days in advance of your expiration date, you will receive a paper or electronic renewal notice notifying you of your upcoming expiration. Individuals who are “opted in” to receive electronic notifications from our office will receive the notification at the email address you provided on your application. Licensees who did not opt in will receive a paper renewal notice.

Renewals must be successfully processed by your expiration date. An incomplete renewal application, incomplete payment, or otherwise a hold on the renewal will delay successful processing. Starting the day after your expiration date, a late renewal fee will be imposed, and your licensure status will change to lapsed on the public facing licensure verification page.

Q: I have a professional privilege tax hold on my license, preventing renewal, how do I clear this hold?

A: You must contact the Tennessee Department of Revenue, pay any professional privilege tax fees owed, and request a Tax Clearance Letter. You may obtain a copy of that letter and send it to us at medical.health@tn.gov. A receipt of tax payment **will not** clear your tax hold. We must receive the Tax Clearance Letter to remove the hold. Your renewal will not be processed until the hold is clear. Thus, you could be subject to the late renewal fee.

Q: I am trying to pay my late renewal fee online and it is not accepting my payment. How do I pay the late fee?

A: The online system will only accept one payment. Thus, if you already paid for your renewal online then you cannot pay for the late fee online. You must send a check or money order written to the TN Department of Health to our address: TN Board of Medical Examiners, 665 Mainstream Dr., Nashville, TN 37243.

Q: My license is due to renew, where do I send proof of my continuing medical education?

A: The Board is not a records keeper of your continuing medical education. You will only be requested to send in continuing medical education proof if you are randomly selected for an audit after renewing your license.

Q: What happens if I failed to meet the required continuing medical education hours?

A: The Board may conduct a continuing education audit of any licensee after the licensee renews. Upon receipt of the audit notice, if you fail to provide the required continuing medical education then the Board's administrative office will enforce the Board's policy on continuing education:

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/healthprofboards/medicalexaminers/ME_CE_Policy_110320.pdf

Q: How many total hours of continuing education am I required to complete each renewal cycle?

A: All medical doctors must complete forty (40) hours during the twenty-four (24) months that precede licensure renewal. Unless statutorily exempted under TCA 63-1-402(c), all licensees shall complete a minimum of two (2) hours in continuing medical education related to controlled substances prescribing, which must be Tennessee specific thus including instruction in the Department's treatment guidelines on opioids, benzodiazepines, barbiturates, and carisoprodol and may include topics such as medicine addiction, risk management tools, and other topics approved by the Board.

Example: If your medical license is set to expire on October 31, 2022, forty hours of CME must be completed between November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2022 and prior to your renewal application being submitted.

Q: How do I know whether a particular course is acceptable to the Board?

A: The continuing medical education hours must be awarded by an organization accredited as a sponsor of continuing medical education by the ACCME, and hours must be designated as meeting the criteria for AMA Cat 1, AAFP Prescribed, or AOA Prescribed credits.

Q: How do I file a complaint on a physician?

A: Contact the Bureau of Investigations at 1-800-852-2187; 615-532-3421

<https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/health-professional-boards/report-a-concern.html>

Q: How do I request a duplicate of my certificate?

A: You can request a duplicate certificate after logging into your online account here:

<https://apps.tn.gov/hlrs/>. From a drop down on the main menu, select Request a Duplicate Renewal Certificate or Duplicate Wall Certificate. The Duplicate Renewal Certificate will be a duplicate of the small certificate with your expiration date on it and is free. The Duplicate Wall Certificate will be a duplicate of the large brown certificate, and costs \$25. The certificate(s) will print and be mailed to the mailing address we have on file. For security purposes, we cannot provide an electronic copy of your license.

Q: I am retiring from the practice of medicine. What should I do?

A: You may retire your medical license with the submission of an affidavit of retirement. You may access the affidavit here: <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/PH3460.pdf>. There is no fee to retire your license; however, should you seek to reinstate your license at a later date, the Board may require that you submit evidence that you have maintained your clinical competency. If you are retired from clinical practice for more than two years, you will be subjected to the Board's reentry policy.

Q: I am struggling with an illness or impairment (such as substance use disorder, anxiety, depression, etc.) that I fear may be or may soon be impeding my practice of medicine. Can I get help from a trusted, confidential source?

A: Yes, if you are struggling and need assistance, please contact the Tennessee Medical Foundation (TMF) today. The TMF conducts Tennessee's Peer Assistance Program and exists to assist practitioners with chemical dependency, psychological and physiological conditions that may impair their ability to safely practice medicine. Your contact with the TMF is not reported to the Board and does not become a part of your licensure file. The TMF will consult with you regarding your specific concerns and/or condition(s) and will likely recommend that you submit to an evaluation. That evaluation is intended to determine a diagnosis and if indicated, a treatment plan. This entire process can be carried out confidentially.

Tennessee Medical Foundation
(615) 467-6411
5141 Virginia Way, Suite 110
Brentwood, TN 37027

Q: I suspect that a physician in my life (spouse, friend, colleague, coworker) may be struggling with an illness or impairment (such as substance use disorder, anxiety, depression, etc.) that may be or may soon be impeding his or her practice of medicine. How can I help?

A: Yes, if you are the spouse, friend, colleague or otherwise significant other of a physician that is struggling with an illness please contact the Tennessee Medical Foundation (TMF) to get assistance in how best to handle this problem. It is imperative that this occur as soon as it is realized the physician is struggling so the safety and effectiveness of the medical care that he or she is providing is not compromised. Treating illness early in the process provides the best chance for a good result. Whereas any delay in treatment allows overt impairment to manifest in the physician's work, putting all at risk. Referral of the physician to the TMF is not reported to the Board unless patient harm has occurred. The TMF will do an initial assessment of the physician and will likely recommend a full evaluation which is intended to determine a diagnosis and if indicated a treatment plan. This entire process can be confidential.

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Q: Can I supervise an APRN and/or PA's prescribing of controlled substances if I myself do not have a DEA registration.

A: No, you may not delegate authority that you yourself do not have.

Q: I supervise APRNs and/or PAs. What administrative responsibilities do I have?

A: First, you must jointly develop protocols with your supervisee. The protocols must satisfy the following requirements:

- 1) It must be reviewed and updated biennially;
- 2) It must cover the applicable standard of care;
- 3) It must be maintained at the practice site;
- 4) It must be made available to the Department of Health upon request;
- 5) It must specify the classes of drugs that may be prescribed by the PA/APRN; and
- 6) It must be specific to the population seen.

You must also complete and sign the Attachment 4 and 5 if you are supervising a PA, or a Notice and Formulary if you are supervising an APRN. These documents identify you as the supervising physician

and specify the area in which the PA or APRN will be practicing, as well as the bounds of the supervisee's prescribing authority. If your supervisee will be prescribing controlled substances and is registered in the Controlled Substance Monitoring Database (CSMD), you must also confirm your supervisory relationship in the CSMD.

Additional supervisory relationship information can be found on our other FAQs/Instructions:

Supervision FAQs: https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/SUPERVISION_FAQs.pdf

Reviewing or Modify a Supervisory Request in LARS account:

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/Reviewing_a_Supervisory_Request.pdf

Reviewing & Approving a Supervisory Request in CSMD:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/SupervisorInstructionToApproveRelationships-20150209.pdf>

Application Processing Questions

Q: I allowed my Tennessee medical license to lapse. How do I reactivate my license?

A: If you have an expired Tennessee medical license and wish to return to practice in Tennessee, you must submit an application for reinstatement. That application is available here:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/PH-3556.pdf>

If your application reveals you have been out of clinical practice for more than two years, you may be subject to additional requirements of the Board.

Q: I have read that Tennessee is a “Compact” state. How do I obtain a Tennessee medical license through the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact?

A: On May 11, 2017, Governor Haslam signed Public Chapter 365 making Tennessee the 19th state to join the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact. For information regarding the Compact and how it works, please visit: <http://www.imlcc.org/>

Q: How do I check the status of my license application?

A: You may confirm that your application is in progress through our license verification page: The Board's administrative staff makes every effort to keep applicants apprised of their application status. This includes an effort to send deficiency letters to applicants every couple of weeks. Frequent calls and emails to our office for license status updates interrupt our administrators' work processes and reduce the amount of time available to review applications and correspond with applicants regarding application deficiencies.

Q: How do I complete the background check process and what is my OCA number?

A: Follow this link for instructions on how to complete your background check.

<https://www.tn.gov/health/health-professionals/criminal-background-check/cbc-instructions.html>

Q: May I work while waiting for my license/certificate to be ratified by the board?

A: Yes, if you have been issued a license/certificate number you are allowed to commence practice in Tennessee. If your license/certificate is not ratified by the board you will be promptly notified to suspend your practice in Tennessee with an explanation for why your license/certificate was not ratified.

Q: Do you accept FCVS?

A: Yes, if you choose to have your FCVS packet sent to our office the following items will be marked as received for your application process:

- 1) Medical school transcript
- 2) Any post-graduate training verified
- 3) Examination scores
- 4) Proof of citizenship (so long as the document is not expired)

Q: Can my application be expedited if I have an employment opportunity pending the approval of my application?

A: No. Applications are reviewed and considered in the order in which they are received. To emphasize this point, the application instructions recommend that you do not make arrangements to accept employment to practice in Tennessee prior to being issued a license number. Requesting documents from outside organizations or others could be done prior to submitting your application which would assist in your file being promptly complete.