

# LIBERIAN BOARD FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

## NATIONAL STATE BOARD EXAMINATION POLICY



# LIBERIAN BOARD FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY STATE BOARD EXAMINATION POLICY

Date first issued: August 2019	Liberian Board For Nursing And Midwifery State Board Examination Policy  Version #1  Liberian Board for Nursing & Midwifery
Date of this version: August 2019	
Review Date: n/a	
Responsible Officer: LBNM Secretariat Registrar	

**Disclaimer**

This policy was developed with support from the Resilient and Responsive Health Organizations: Sustainability Communities of Practice Initiative (RRHO), a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and PEPFAR under grant number UH5HA30789.

The information and guidelines included in this policy are the responsibility of LBNM and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsement be inferred by HRSA, HHS, PEPFAR, or the US Government.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Liberian Board for Nursing and Midwifery acknowledges the contributions and support of its many partners and their contributions to this very vital policy for LBNM operations.

In particular, our gratitude goes to the RRHO Initiative, implemented by JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI) and funded by HRSA, for support in drafting, reviewing, finalizing and printing this document. Our appreciation goes to Ebony Easley, MPH of JSI for her technical expertise and support towards the development of this document and to Mrs. Cecelia A. Morris for her technical and professional support.

We also acknowledge and appreciate the inputs and efforts of the revision committee:

Mr. Humphrey Gibbs Loweal, Chairperson/LBNM, Phebe Paramedical Training Program

Mrs. Cecelia C. Kpangbala-Flomo, Registrar/LBNM Secretariat

Mrs. Dedeh F. Jones, National State Board & Credentialing Committee/LBNM

Mrs. Mona Sankoh, Accreditation Committee/LBNM

Mrs. Anna D. Smallwood, Diana K. Isaacson School of Midwifery

Mr. G. Clinton Zeantoe, United Methodist University

Mrs. Willimai Weetol-Geninyan, Ether Bacon School of Nursing and Midwifery

Mrs. Darboi G. Korkoyah, M&E Director/LBNM Secretariat

Ms. Mary W. Tiah, Nursing & Midwifery Services Director/LBNM Secretariat

Ms. Jemima W. Toe, Mental Health Officer/LBNM Secretariat

We are equally obliged to our stakeholders, the LBNM Board Members, who endorsed this policy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Loweal', written in a cursive style.

Mr. Humphrey Loweal  
Chairman  
Liberian Board for Nursing and Midwifery

# Contents

<b>1. BACKGROUND AND GOVERNANCE</b> .....	1
<b>2. LBNM STATE BOARD EXAMINATION AND CREDENTIAL COMMITTEES</b> .....	2
<b>3. EXAMINATION SCHEDULE</b> .....	4
<b>4. ELIGIBILITY FOR EXAMINATION</b> .....	4
4.1 CANDIDATE MEETS QUALIFICATIONS.....	4
4.2 RECEIPT OF NAME FROM ACCREDITED INSTITUTION.....	5
4.3 REGISTRATION PERIOD .....	5
4.4 NSBE FEE PAYMENT .....	5
<b>5. EXAMINATION CONTENT</b> .....	6
5.1 EXAMINATION SUMMARY .....	6
5.2 CONTENT SELECTION .....	7
<b>6. SCORING THE NSBE</b> .....	7
<b>7. NOTIFICATION OF EXAMINATION RESULTS</b> .....	7
<b>8. RE-EXAMINATION</b> .....	8
8.1 SINGLE COURSE RE-EXAMINATION .....	8
8.2 FULL RE-EXAMINATION.....	8
8.3 RE-EXAMINATION RESTRICTIONS.....	8
<b>9. CHALLENGING NSBE RESULTS</b> .....	9
<b>10. FRAUD, CHEATING AND MISCONDUCT</b> .....	10
<b>11. CONTRAVENTION CANDIDATE INSTRUCTION</b> .....	11
<b>12. PENALTIES</b> .....	11
<b>13. CONDITIONS FOR BARRING A CANDIDATE</b> .....	12
<b>14. ILLNESS, BEREAVEMENT, AND EMERGENCIES</b> .....	12
<b>15. LICENSE ISSUANCE</b> .....	12
<b>16. REFERENCES</b> .....	13

## 1. BACKGROUND AND GOVERNANCE

In 1948, the Liberian Board for Nurse Examiners (LBNE) was established by the Liberian Nurses Association, and the Nurse Practice Act was passed by the Liberia legislature the following year. In 1952, licensed practical nurses and midwives become Board members of LBNE. The Liberian Council of Midwives (LCM) was established in 1958. LCM merged with LBNE in 1975 to form the Liberian Board for Nursing and Midwifery (LBNM). In 2016, the Nurse/Midwifery Practice Act was amended.

The Liberian Board for Nursing and Midwifery is the legal authority responsible for regulation in Nursing/Midwifery Education and Practice including Administering Licensure Exams for **ALL** basic and post-basic Nursing and Midwifery Graduates.

The **vision** of LBNM is:

- Excellence in nursing and midwifery regulation, education and practice for the health of all Liberians.

The **mission** of LBNM is:

- To protect the public's health and safety by regulating nurses and midwives in order to promote and support safe, competent, ethical nursing and midwifery care through leadership that encourages professional excellence.

The **mandate** of LBNM is:

- Set, regulate and maintain high standards of nursing and midwifery practice in Liberia;
- Accredite nursing and midwifery institutions in Liberia;
- Administer licensure exams;
- Develop and harmonize nursing and midwifery curricula and

ensure adherence;

- Establish procedures and guidelines for the license of all persons practicing nursing and midwifery;
- Register and license all nurses and midwives;
- Ensure continuing competency of active nursing and midwifery workforce; and
- Determine disciplinary actions for violations of nursing and midwifery professional standards.

## **2. LBNM STATE BOARD EXAMINATION AND CREDENTIAL COMMITTEES**

The Credentials Committee is responsible for:

1. Assessing applications by individuals for eligibility to sit the LBNM examination;
2. Reviewing any supporting documents required for licensure;
3. Making recommendations based on policy of a candidate's credentials, and;
4. Providing an annual report summarizing activities to the Executive Committee

The Examination Committee shall have a Chairman along with one member from each of the nursing and midwifery specialties, a member from a Clinical Practice where practical examination will take place and a Board Representative. The Registrar shall be the Secretary.

Functions of the Committee will be the following:

1. To inform the nursing and midwifery candidates about examination deadlines, dates, venues and results;
2. To prepare and administer written and practical oral exams for nursing and midwifery candidates according to the approved LBNM guidelines;
3. To administer the examinations according to eligible candidates who have been approved to sit the exam by the Credentials Committee;
4. To provide oversight on marking written and practical examinations;
5. The Chair will report committee activities to the LBNM annually.

Though described as two distinct committees, the Examination and Credential committees can act as a single body. The Examination and Credentials Committees will meet quarterly or as required or will hold extraordinary meetings for specific purposes such as exam results and matters requiring urgent endorsement.

LBNM bylaws further detail the functions, membership, term, and schedule of meetings of the Examination and Credential Committees.



### **3. EXAMINATION SCHEDULE**

The NSBE is to be administered in-person in Liberia at least twice each calendar year. The dates of the NSBE are selected during the Board's semi-annual Board Meetings.

Through the LBNM Secretariat, the Examination Committee will share NSBE dates with the administration of all accredited nursing and midwifery programs at least three (3) months in advance of the exam date. Though exam dates take into consideration program schedules, national holidays, and LBNM's schedule, exam dates are not chosen at the request of any singular institution or program.

Through LBNM secretariat Examination Committee will inform registered candidates and accredited programs of the venue and time of the NSBE at least one week in advance of the exam schedule.

### **4. ELIGIBILITY FOR EXAMINATION**

Only persons that have successfully completed coursework at one of LBNM's accredited basic/post-basic/advanced programs is eligible to sit the NSBE or persons who have met requirements for foreign-trained candidates.

#### **4.1 CANDIDATE MEETS QUALIFICATIONS**

Successfully completed course work at an LBNM accredited institution:

- Name appears on approved souvenir and NSBE list from an accredited institution
- Contain an LBNM-recognized index number

Criteria for Foreign-Trained Candidates: A professional nurse/midwife legally qualified in a foreign country may qualify in Liberia for a

permanent license as a registered professional nurse/midwife by filing an application to LBNM and submitting evidence as to the following matters:

1. That the applicant has completed a course of study at an accredited institution abroad in professional nursing/midwifery which the Liberian Board for Nursing and Midwifery approves as a satisfactory equivalent to that required in Liberia; and,
2. That the applicant has received a license to act as a professional nurse and/or midwife in a foreign country.

Candidates that do not meet the above criteria due to error or extenuating circumstances may appeal to the Examination Committee or the Secretariat for approval to register.

#### 4.2 RECEIPT OF NAME FROM ACCREDITED INSTITUTION

In order to be considered for eligibility, the Secretariat must receive, at least one month in advance of the exam date, the name and program of the candidate from their accredited institution. If the name is not received from the institution administration, the candidate will not be eligible to participate in the NSBE.

#### 4.3 REGISTRATION PERIOD

The Secretariat will have a one-month registration period in advance of each NSBE. The registration period will open two (2) months in advance of the NSBE date. The registration will close one-month before the NSBE period. During the registration period all fees must be paid and candidates will complete applications for NSBE.

#### 4.4 NSBE FEE PAYMENT

All candidates must pay the required fees before sitting the NSBE. Fees vary based on candidacy status. Fees are to be paid in full at a local

bank and receipt of payment delivered to the Secretariat during the registration period.

The Secretariat will forward lists and applications for registration to the Examination Committee to review eligibility. Candidates meeting all eligibility requirements and approved will receive a card from the secretariat. This card will serve as an admission ticket to the NSBE.

## **5. EXAMINATION CONTENT**

All Candidates are tested on knowledge of subject matter, nursing procedure, drugs administration, side effect and nursing or midwifery implication.

### **5.1 EXAMINATION SUMMARY**

The NSBE for basic programs has five (5) sections or courses. Each course is comprised of 100 multiple-choice questions. NSBE may include written and Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE). Students will have two (2) hours to complete all multiple-choice questions in each course. OSCE will be timed accordingly. The courses are:

1. Medical Surgical Nursing
2. Obstetrics/Gynecology
3. Pediatrics
4. Psychiatry/ Mental Health
5. Tropical and Communicable Diseases

All post-basic/advanced examination courses will be administered based on the content area or specialty. Post-basic examinations may vary in format.

## 5.2 CONTENT SELECTION

The Examination Committee may request questions from each nursing, midwifery, and post-basic institution prior to the examination. Questions may also be generated from group of experts in specific examination content. Schools may be asked to send in the questions for the five major nursing/midwifery courses and post-basic specialty content. The questions received can be combined with questions in a pre-existing test bank. The Examination committee will review all questions in the test bank and select the final questions to appear in each course. The test bank is maintained electronically and managed, monitored, and secured by the State Board Examination Committee in collaboration with the secretariat. Following administration of each NSBE, exam questions are analyzed to remove or improve questions. All exam related items, handlings and preparation must be stored, conducted and performed at LBNM official office at all times.

## 6. SCORING THE NSBE

The Examination Committee manages examination grading using an electronic system to ensure accuracy. Each NSBE course is scored independently and candidates must score at or above 70% to pass a course. All five (5) courses must have passing grades in order to pass the NSBE and be eligible for licensure. For each course in which the candidate does not receive a passing score, the candidate will have to re-sit that course at a future NSBE and delay licensure until s/he passes the course. If a candidate fails three (3) or more courses during a single NSBE, the candidate will have to re-sit the exam for all five (5) courses.

## 7. NOTIFICATION OF EXAMINATION RESULTS

The Secretariat shall notify each examinee of the results of their examination no later than 60 days after the date the examination was administered. Training institutions will be notified of the release date of NSBE results by the Secretariat. If the examination results notice is

delayed or will be delayed for longer than 60 days, the Secretariat shall notify examinees of the delay before the 60<sup>th</sup> day closes.

## **8. RE-EXAMINATION**

Students failing exams will have to go to school from which he/she graduated for name to be submitted by his/her school, for re-examination.

### **8.1 SINGLE COURSE RE-EXAMINATION**

For each course, up to two (2) courses, which does not receive a 70% passing score, a candidate will be required to re-sit the NSBE course.

Candidates will have to meet all eligibility requirements and pay applicable fees.

### **8.2 FULL RE-EXAMINATION**

If a candidate fails three (3) or more courses during a single NSBE, the candidate will have to re-sit the exam for all five (5) courses.

Candidates will have to meet all eligibility requirements and pay applicable fees.

### **8.3 RE-EXAMINATION RESTRICTIONS**

Candidates who fail the NSBE or an individual course three or more times will be required to fulfill additional educational requirements or work under the supervision of a licensed nurse or midwife for one (1) year on a ward in a hospital before retaking the examination. The candidate, with the support of the Secretariat, will identify and apply to an accredited institution. The Secretariat will specify the content of the enrichment program/period. Candidates are responsible for the payment of all fees associated with the enrichment program/period. Candidates are responsible to complete all necessary course work identified by the training institution and the Secretariat before registering for a future NSBE.

## 9. CHALLENGING NSBE RESULTS

For challenges on the grounds of grading, candidates must make a formal complaint to the Secretariat within seven (7) days of receipt of the NBSE results. For challenges on the grounds of grading, a deposit shall be paid when the complaint is made. The deposit shall be refunded if the outcome of the investigation shows errors were made in grading.

For challenges on the grounds of environment or procedure, candidates must make a formal complaint with the Secretariat within seven (7) days of the administration of the NSBE.

**Grading:** If a candidate believes the score is incorrect:

- The Registrar or their designee will review the candidate's answer sheets and re-grade the candidate's exam by hand

**Environment:** If a candidate believes the examination environment was not conducive to testing (had good ventilation, sufficient lighting, minimal noise, and adequate seating):

- The Registrar will appoint an LBNM Board or Secretariat member (not on Examination Committee and not a proctor of the exam in questioned) to follow up on the claim to substantiate or refute the claim. If the complaint is not founded, the candidate's grade stands. If the complaint is founded, the candidate will be eligible to re-sit the NSBE. The candidate will not be subject to payment of fees. The Secretariat and committee will schedule a test for the candidate within thirty (30) days of notification of the investigation outcome.

**Procedural:** If a student believes that policies and procedures were not followed in the administration of the NSBE:

- The Registrar will appoint an LBNM Board or Secretariat member (not on Examination Committee and not a proctor of the exam in question) to follow up on the claim to substantiate or refute the claim. If the complaint is not founded, the candidate's grade stands. If the complaint is founded, the candidate will be eligible to re-sit the NSBE. The candidate will not be subject to payment of fees. The Secretariat and committee will schedule a test for the candidate within thirty (30) days of notification of the investigation outcome.

## **10. FRAUD, CHEATING AND MISCONDUCT**

Candidates are prohibited from committing fraud and/or cheating during the registration period and the examination.

Examples of fraud and cheating include, but are not limited to:

- Impersonating an examinee or permitting an impersonator to take the examination on one's own behalf;
- Using unauthorized or foreign items in the test hall to give candidates an advantage;
- Unauthorized communication during the exam;
- Foreknowledge of examination questions (procuring or having in possession examination questions before the actual examination is due either around the exam center or other places);
- Inducement (candidate bribes or does anything to persuade someone or group of people to do something leading to passing an exam).

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Fighting, insulting, or abusing proctors or candidates;
- Threatening or intimidating proctors or candidates;
- Creating disturbances or distractions in the examination hall.

## 11. CONTRAVENTION CANDIDATE INSTRUCTION

Contravention of instructions occurs when a candidate neglects, omits or fails to follow lawful instructions or orders issued by LBNM during the exam periods:

1. Use of unacceptable dress code;
2. Use of pencil instead of pen or vice versa;
3. Illegal writing in the booklets or answer sheet with intend of changing;
4. Failure to provide index/exam number;
5. Writing the wrong index/exam number on the answer sheet;
6. Start to answer the NSBE booklets before official announcement is made **to start** or continues writing after official announcement is made to **stop work**;
7. Not shading clearly on the answer sheet.

## 12. PENALTIES

If a candidate is found committing fraud, cheating, or misconduct s/he automatically fail the NSBE.

A candidate caught cheating or committing misconduct or fraud is only permitted to register for future NSBEs when he/she has been



cleared by the Examination Committee through the Registrar that he/she has gone through and required procedure and is subject to pay 2 times more of the previous fees paid.

Based on the severity of the fraud or misconduct, a candidate may be asked to attend an enrichment program for 1 year at a Nursing/Midwifery school recommended by LBNM on Nursing/Midwifery ethics. The candidate will be responsible to pay the fees for such program and, upon completion, submit written evidence stating that the candidate attended and completed the program signed by the faculty that taught the course and approved by the Nursing/Midwifery Program head (Dean, Director, etc.)

### **13. CONDITIONS FOR BARRING A CANDIDATE**

Where it is established by the Ethics Committee in collaboration with the Examination Committee that a candidate has committed a high level offence, an agreed period shall be applied for barring that candidate as penalty based on the offence.

### **14. ILLNESS, BEREAVEMENT, AND EMERGENCIES**

If a candidate becomes ill following registration and is unable to complete a NSBE, the candidate will be exempted from the current NSBE and eligible to take a future NSBE. Candidates exempted on account of illness will not be subject to fees associated with registration of a subsequent NSBE for 12 months. Following a 12-month period, candidates will be required to pay fees to register to sit the NSBE.

### **15. LICENSE ISSUANCE**

If the results of an examination taken under these criteria satisfy these criteria, the candidate will be eligible for licensure to practice professional nursing or midwifery in Liberia.

The policy regulating the issuance of licenses is contained in the LBNM Policy for Licensure of Nurses and Midwives in Liberia.

## **16. REFERENCES**

Liberian Board for Nursing and Midwifery Practice Act, amended 2019  
Nursing and Midwifery Council, Ghana. (2016) Rules & Regulations for dealing with Licensing Examination Irregularities

Published by the Liberian Board for  
Nursing and Midwifery (LBNM),  
Monrovia, August 2019

This document is online at  
[www.resilientinstitutionsafrica.org](http://www.resilientinstitutionsafrica.org)

For further information, contact:

LBNM

James A. A. Pierre Building,  
40 Carey Street-Snapper Hill;  
Behind Trinity Episcopal Cathedral;  
Monrovia, Liberia; West Africa

Phone: +23 1-886-426659

Internet: <http://lbnm.gov.lr/>