

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PROBATION

Starting Probation

What happens if I am ordered to complete probation?

You will receive a written notice from the Board of Registered Nursing (Board) after your decision is adopted. This applies to both signed Stipulated Settlements and Proposed Decisions after a hearing. The effective date of your probation typically occurs 30 days after a decision is adopted. The effective date is also when you are required to start following all the terms of your Decision and Order.

What can I expect at the onset of probation?

You will receive an email with your probation monitor's name, contact info, and the pre-orientation packet. Your probation monitor will then contact you to set up an orientation meeting to go over your Decision and Order and your probation conditions. Your probation monitor will be your primary contact during your probation, and you should reach out to them with any questions unless you're told to contact someone else.

How will I know who to contact while on probation?

After your decision is adopted, the Board's Probation Unit is notified, and a probation monitor will be assigned. You'll get an email with your monitor's name, contact details, and a pre-orientation packet listing all conditions and any due dates. Usually, you will receive this email within two weeks of your decision being approved.

Residency Outside of California and Tolling

If I move out of California and move back later (e.g., 6 months), will my probation be on pause?

Yes, your probation will be paused if you live outside of California while you're on probation. The time you spend living outside of California will not count towards your probation period. Instead, that time will be added to the end of your probation when you come back to California.

Written Reports

According to Standard Probation Condition #5 I must submit reports/declarations that contain statements relative to my compliance with all the conditions of the

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Board's Probation Program. Is that something I must write up or ask someone to submit to the Board for me?

Yes, you are required to provide any documents your probation monitor requests, including job-related paperwork.

Employment Approval

Will I be able to continue working at my current job while on probation?

Possibly, the Board will need to review your current or new job to verify that the supervision and duties of the position meet the necessary requirements for approval. The Board may also request papers and reviews of any other healthcare jobs you may obtain. All nursing-related jobs must be approved by the Board before you can begin working or continue working while on Probation. All healthcare-related jobs must be reviewed by the Board to confirm the position is not an RN role.

What level of supervision will be required?

The Board will determine what specific supervision requirements are needed after reviewing your case and understanding what caused the disciplinary action that led to the probation decision.

May I work as a travel nurse or for a registry while on probation?

No, the Board does not permit nurses on probation to work as a travel nurse or for a nursing registry.

Can I still own or work at a Medical Spa while on probation?

Supervision or oversight of a Medical Spa while on probation will need to be reviewed and discussed with your assigned probation monitor. The Board may request documentation of organizational details and the reporting structure to ensure compliance with your Decision and Order. If supervision and monitoring requirements can be met, you may be able to work at a Medical Spa.

How long does the employment approval process take?

It can vary, the volume of employment approval requests the Board receives fluctuate throughout the year and response timelines are heavily dependent on how quickly employers respond to the Board's questions. Please make sure to send all required documents, as requests that are missing information may delay the review process. Requests are looked at in the order they are received and your probation monitor will contact you when a decision has been made. You are not permitted to use your nursing license or work in any nursing capacity until you receive approval from the Board.

How do I request a modification to my employment approval, such as working additional hours or a change in supervision level?

If you want to make any modifications, such as working more hours or changing your supervisor, you or your employer must request a modification from your probation monitor. You must wait for Board approval before making any changes. If your request is approved, you and your employer will receive a new Employment Approval Letter that shows the updated details. Please follow all approval requirements included in your Employment Approval Letter carefully.

Can I report to work if my worksite monitor calls out sick?

Yes, but only if an approved backup worksite monitor is available. If an approved backup worksite monitor is not available for monitoring, you are not to report to work that day.

Courses

How will the courses I need to take while on probation be determined?

The Board determines which courses are necessary based on the details of your Decision and the underlying conduct for why you were put on probation.

Cost Recovery

How do I schedule my cost recovery payments?

The Board recommends working with your probation monitor to set up a payment plan at the start of your probation. This can help you make regular payments and avoid having to pay a big sum near the end of your probation as cost recovery is due in full three months prior to the end of your probation period.

Mental Health/Physical Health Examinations

Where can I obtain a list of approved examiners?

The Board does not choose or recommend any examiners. It is the probationer's responsibility to find and submit the name of an examiner who will conduct the exams. If the Board has not already approved the examiner you want to see, you can send their resume to your probation monitor for review. If the examiner meets the Board's standards and is approved, your monitor will let you know. If not, they will tell you to find another examiner.

I received the names of physicians/examiners in the Nurse Support Group. Can I assume they are approved?

No, you should check with your probation monitor first. They can confirm if the doctor you want to use is approved for your exam. A doctor's or examiner's approval can change over time. So, even if they were approved before, they may no longer be approved.

Drug Screening Requirements

How do I enroll in a drug screening program?

You must sign up with [Vault Health](#) at least 24 hours before your probation starts by following the steps in your pre-orientation packet. This will ensure you have access to begin checking in with Vault Health on the effective date of your probation.

How many times per month should I expect to be drug tested?

There is not a set number of times per month that drug testing will occur. Drug testing is conducted by Vault Health on a random basis and on any day, including weekends and holidays.

What foods and beverages should I avoid if I am required to abstain from all psychotropic (mood-altering) drugs, including alcohol?

The Board does not maintain a list of foods or drinks to avoid when drug screening is required. It's your responsibility not to eat or drink anything that might cause a positive result. You may consider talking to a health professional or addiction specialist about what foods and drinks to avoid.

I forgot to check in today, and it is now past the 5 pm cutoff. What do I do?

If you do not check in with Vault Health before 5pm, you can go to a nearby Vault Health testing center on the same day and give a sample. Doing this will help you stay in compliance with your probation rules.

Can I take medications prescribed to me by my doctor?

Yes, the Board understands that you may still need to take certain medications while on probation. If you have a medical emergency or get a new prescription from your doctor, you need to email your probation monitor and provide appropriate documentation within 15 calendar days of the occurrence. For medications containing psychotropic (mood-altering drugs or alcohol, you must get approval from your approved addiction specialist doctor, who will then send the paperwork to your probation monitor.

Travel

Can I travel while on probation?

Yes, you can travel while on probation. However, you are still required to comply with all terms and conditions of your probation, including random drug screening. Therefore, you must contact Vault Health at least three weeks before your departure to obtain a list of testing facilities in the area you will be traveling to. Some locations may not have a testing facility in the immediate vicinity, in which case you will need to work with Vault Health to identify viable testing locations. In the event of an emergency, contact your probation monitor. If you are unable to fulfill your probation requirements while traveling, it may result in a probation violation and which may lead to additional discipline.

I am selected for a drug screening today and visiting out of state. The nearest testing facility is 100 miles away, and I don't know what to do. May I please be excused from the test?

No, if you are selected for a drug test, you need to provide a sample at a Vault Health testing center on the same day. Probationers should contact Vault Health at least three weeks before to find out where the closest testing centers are near their travel location.

Support Group Meetings

Do I have to attend support group meetings during probation?

Yes, you must participate in both mutual support groups, such as a Nurse Support Groups as well as structured support groups, such as a 12-step or other recovery-based program.

Can I substitute my Nurse Support Group meetings with attending additional 12-Step meetings?

Yes, you may substitute a Nurse Support Group meeting with an extra 12-Step or alternative recovery program meeting if it is planned and approved by your probation monitor prior to missing the Nurse Support Group meeting.

Am I required to attend 12-step meetings? Or can I participate in a different type of recovery program?

Yes, you may participate in a recovery program that is not affiliated with the 12-Step Process. Recovery programs are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Work with your assigned probation monitor if this applies to you.

Do I need to attend 12-step meetings in person, or can I do them online?

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Yes, if you choose to attend 12-step meetings you may do so online or in person.

What do I do when my Nurse Support Group gets canceled?

If your facilitator cancels a Nurse Support Group meeting, you must attend an extra meeting of your recovery-based program that week. Prior approval is not required when the facilitator cancels your group.

If I miss my Nurse Support Group for the week, can I attend a recovery-based program to make it up?

If you miss your Nurse Support Group meeting, you need to contact your probation monitor right away. Your probation monitor will review this occurrence with you, and if you get permission from your probation officer, you will be able to attend a recovery-based program meeting to make up for the missed Nurse Support Group meeting.

My Nurse Support Group is currently online. Will I eventually have to attend in person at any time?

Nurse Support Group meetings are currently allowed to be held online, but may move to in-person or hybrid formats in the future.