

POLICY 211

TRANSITION-TO-PRACTICE PROGRAM RECORDS ON FILE

The ACEN maintains the following records for each transition-to-practice program:

1. Accreditation and Reaccreditation (from most recent review)
 - a. Self Study Report
 - b. Site Visit Report
 - c. Nurse Administrator Response Form

2. Formal Written Correspondence (as applicable)
 - a. Commission Action on Accreditation Status
 - b. Commission Action on Substantive Change Prospectus and/or Letter of Notification
 - c. Complaints (see ACEN Policy 217)
 - d. Correspondence between the ACEN and the sponsoring organization and/or transition-to-practice program

3. Reports (as applicable)
 - a. Focused Visit Report
 - b. Focused Site Visit Report
 - c. Written documentation
 - d. Substantive Change Prospectus and/or Letter of Notification
 - e. Candidacy Application Form (for a period of three years or until initial accreditation is earned, whichever occurs first)
 - f. Candidacy Presentation (for a period of three years or until initial accreditation is earned, whichever occurs first)

Selected records for transition-to-practice programs that have voluntarily withdrawn from the accreditation process or been denied initial or continuing accreditation are maintained by the ACEN.

The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) will retain and destroy sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program accreditation records, non-accreditation records, and official correspondence as required by law, applicable regulations, and ACEN policies.

This policy does not seek to provide obligations that may conflict with federal law or regulations, State Sunshine laws, Open Records, or other record retention laws, and shall be construed wherever possible consistent with such laws; should an apparent conflict arise between this policy and federal or state law, in all instances such law shall prevail.

A. Accreditation Records

Accreditation records means those documents (paper or digital) created by the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program or created by the ACEN and are in the possession

of the ACEN that relate to the review of a sponsoring organization's/transition-to-practice program's seeking initial accreditation, continuing accreditation, or approval of a substantive change.

1. Initial or Continuing Accreditation Records

Initial or continuing accreditation records shall be retained for one accreditation cycle and then destroyed. In the case of appeal or binding arbitration, required records shall be retained until the conclusion of the respective process and then destroyed in four years. These records include the following:

- a. Transition-to-practice program's written report (e.g., Self-Study Report, Focused Visit Report) excluding supporting evidence
- b. Site visit team report, if applicable (e.g., Site Visit Report, Focused Site Visit Report)
- c. Nurse Administrator Response Form, if applicable
- d. Evaluation Review Panel Summary

2. Substantive Change Records

Substantive change records shall be retained for three years and then destroyed. These records include the following:

- a. Written documents (paper or digital) created by the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program as required at the time of submission per ACEN Policy #212 Reporting Substantive Changes for Transition-to-Practice Programs.

3. Candidacy Records

Candidacy records shall be retained for three years or until initial accreditation is earned, whichever occurs first and then destroyed. These records include the following:

- a. Written documents (paper or digital) created by the ACEN or created by the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program as required at the time of submission per ACEN Policy #225 Candidacy for a Sponsoring Organization/Transition-to-Practice Program Seeking Initial Accreditation and candidacy process.

4. Annual Report

Annual Report records shall be retained for four years. These records include the following:

- a. Written documents (paper or digital) created by the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program as required at the time of submission for the ACEN Annual Report.

B. Non-Accreditation Records

I. Complaint Records

Substantiated complaint records shall be retained for four years. These records include the following:

- a. Written documents (paper or digital) created by the complainant or created by the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program at the time of submission as required per ACEN Policy #216 Complaints Against an Accredited Transition-to-Practice Program and the complaint process.

C. Official Correspondence Records

Official correspondence includes correspondence on ACEN letterhead signed by the ACEN Chief Executive Officer and addressed to the sponsoring organization chief executive officer and/or transition-to-practice program administrator.

1. Initial or continuing accreditation official correspondence shall be retained permanently. These include the following:
 - a. Accreditation decision letter to the sponsoring organization's chief executive officer and transition-to-practice program's nurse administrator
 - b. Letter of voluntary withdrawal from initial or continuing accreditation process if the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program withdraws before Board of Commissioners' decision; see ACEN Policy #207 Voluntary Withdrawal from ACEN Accreditation of a Transition-to-Practice Program. In this case, only the sponsoring organization's/transition-to-practice program's withdrawal letter and ACEN acknowledgement letter are retained permanently, and all other documents (paper or digital) created by the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program or created by the ACEN are destroyed.
 - c. Letter of voluntary withdrawal from candidacy process. In this case, only the sponsoring organization's/transition-to-practice program's withdrawal letter and ACEN acknowledgement letter are retained permanently, and all other documents (paper or digital) created by the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program or created by the ACEN are destroyed.
2. Substantive change official correspondence shall be retained permanently. This includes the following:

- a. Board of Commissioners' or Chief Executive Officer's decision letter.
3. Other official correspondence shall be retained permanently as determined by the Chief Executive Officer or designee.
 - a. Correspondence deemed critical to the accreditation functions of the ACEN.

D. Applicability

1. This policy applies to paper or digital accreditation records, non-accreditation records, and official correspondence wherever and however they are retained.
2. Accreditation records, non-accreditation records, and official correspondence do not include any other type of records (e.g., administrative, business, corporate) created by the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program or created by the ACEN and are in the possession of the ACEN.

Policy 211 History
Initial Approval: July 24, 2019
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