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New Jersey Enters Multistate Nurse Licensure Compact

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Governor Phil Murphy has signed legislation making New Jersey the 34th State to participate in the enhanced multistate Nurse Licensure Compact (the “Compact”). Through the Compact, registered nurses (“RNs”) and licensed practical/vocational nurses (“LPN/VN”) (collectively, “Nursing Professionals”) in the State of New Jersey will be eligible for employment in the other states that participate in the Compact. Likewise, Nursing Professionals licensed in participating states outside of New Jersey are eligible for reciprocal licenses and therefore employment opportunities in the State. Under the Compact, Nursing Professionals maintain a license in their home states, but are subject to the regulations of the host state, or the state where the care is actually rendered, if they obtain licenses and ultimately practice in another participating Compact state.

New Jersey’s nursing shortage is reportedly among the most significant in the nation. The Compact will permit hospitals and health care organizations to look beyond the State’s borders to attract qualified candidates for nursing positions in the State. It is hoped that simplifying the application process and reducing administrative burdens on the New Jersey State Board of Nursing will help to address New Jersey’s need for Nursing Professionals.

Compact states exchange information and pool their efforts to license Nursing Professionals through uniform licensure requirements and a shared database. The Compact requires participating states to rely on a coordinated licensure information system that tracks regulatory and disciplinary history. Prior to issuing new licenses, states in the Compact must evaluate candidates using the information in the licensure information system. The Compact eliminates the need for qualified candidates to undergo the extensive and often time-consuming process each time they seek an additional state license. The system furthers health and safety in the delivery of nursing services amongst participating states through a standardized process. Compact states are required to report adverse actions against Nursing Professionals, significant investigative information and other relevant information to the shared database. Importantly, the legislation permits New Jersey to withdraw from the Compact if withdrawal is in the best interests of the health, safety and welfare of its citizens or the licensure requirements of another party state become substantially lower than the New Jersey standards.

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Schenck Price is available to provide legal guidance involving myriad regulated professions, including nursing and other health-related fields.

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