



Full Licensure: Requirements and Criteria for Physicians

Section:	Registration		
Applicable Legislation:	Sections 5, 19 – 24 of the Medical Act Regulations		
Approved by: Registration Policy Committee Executive Committee	Approval Date: June 20, 2024 July 22, 2024	Reviewer: Deputy Registrar	Review Date: June 2027

PREAMBLE

A Full licence in Nova Scotia is an annually renewable licence for independent practice without terms, conditions or restrictions.

Historically, a Full licence in Canada had strict, rigid prerequisites. In addition to requirements of good capacity, competence, and character, to be granted a Full Licence, the physician was required to hold a recognized medical degree, be a Licentiate of the Medical Council of Canada and hold certification with either the College of Family Physicians of Canada or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia (the College) has pioneered alternate pathways for physicians to obtain a Full licence in the absence of Canadian certification.

PURPOSE

This policy sets out the pathways to, and the minimum requirements for, a Full licence in Nova Scotia.

SCOPE

This policy applies to physicians applying for licensure in Nova Scotia as well as physicians issued a Restricted licence via an approved licensing pathway.^{1, 2, 3}

POLICY

1. Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for a Full licence, physicians must have:

Qualification	Description
Medical Degree	Applicants must have a recognized medical degree from a school listed in the World Directory of Medical Schools. ⁴

Qualification	Description
Licentiate of the Medical Council of Canada	Applicants must be a Licentiate of the Medical Council of Canada or hold an Acceptable Alternative to the LMCC. ⁵
Canadian Certification Examinations	<p>Applicants must obtain certification with the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (the Royal College).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If all other licensing requirements are met, the College also accepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certification issued by the CFPC without examination⁶, and • a pass standing on the relevant Royal College certification examinations via the Practice Eligibility Route.

Alternatively, physicians may qualify for a Full licence if they meet the criteria outlined in one of the following College policies:

- American Board-Certified Physicians: Requirements for Full Licensure.⁷
- Subspecialist Examination Affiliate Program (SEAP) Designates: Requirements for Full Licensure.⁸
- Comprehensive Clinical Assessment of Practice: Criteria and Outcomes.⁹

2. Letter of Offer or Confirmation of Privileges

Physicians who meet the eligibility criteria for Full Licensure without certification by examination with the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada or the College of Family Physicians of Canada must provide the College with a letter of offer **OR** confirmation of privileges with Nova Scotia Health or the IWK Health Centre in Nova Scotia before their Full licence will be issued.

This information is required to satisfy the College's requirement for the respective health authority to conduct a review of the applicant's scope of practice before extending a letter of offer or granting hospital privileges.

3. Scope of Practice

All physicians must only practise within the scope of practice for which they have the training, knowledge, skills and recent practice experience and in accordance with the College policy for *Currency of Practice Experience*.¹⁰

Resources:

1. [Pathway to Long-Term Licensure via a Defined Licence](#)
2. [Pathway to Restricted Licensure for Defined Licence Physicians on Sponsor-Only Oversight](#)
3. [Pathway to Restricted Licensure for Physicians on an Academic Licence](#)
4. [University or School Approved by Council](#)
5. [Acceptable Alternatives to the LMCC](#)
6. [College of Family Physicians of Canada](#)
7. [American Board-Certified Physicians: Requirements for Full Licensure](#)
8. [Subspecialist Examination Affiliate Program \(SEAP\) Designates: Requirements for Full Licensure](#)
9. [Comprehensive Clinical Assessment of Practice: Criteria and Outcomes](#)
10. [Currency of Practice Experience](#)