

A faster path to NC licensure

In January 2026, North Carolina became a member of the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC), an agreement amongst US states and territories that creates an expedited pathway to medical licensure.

IMLC is currently the fastest possible licensure pathway in NC for eligible physicians applying from other Compact states.

NC Licenses issued in days, not weeks (or months)¹

In the **first five months of 2026**, the North Carolina Medical Board (NCMB) received more than **1,394 license applications** from physicians in other IMLC states.

- On average, licenses were issued **nine days** after NCMB’s receipt of the application.
- To benefit from the IMLC pathway’s expedited processing time, applicants **MUST** hold a valid letter of qualification (LOQ) from their home state.

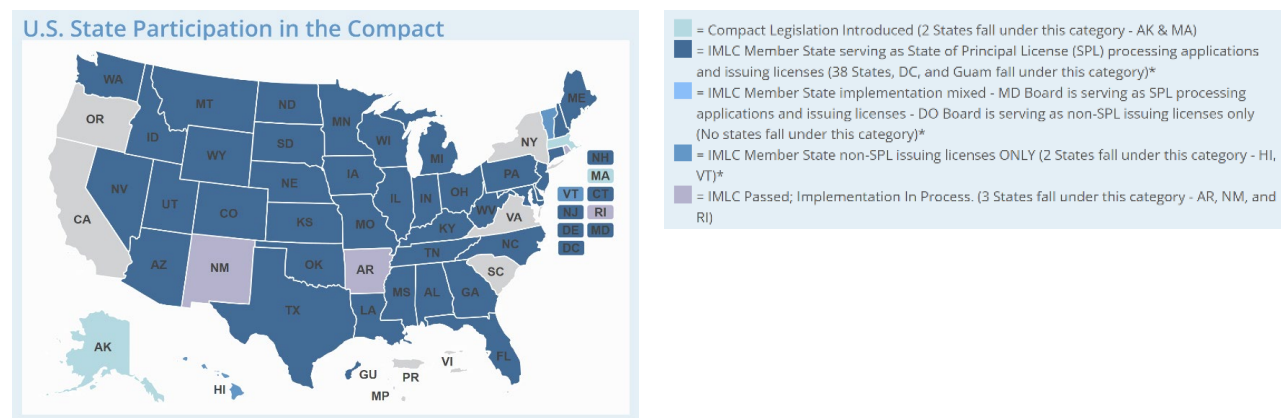
What about NC physicians seeking licensure in other IMLC states?

Eligible NC physicians seeking licensure in other Compact states utilizing the Compact must first apply through IMLCC.com for a letter of qualification (LOQ) from North Carolina. In the **first four months**, the NCMB received **252 requests for an LOQ**.

- It takes longer to obtain an LOQ due to the need to obtain a background check and verification of other requirements.
- On average, it currently takes about **35 days** to receive an LOQ from NC. Note this average processing time is heavily dependent on the processing time of verifications, including background checks.

What states participate with IMLC?

As of 2026, **43 US states** and territories are participating with the IMLC.



¹ As of May 2026, the average number of days to issue licenses through the NCMB’s traditional application pathway was about 70 days.

Who can apply using the IMLC pathway?

Physicians must hold a full, unrestricted medical license in a state that is a member of the Compact and qualifies as their State of Principal License (SPL).

- To qualify as an SPL one of the following requirements must be met:
 - Physician's primary residence is in the SPL
 - At least 25% of physician's clinical practice occurs in the SPL
 - Physician's employer is located in the SPL
 - If none of the above, the Physician uses the SPL as their state of residence for U.S. Federal Income Tax purposes
- To participate with IMLC, the physician must apply through IMLCC.com, pay the initial application fee, and complete the process to request a Letter of Qualification (LOQ) certifying the physician's eligibility.

General eligibility criteria

The IMLC licensure process is not available to physicians based solely on residency in a Compact state. To be eligible for licensure, a physician also must:

- Have graduated from an accredited medical school, or a school listed in the International Medical Education Directory
- Have successfully completed ACGME- or AOA-accredited graduate medical education
- Have passed each component of the USMLE, COMLEX-USA, or equivalent in no more than three attempts for each component
- Hold a current specialty certification or time-unlimited certification by an ABMS or AOABOS board
- Have no history of disciplinary actions on their medical license
- Have no criminal history
- Have no history of controlled substance actions on their medical license
- Not currently be under investigation