

**POLICY 212
REPORTING SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES FOR TRANSITION-TO-PRACTICE
PROGRAMS**

TRANSITION-TO-PRACTICE PROGRAM OBLIGATIONS

It is the responsibility of each transition-to-practice program to notify the ACEN of major changes in a transition-to-practice program to ensure maintenance of accreditation status and protection of nurse residents in accordance with policy. Failure to report a substantive change places the accreditation status of a transition-to-practice program in jeopardy.

The ACEN reserves the right to reconsider the accreditation status of a transition-to-practice program at any time. The ACEN Board of Commissioners may also take action to require formal monitoring of a transition-to-practice program due to non-compliance with any Accreditation Standard.

Based on ACEN policy, a substantive change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of a transition-to-practice program. The different types of substantive change, **information about the need for a Focused Visit, and the timeframe for submission to the ACEN** the specific procedure to be used for each, the respective approval/notification requirement, and the reporting timeline are included in the following table:

Type of Substantive Change	Focused Visit (See Policy #215)	Timeframe for Submission to the ACEN
MISSION-GOVERNANCE-RESOURCES		
A change in the nurse administrator	No	No later than 30 calendar days after permanent or interim nurse administrator assumes duties/responsibilities
A significant change in the organizational structure of the transition-to-practice program that would place a transition-to-practice program in non-compliance with the Transition-to-Practice Standards and Criteria	Possible	No later than 30 calendar days after the change in organizational structure is finalized
Entering into a contractual or consortia relationship with an entity to jointly offer all or part of a transition-to-practice program	Possible	No later than 30 calendar days after the contractual or consortia relationship is finalized
PROGRAM		
Addition of a new transition-to-practice program type	Possible	Within 60 calendar days of the decision to offer a new transition-to-practice program type

Type of Substantive Change	Focused Visit (See Policy #215)	Timeframe for Submission to the ACEN
Closing a transition-to-practice program (See ACEN Policy #213)	No	Within 60 calendar days of the decision to close a transition-to-practice program
PROGRAM OUTCOMES		
A decline of 20% or more below the expected level of achievement in transition-to-practice program completion rates	Possible	Within 60 calendar days of the transition-to-practice program identifying the decline
A decline of 20% or more below the expected level of achievement in nurse resident program satisfaction	No	Within 60 calendar days of the transition-to-practice program identifying the decline
A decline of 20% or more below the expected level of achievement in employer program satisfaction	No	Within 60 calendar days of the transition-to-practice program identifying the decline
A decline in employee retention (as applicable)	Possible	Within 60 calendar days of the transition-to-practice program identifying the decline
A decline of 20% or more below the expected level of achievement in job placement (as applicable)	Possible	Within 60 calendar days of the transition-to-practice program identifying the decline
REGULATORY APPROVAL STATUS		
A change in the approval status with any state regulatory agency, if applicable	Possible	Within 60 calendar days of the program receiving notification

**PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING A SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE:
AN OVERVIEW**

The nurse administrator with responsibility for the transition-to-practice program should submit a letter of notification to the ACEN within the specified timeframe. The letter of notification should include details about the change for the ACEN to review and evaluate the program’s compliance with the Transition-to-Practice Standards and Criteria, including but not limited to the rationale or reason for the change and the date the change occurred or will occur. If the substantive change is related to a decline in program outcomes, the letter of notification should include any plans developed to address the areas of decline.

POLICY STATEMENTS REGARDING SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

1. The Transition-to-Practice Standards and Criteria apply to all ACEN-accredited transition-to-practice programs wherever the transition-to-practice program is located or however the transition-to-practice program is delivered.
2. Failure to comply with the Transition-to-Practice Standards and Criteria or with the procedures referred to in this policy could result in the transition-to-practice program being removed from the list of accredited transition-to-practice programs.
3. The ACEN substantive change transition-to-practice policy applies only to accredited transition-to-practice programs. The substantive change transition-to-practice policy does not apply to programs in Candidacy. Transition to practice programs that have achieved Candidacy status should refer to Policy #225 for information about program changes that should be reported to the ACEN prior to achieving initial accreditation.
4. The ACEN reserves the right to classify significant changes other than those described above as substantive in nature and to follow up accordingly. The follow-up procedure may include a focused visit. See Policy #215.
5. A transition-to-practice program may withdraw/discontinue a substantive change at any time prior to the review by either the ACEN staff or the ACEN Board of Commissioners by submitting a formal letter of withdrawal to the ACEN Chief Executive Officer.
6. ACEN staff will conduct a review of all substantive changes upon receipt. Substantive change submissions may be referred to the ACEN Board of Commissioners or the Chief Executive Officer for the ACEN if the ACEN staff determine the substantive change may affect the program's compliance with the Transition-to-Practice Standards and Criteria.
7. The ACEN staff acceptance of a substantive change is effective as of the date on the acceptance letter sent to the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program.
8. If indicated, the ACEN Board of Commissioners' or Chief Executive Officer's approval of a substantive change is effective as of the date of the Board's approval; this date will be noted in the approval letter sent to the sponsoring organization/transition-to-practice program.
9. Extensive substantive changes by a transition-to-practice program may accelerate the date for the transition-to-practice program's next continuing accreditation. Examples of triggers for an accelerated continuing accreditation include but are not limited to frequent mergers or consolidations or rapid proliferation of new transition-to-practice program types.

TRANSITION-TO-PRACTICE PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of a transition-to-practice program to follow the substantive change procedures and inform the ACEN of substantive changes as specified in this policy and procedures. If a nurse administrator is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, he or she should contact the ACEN staff for consultation.

ACEN AND COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES

The ACEN accredits transition-to-practice programs wherever a transition-to-practice program is located or however a transition-to-practice program is delivered. The ACEN is responsible for reviewing all substantive changes that occur, determining whether the change has affected the quality of the transition-to-practice program, and assuring the public that all aspects of the transition-to-practice program continue to meet the Transition-to-Practice Standards and Criteria.

Policy 212 History

Initial Approval: July 24, 2019

Revised: _____ 2020