

## Facts About the Nevada State Board of Nursing

- What:** The Board's mission is to protect the public's health, safety and welfare through effective nursing regulation. It is a governmental agency established by Nevada law to protect the public from unsafe practice by nurses.
- Who:** A seven-member board appointed by the governor consisting of four registered nurses, one practical nurse, one certified nursing assistant and one consumer member. One member must represent the interests of those who are indigent, uninsured, or unable to afford health care. The Board is advised by and appoints members to five standing advisory committees. The Board appoints an executive director (a registered nurse) who is responsible for a staff of 23.
- Why:** In 1923, the state legislature established the Board to regulate the practice of nursing.
- How:** The scope of the Board's original responsibilities has grown dramatically since 1923, when it licensed 104 registered nurses. In 2011, it was responsible for licensing, certifying and disciplining more than 38,000 individuals, including registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, advanced practice nurses, certified nursing assistants, medication aides-certified and certified registered nurse anesthetists. The Board's functions now include:
- Establishing minimum practice standards
  - Approving schools of nursing, medication aide-certified and nursing assistant training programs
  - Adopting exams for licensing/certification
  - Licensing registered nurses and licensed practical nurses
  - Certifying advanced practitioners of nursing, certified registered nurse anesthetists, emergency medical service/registered nurses, medication aides-certified and certified nursing assistants
  - Developing and adopting regulations
  - Appointing advisory committees to get direct nursing input
  - Approving education/training programs for ongoing competency
  - Investigating complaints against nurses, medication aides-certified, and nursing assistants
  - Conducting disciplinary proceedings
  - Administering alternative program for nurses and CNAs recovering from substance use disorders
  - Publishing, distributing and providing education on the Nurse Practice Act
  - Collaborating with consumers, individuals, groups, other regulatory bodies, and organizations
  - Providing education to increase public awareness and understanding of the Board's role and purpose

The Board has authority only over its licensees and certificate holders and not over the facilities in which these individuals practice. The Board enforces the Nurse Practice Act (the law regulating nursing practice), with funding for all of its activities coming solely from the fees paid to the Board by licensees and certificate holders. The Board does not have authority to take action on issues that are of an employment nature or that relate to the profession of nursing as a whole. These matters are best dealt with by nursing associations, labor unions, or other similar entities.

(revised 9-11)