



Frequently Asked Questions on Emergency Order 16, Emergency Order 20 and Related Orders

Governor Tony Evers and Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary-designee Andrea Palm issued [Emergency Order 16](#) on March 27, 2020, to better position Wisconsin to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The order enables Wisconsin to expand its healthcare workforce more quickly and will give health systems greater flexibility to assign providers to areas with greatest need. The order covers a variety of topics across several professions, and it references several administrative rules. On April 3 Governor Evers and Secretary-designee Palm issued [Emergency Order 20](#), which updated some provisions of EO 16.

The Wisconsin Pharmacy Examining Board also issued three orders in response to the public health emergency. [One](#), issued on March 17, 2020, is designed to allow pharmacists to exercise their professional judgment on whether to re-use personal protective equipment (PPE). The [second](#), issued on March 25, 2020, allows pharmacists to dispense outside of licensed pharmacies in the event they need to dispense in mobile clinics, mobile hospitals or other similar facilities that do not have a pharmacy license. The [third order](#) enables wholesale distributors to source drugs from out of state in certain circumstances to avoid supply chain disruptions during the COVID-19 crisis.

This document is intended to help individuals better understand the orders. However, in the interest of accuracy, we strongly encourage all providers and health care employers to read the actual orders and consult any related administrative rules, as this FAQ document is not, and is not intended to be, a complete resource. It offers general answers that apply in many, but not necessarily all, circumstances.

Reciprocity for Healthcare Providers

Q: If I am a licensed healthcare professional from a different state, can I now work in Wisconsin without a Wisconsin license?

A: Yes. Many providers who have a current unrestricted (unencumbered) license in another state may begin practice in Wisconsin without a Wisconsin license under EO 16 and EO 20. Included providers are those listed in [Wis. Stat. 146.81 \(1\)\(a\) through \(hp\)](#). However, providers must apply for a [temporary](#) or permanent license within 30 days of providing care in Wisconsin. Employers have separate notification requirements (see next question). *Note that massage therapists must be working in a clinical setting to qualify for temporary licensure under EO 20.*

Q: Do employers have to notify the state that they have hired out-of-state providers?

A: Yes. Employers must use this [form](#) to notify the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS) that they have hired an out-of-state worker under the provisions of the order within ten days (this is a change in EO 20), and all providers must apply for a temporary or permanent Wisconsin license within thirty days (this is a change in EO 20) of beginning work in Wisconsin. See page 2 of [EO 16](#) for other conditions.

Temporary Licenses for Out-of-State Providers

Q: I am a licensed provider from another state. How do I apply for a temporary license under EO 16 and EO 20?

A: [Temporary license application forms](#) are available on the [DSPS website](#).

Q: Do I have to stop practicing after thirty days if my temporary or permanent Wisconsin license has not been issued?

A: No. You may continue to practice unless you are notified that your application has been denied.

Q: How do healthcare employers notify DSPS that they have hired out-of-state workers?

A: Employers must complete [this form](#) and submit the form to dps@wisconsin.gov within ten days of the provider practicing at the employer's facility under EO 16 or 20.

Q: How long will temporary licenses be valid?

A: Temporary licenses issued to address the COVID-19 crisis will remain in effect for 30 days after the conclusion of the declared emergency, including any extensions.

License Renewals During Public Health Emergency

Q: What if my license expires during the public health emergency?

A: The order is retroactive and includes licenses (*both permanent and temporary*) that were current prior to the [declaration of a public health emergency](#) on March 12, 2020, but have since expired. This renewal provision of the EO applies only to the practitioners listed in [Wis. Stat. § 146.81 \(1\)\(a\) through \(hp\)](#).

Telemedicine and Telehealth

Q: Do I need a Wisconsin license to practice telemedicine or telehealth in Wisconsin during the public health emergency?

A: Physicians with a current, unrestricted license from another state may practice telemedicine without obtaining a temporary or permanent Wisconsin license. See page 3 of [EO 16](#) for other considerations and conditions.

Other providers who wish to provide telehealth services may begin practicing immediately, but they must apply for a temporary or permanent Wisconsin license within 30 days of providing telehealth services, and their employers must notify DSPS within 10 days. These providers may practice telehealth within the scope of their licenses in their home states.

Physician Assistants

Q: Do physician assistants have to notify the Medical Examining Board if they change supervision physicians during the public health emergency?

A: Yes, but they have 40 days instead of 20 days to notify the board.

Q: Can physician assistants delegate tasks during the public health emergency?

A: A physician assistant may delegate tasks, as appropriate and within their scope of their experience, education, training, and capabilities, to another clinically trained health care professional. The physician assistant must have knowledge, based on personal experience with the health care provider, that the delegated task is within the experience, education, training, and capabilities of the provider receiving the delegation.

Q: How many physician assistants can a physician supervise during the public health emergency?

A: A physician may supervise no more than eight physician assistants on duty at one time. There is no limit to the number of physician assistants a physician may supervise over the course of the public health emergency. A physician assistant can also be supervised by multiple physicians while on duty.

Nurses (including retired nurses or those with lapsed licenses)

Q: Normally, nursing students may obtain no more than 50% of their clinical training in simulated environments. Has that changed?

A: Yes. During the public health emergency, the amount of simulated clinical training allowable is neither specified nor restricted. This will enable students who were removed from their clinical placements to complete their clinical educational requirements and stay on course for graduation.

Q: How long can new nursing graduates practice under a temporary license without taking the NCLEX?

A: Temporary nursing licenses will remain valid until either the end of the public health emergency or six months after the availability of the NCLEX, whichever is later.

Q: I would like to help with the COVID-19 public health emergency, but my license has expired. What do I need to do to renew?

A: Adequate nursing staffing is a critical element of the COVID-19 response, and it is essential that nurses seeking to re-enter practice can do so quickly and easily. Therefore, if your license has expired (and it was not surrendered as a result of an investigation or otherwise revoked), you can renew your license [by submitting an application](#) and paying a normal license fee. You will not need to pay late fees, complete the nursing workforce survey that is typically required for renewal, provide documentation of employment, or complete the nursing refresher course.

Q: If my Wisconsin compact license has expired, can I renew it under EO 16 with late-fees and other requirements waived?

A: You can renew under EO 16 but you will be issued a Wisconsin license and not a compact license. If you wish to renew your compact license, you may begin [here](#). Note that the fee and other requirement waivers granted under EO 16 do not apply to compact license renewals.

Q: I am a nurse with an expired license. I am renewing my license now. May I begin practice immediately while I await the decision on my renewal?

A: No, you may not practice until your license is issued and active. We understand that the need for providers is immediate, and so the department is prioritizing health care licensing, both initial and renewal, during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Q: I am a nurse practitioner. Do I still need a collaboration agreement with a physician?

A: For the duration of the public health emergency, nurse practitioners and other advanced practice nurses do not need a collaboration agreement with a physician to practice. They may practice independently but within the scope of their experience, education, training, and capabilities.

Other Expired Licenses

Q: I am a health care professional who would like to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency, but my license has expired. Can I renew my license quickly so that I can help?

A: In many cases, yes. If your license expired (but was not suspended, revoked, or surrendered as a result of disciplinary requirements) less than five years ago, you can [renew](#) your license without meeting certain standard renewal requirements such as completing continuing education (CE) or paying late fees.

Here is a summary of information for each profession (See EO 16 for exact renewal requirement suspensions):

Physicians: No CE or late fee required to renew

Radiographers: No CE or late fee required to renew

MPSW professions: No CE or late fee required to renew

Psychologists: No CE or late fee required to renew

Pharmacists: No CE or late fee required to renew

Chiropractor: No late fee required to renew

Dentist: No CE, no late fee and no CPR/AED required to renew

Physical Therapist: No CE or late fee required to renew

Q: How do I renew my expired license?

A: The [renewal form](#) for expired licenses is on the [DSPS home page](#).

Opportunities to Serve

Q: I am a former provider interested in returning to practice during the COVID-19 public health emergency. How can I help?

A: The Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry (WEAVR), is a secure, password-protected, web-based volunteer registration system for health care and behavioral health professionals. Individuals who are interested in filling critical response and recovery roles during a major public health emergency, such as the current COVID-19 crisis, can volunteer. Click [here](#) for more information or to register.