

AN ACT concerning nursing.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Nursing and Advanced Practice Nursing Act is amended by adding Section 10-37 as follows:

(225 ILCS 65/10-37 new)

(Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2008)

Sec. 10-37. Nurse externship permit.

(a) The Department shall establish a 2-year program under which the Department may issue a nurse externship permit to a registered nurse who is licensed under the laws of another state or territory of the United States and who has not taken the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). A nurse who is issued a permit shall be allowed to practice as a nurse extern under the direct, on-site supervision of a registered professional nurse licensed under this Act. There shall be one supervising registered professional nurse for every one nurse extern.

(b) An applicant shall be qualified to receive a nurse externship permit if that applicant:

(1) Has submitted a completed written application to the Department, on forms provided by the Department, and paid any fees established by the Department.

(2) Has graduated from a professional nursing education program approved by the Department.

(3) Is licensed as a professional nurse in another state or territory of the United States and has submitted a verification of active and unencumbered licensure in all of the states and territories in which the applicant is licensed.

(4) Has submitted verification of an offer of employment in Illinois as a nurse extern. The Department

may prescribe the information necessary to determine if this employment meets the requirements of the permit program. This information shall include a copy of the written employment offer.

(5) Has submitted a written statement from the applicant's prospective employer stating that the prospective employer agrees to pay the full tuition for the Bilingual Nurse Consortium course or other course approved by rule.

(6) Has submitted proof of taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a minimum score as set by rule. Applicants with the highest TOEFL scores shall be given first consideration to entrance into an extern program.

(7) Has submitted written verification that the applicant has been enrolled in the Bilingual Nurse Consortium course or other course approved by rule. This verification must state that the applicant shall be able to complete the course within the year for which the permit is issued.

(8) Has agreed to submit to the Department a mid-year exam as determined by rule that demonstrates proficiency towards passing the NCLEX.

(9) Has not violated the provisions of Section 10-45 of this Act. The Department may take into consideration any felony conviction of the applicant, but such a conviction shall not operate as an absolute bar to licensure.

(10) Has met all other requirements established by rule.

(c) A nurse extern shall be issued no more than one permit in a lifetime. The permit shall expire one calendar year after it is issued. Before being issued a license under this Act, the nurse extern must submit proof of the successful completion of the Bilingual Nurse Consortium course or other course approved by rule and successful passage of the NCLEX. The nurse extern shall not practice autonomous, professional nursing until he or

she is licensed under this Act. The nurse extern shall carry out progressive nursing skills under the direct supervision of a registered nurse licensed under this Act and shall not be employed in a supervisory capacity. The nurse extern shall work only in the sponsoring facility. A nurse extern may work for a period not to exceed one calendar year from the date of issuance of the permit or until he or she fails the NCLEX. While working as a nurse extern, the nurse extern is subject to the provisions of this Act and all rules adopted by the Department for the administration of this Act.

(d) The Secretary shall convene a task force within 2 months after the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 94th General Assembly to establish clinical guidelines that allow for the gradual progression of nursing skills in culturally diverse practice settings. The Nursing Act Coordinator or his or her designee shall serve as chairperson of the task force. The task force shall include, but not be limited to, 2 representatives of the Illinois Nurses Association, 2 representatives of the Illinois Hispanic Nurses Association, a nurse engaged in nursing education who possesses a master's degree or higher, one representative from the Humboldt Park Vocational Educational Center, 2 registered nurses from United States territories who each hold a current State nursing license, one representative from the Chicago Bilingual Nurse Consortium, and one member of the Illinois Hospital Association. The task force shall complete this work no longer than 4 months after convening. After the nurse externship permit program has been in effect for 2 years, the task force shall evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make appropriate recommendations to the Secretary.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.