

## A Guide to the Application Process for obtaining an APNP Credential

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While this guide may seem a bit too detailed to many individuals, I wish that I would have had something along these lines when I first started going through the process of getting my APNP credential. To be sure, well over three thousand nurses in Wisconsin have the APNP credential and did so without this guide. Hopefully, though, this might make life a bit easier for those now wishing to obtain their APNP Credential.

Step 1: go to <http://drl.wi.gov/index.htm> In the "Consumer Info & Tools" section, click on Applications. This will take you to the "Applications (how to obtain a Credential/License)" page. In the Health column, click on Advanced Practice Nurse Prescriber. This brings you to the "Advanced Practice Nurse Prescriber - Credentialing" page. Nearly everything you need to do and/or know is found on this web page. Additional helpful sites and info will be discussed below.

Step 2: For the purpose of these hints and tips, it will be assumed that items 1), 2) & 3) have been completed i.e. you are already a Wisconsin RN and a CRNA, CNM, NP or CNS. Click on application link in Item 4) to go to the page that lists forms that need to be completed, informational documents & additional info to help you through the process. Since not all of the forms are required for all applicants, open each of the forms to determine their applicability to your situation. Forms 2070 & 2125 are especially important and need to be read thoroughly! At the very least, download them to your computer so that you can review them at any time. (I printed them out too so I could "check off" the requirements as I completed them). Form # 2124 (the actual application) will need to be downloaded and printed for sure. At this time, there is no provision to "fill in" this form prior to printing. You must do that manually. ALL blanks need an entry. If any item doesn't apply to you, enter N/A.

Throughout the process of completing these forms and other requirements, please keep in mind that your application is processed by one administrative assistant at the WI Dept of Regulation & Licensing / Board of Nursing. DO NOT provide more information than asked!!! Form 741 is only required if you have received Advanced Practice Nurse Prescriber certification in another state (not just if you have a license in another state). This goes for the box at the bottom of page 2 of Form 2124 too. If you don't have APNP certification in another state, both blanks are N/A (Advanced Practice Nurse does not equal APNP). Form 2376 is only required if you were certified in your specialty AFTER 1 JUL 98. Those certified before that date have been "grandfathered/(grandmothered?)" in and a Master's degree isn't required. There aren't any "Brownie" points for us old-timers that have our Master's and it may slow the process down by giving the DRL / BoN staff more work not to mention that you may well have to pay your Master's granting university a fee to verify your degree!

RE: the 45 contact hours of Continuing Education in pharmacology/therapeutics. As indicated in chapter N 8 of Wisconsin Administrative Code, "Clinical pharmacology/therapeutics" means the identification of individual and classes of drugs, their indications and contraindications, their likelihood of success, their side effects and their interactions, as well as, clinical judgment skills and decision making, based on thorough interviewing, history taking, physical assessment, test selection and interpretation, pathophysiology, epidemiology, diagnostic reasoning, differentiation of conditions, treatment decisions, case evaluation and non-pharmacologic interventions. Many, if not most, CE programs fit this description. The trick is making it easy for the admin person at the DRL / BoN to figure that out. In addition to the Certificate of Completion you receive for the CE offering, attach a copy of the objectives highlighting the verbiage indicating that the topics listed above were a part of the program. This will help to make it easy for them to accept your contact hours.

STEP 3: Review EVERY document to ensure that ALL blanks have an entry and all of the appropriate boxes are checked. **Remember that your signature on page 5 needs to be notarized!!!** Review the instructions on Form 2125 to insure that you've completed everything

required (and nothing that isn't needed). It may be a good idea to make a copy of the entire packet (just in case). Don't forget the \$110.00 check for the application and exam fees.

STEP 4: Mail the completed application, support documents and payment to the address indicated on Form 2125. Some of the required info needs to come directly from the source. Requests for specialty certification/recertification, Master's degree confirmation (if req'd) and license verification (if req'd) need to go directly to the appropriate organization since the DRL / BoN only accepts that info from the source. It may be wise to request that you receive a copy of what you have these organizations send to the DRL / BoN. (I didn't do this but should have).

STEP 5: Wait! In a few weeks (maybe less) the DRL will mail to you an APNP Check Form. It will tell you the current status of your application as to which requirements have been met and those that have yet to be met. This is the ONLY status report that will be mailed to you. To check for updates, you will have to go on-line or use the Interactive Voice Response System via telephone. The most important part of this notice is the Application Number it assigns to you. This number allows you to access the on-line application status page AND the Jurisprudence Exam.

While you are waiting to receive your APNP Check Form and access code, you will do well to start reviewing the Administrative Code commonly called the "Code Book". Go to the APNP page at <http://drl.wi.gov/prof/nura/def.htm>. Click on the Administrative Code (Code Book) link which will take you to the index of Chapters and documents that contain ALL of the answers to the Jurisprudence Exam. The chapters and documents on this list cover a very wide range of subjects and I suspect no one reads every word. Understanding the way the Administrative Code is organized will be of the most help to you when taking the exam. Keep in mind that the exam is "Open Book" and is quite the learning experience.

STEP 6: Once you receive your access code (your application number) follow the instructions on the APNP Check Form to access the Jurisprudence Exam. You will have 6 months from the date you first access the exam, to complete it. If you do 8 or 9 questions a sitting, you can finish in less than a week. (If you have no life what-so-ever, you could probably knock it out in a day). The navigation buttons on the left side of the exam screen allow you to look at each question in sequence or to pick a specific question by number. There is also a "bookmarking function" that allows you to mark a specific question. You can answer, skip ahead, go back or even change a previous answer AS LONG AS YOU DON'T CLICK ON THE DONE BUTTON!!! Be careful, the "next question" button is very close to the "Done" button. (There is a FAIL-SAFE box that pops up if you do accidentally hit the "done" button but still be careful). To exit the exam prior to completion, click the red X in the upper right corner of the screen. Any questions that you answered or changed will be updated at that time and will still be there the next time that you log-in to the exam. When you are finally done AND are as sure as you can be that you've answered ALL of the questions correctly (remember you can only miss 7 !), hit the "done" button. The fail-safe box will ask if you're sure. If you click "yes" you'll have your score in just a few milliseconds! Since this is an "open book" test there should be no reason not to pass. If you fail, you will have to pay an additional exam fee to re-take it. As I stated before ALL of the answers are in the materials provided!

The exam is the final hurdle for YOU. It can take a couple of weeks for information to be updated to your check sheet. Assuming your application packet was in order and you passed the exam, once the verifications are received and reviewed by the DRL the APNP Credential will be issued. Check on the progress of your application by using the "Interactive Voice Response System" via telephone or via the DRL website. Patience is key. However, if more than 4 weeks have passed and you KNOW that your external verifications have been sent (good reason to ask for copies), something is amiss. The application status page suggests calling or emailing if you have questions. You may be lucky enough to actually speak directly with the person that processes the applications but you're more likely to get to the voice mailbox or the office receptionist. Leave your name & application number and again be patient. If after a reasonable amount of time (you be the judge) someone doesn't get back to you. It may be time to move "up the food chain". A

squeaky wheel may get the grease. Good Luck.