

**The COVID-19 Pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation affecting every individual, group, family, and organization in society. The SALPN is accountable to the public through the Minister of Health. The SALPN Council and staff have worked diligently to ensure our responsibilities and obligations are fulfilled.**

#### Operations:

All SALPN staff are working from home. With some modifications to ensure compliance with social distancing requirements, the SALPN core functions continue to be accomplished.

- 'LPN Search' function on the website
- Acceptance of applications and issuing of licensure
- Response to practice-based inquiries
- Acceptance and investigation of complaints
- Continued monitoring of current discipline orders
- Pre-Authorized Payment Program
- Virtual statute committee meetings

The SALPN Annual General Meeting is postponed. The Ministry of Health, to whom SALPN is accountable, has indicated that regulators must focus efforts on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and recommend the delay of Annual General Meetings until an appropriate time.

The SALPN Education Conference, normally held in conjunction with the AGM, is cancelled.

#### Regulatory Response:

The SALPN is working closely with our partners at the Ministry of Health, regulator colleagues, Practical Nursing education programs, and the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) to adequately prepare the health system and regulated health professionals for the coming days and weeks.

**Employers** may be required to redistribute current employees and seek others to join the workforce. It will be the responsibility of employers to arrange for the redistribution of health care workers based on the needs and risks of the environment. **Regulators**, at the request of the **Ministry of Health** and the **SHA**, may be required to accommodate the emergency licensure of professionals to support the needs of the health care system.

The **SALPN Council** has taken the following steps to offer temporary emergency licensure, if required:

1. Non-Practicing LPNs are offered the opportunity to voluntarily change their status to Practicing, at no cost (more information is available below). The status change will make them available to employers during the response.
2. Amendments to the Regulatory Bylaws to accommodate emergency licensure, if required, at no cost, were submitted to the Minister of Health for approval. If approved by the Minister, the SALPN have the authority to enact emergency licensure measures.

A phased approach to emergency licensure is in place if it is required. Please watch your inbox for information about emergency licensure.

The SALPN is currently working with the Practical Nurse education programs regarding the status of the programs in Saskatchewan. Ensuring students meet the entry-level competencies of the profession will serve as the foundation for decisions made as the situation evolves.

#### Non-Practicing to Practicing Status Change

To respond to the work force needs of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council has allowed non-practicing LPNs to change their licensure status to practicing at no cost. The details of each status change are at the discretion of the SALPN Registrar.

The SALPN would like to notify non-practicing members they may return to practice, assisting during the pandemic, if they wish – it is not mandatory.

Non-practicing members already meet SALPN's practicing licensure requirements and make for a simple status change. The emergency licensure is temporary and will be active for up to 90 days. After 90 days, you will return to Non-Practicing. If you wish to return to practice after the 90 days, you will follow the standard status change requirements. Click here to view the status change process and to access the form to submit.

#### Things to Consider Before Returning to Practice:

- Are you currently on a leave (ex: maternity, paternity, education, disability) with a planned return to work occurring soon? If your leave is ending in the next few months and you already have an anticipated return to practice as an LPN, you may not be eligible for an emergency Practicing license. Please email [cbrewster@salpn.com](mailto:cbrewster@salpn.com) if you have questions.
- Are you willing to allow the SALPN to share your contact and previous LPN work experience with the Saskatchewan Health Authority (or other employers)? The SALPN intends to provide the SHA with a list of who is licensed on an emergency basis to assist during the pandemic and this information will help them assess who is available and what areas of practice they may be best suited for, depending on need. This will be a requirement to obtain emergency licensure.
- Are you over the age of 65? If so, you are at a higher risk for a more severe form of the disease.
- Are you immunocompromised or do you have a chronic illness? If so, you are at a higher risk for a more severe form of the disease.
- Are you currently receiving Employment Benefits? If so, please connect with Service Canada for information.

#### Submit your Application for Emergency Licensure:

If you're interested in returning to practice under emergent licensure, please submit your application for SALPN's review.

[Emergency License Application](#)

#### Practice Advice

##### COVID-19 – HOW IT IS CHANGING YOUR PRACTICE?

COVID-19 has changed how we all work and function. We are not able to meet with friends for coffee, our children cannot attend school, and we must plan and shop very differently than what we might normally.

Nursing professionals must provide safe care and remain safe to help reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19. We urge all LPNs to adhere to best practices and recommendations that are being made by public health officials. The Government of Saskatchewan has robust and updated information on the COVID-19 virus.

During this difficult time, the SALPN is mindful of the fact that many LPNs are experiencing changes and challenges within their employment settings. Employers are making plans to support an influx of patients in the coming days and weeks. We understand that this uncertainty can cause an increased level of anxiety for many....

*Continue reading the practice advice by clicking the image to the right.*



#### Practice advice

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Many LPNs have questions regarding being asked to perform their roles ways that they have not before; they may be asked to work in a different environment or be asked to perform duties and tasks that they are unfamiliar with.

LPNs have a professional obligation to provide care, and this extends to all contexts, at all times, including during an emergency or disaster and is embedded within the Standards of Practice and the Code of Ethics. LPNs must utilize safety precautions and absorb a certain amount of risk while providing care during a public health emergency crisis.

Employers are creating rapidly evolving plans to provide care to an unknown number of patients. While their plans may include asking LPNs to practice differently, they are not asking LPNs to practice outside the professional scope of practice for Saskatchewan LPNs.

What is the LPN's duty to provide care in a Public Health or other emergency situations?

There is a strong claim for a social contract between the healthcare professional and society in a publicly funded healthcare system. It is a reasonable and legitimate expectation by the public that healthcare professionals will respond to public health or other emergencies. The primary concern in times of public health or other emergency situations is the professional commitment to care. LPNs are expected to utilize appropriate safety precautions and to absorb a certain amount of risk while providing care during public health or other emergency situations; however, there is no expectation that they place themselves at unnecessary risk to do so.

What do you do if you are asked to work in an unfamiliar unit/facility, or are asked to perform tasks that are unfamiliar to you?

Licensed practical nurses are expected to only practice within their individual level of competence. They are accountable to continually acquire new knowledge and skills in their areas of practice and are not obligated to provide care beyond their level of competence. LPNs that are asked to provide care beyond their individual competence should: consider whether delivering a part of the required care (i.e. that part for which they have the competence to deliver) is more appropriate than not.

**For up-to-date information on the COVID-19 Virus, visit the Saskatchewan Government website link below.**

[Information on COVID-19](#)

**Independent Practice  
Registration Deadline  
Postponed**

**The SALPN office is  
now closed to visitors:  
COVID-19**

**Licensure Audit  
Deadline is Postponed**

Thank you to our members and all health care providers for your efforts to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. We acknowledge the challenges and recognize that health care providers will encounter risks and demonstrate courage as the demands on the health care system increase.



Please visit [salpn.com](http://salpn.com) to stay connected on news and information. And follow us on social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).