

## DHHS Occupational Licensure Unit (OLU)

### Plan for Successful Licensing of New Graduate RNs and LPNs

#### **What DHHS OLU Has Done/Will Do:**

- Contacted all 16 nursing programs in Nebraska to stress the importance of having students submit their license applications as soon as possible. Early submission allows staff to “front load” applications and address any deficiencies with applicants prior to graduation.
- As of April 21, 2023, approximately 75% of new grad license applications have been received and are being processed.
- Applicant responsibilities include the following:
  - Submit a complete license application to the OLU (application fee is \$123 unless they qualify for waiver);
  - Submit fingerprints and \$45.25 background check fee to the NE State Patrol; and
  - Register for the NCLEX exam with PearsonVue and pay \$200 exam fee.
- Once the transcript (or letter of validation from the school) is received, the applicant is made eligible to take NCLEX RN or PN within 1-3 days (if applicant has completed the license application, fingerprinting, and NCLEX registration).
- NCLEX can be taken anywhere there is an approved PearsonVue testing center. There are 3 in Nebraska (Omaha, Lincoln, and North Platte). New grads can also use testing centers in surrounding states.
- In recent years, new grads have been able to make appointments to test within 2-3 weeks after they are made eligible to take NCLEX. Many can find openings within a week after they are made eligible.
- The electronic testing process works as follows:
  - Student takes exam;
  - Results are scored within 24 – 48 hours;
  - State Board of Nursing is notified immediately of exam results; then
  - License is issued within 24-48 hours of receipt of exam scores.

#### **What an Employer Can Do to Help:**

- If you do allow a new graduate to work under a provisional license, make sure that the graduate has time to prepare for and take NCLEX. New graduates have told us they are not able to test because they cannot get time off from work.
- Employers might consider offering to pay the \$200 exam registration fee. Failure to register for NCLEX and pay the \$200 exam fee is the most common reason for delays in becoming eligible to take NCLEX.
- Employers might also consider offering to pay gas and lodging if a student wishes to travel to an out of state PearsonVue site to test earlier than times available in Nebraska.
- Talk to your new grads and identify their plan for testing, identify any gaps in funding, scheduling, etc.
- Hold the new grad employee accountable to test per plan and as early as possible.

#### **What We Know to Be True:**

According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, there is a direct correlation between time and testing date. Students who take NCLEX immediately after graduation are more likely to pass the NCLEX exam on the first attempt than students who wait 2-3 months. Passing scores decrease proportionately with time in between graduation and testing.