



Interstate Medical Licensure Compact

imlcc.org

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NEWSLETTER

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IMLC SPOTLIGHT MEMBER

Alabama



The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC) was signed into law in Alabama on May 19, 2015. Alabama became the seventh state to enact the law, thereby making the compact officially “effective.” Alabama welcomed the Compact and takes pride in having been involved in its successes from the beginning. Becoming a member state early allowed Alabama the opportunity to participate in the initial implementation of the IMLC licensing process and to be involved in the growth of the advancing technology that will lead the IMLC into the future.

To date, Alabama has issued 3,700 licenses via the IMLC

Commissioner Tiffany Seamon was appointed to represent Alabama in September of 2021 and has served on the Personnel Committee since that time. Commissioner Karen Silas was appointed in May of 2017 and has served on the Budget

Continued on page 4



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

The 2024 legislative season is drawing to a close in most states. In March, legislation was passed in Florida, making it our 40th State, along with Guam and DC. Massachusetts, New York, and North Carolina have bills that are active in committee, but they appear stalled and unlikely to be passed this year. IMLCC staff continue to work the process and take every opportunity to advance the bills.

CONTINUING EDUCATION TRACKING PILOT

At the request of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners, the IMLCC IT staff completed a project to help streamline the Continuing Education or CE verification process used by Louisiana. Louisiana used CE Broker as their vendor and requested the assistance of IMLCC IT staff to work with the board and vendor staff to create a process that would provide a verification process similar to that used by physicians renewing their licenses through the traditional process. This pilot process has been successfully completed and is in the final implementation stages. If your board uses CE Broker or any other CE verification vendor, the pilot process is available, and IMLCC IT staff can assist in implementing a similar process for your board.



Application Programming Interface Development For License Renewal

The Technology Committee of the IMLC encourages state boards to pursue application programming interface (API) development for compact renewal applications. IMLC staff has been engaging in application programming interface (API) development, and it has recently completed renewal process projects with several member states.

Through API, compact database information is communicated to state licensing databases, reducing manual data entry so that licensing data flows directly between databases. Ultimately, the goal is that the API will handle all aspects of compact processes and data exchange, but the primary application process being pursued at this time is renewal applications.

Background

Physicians who are issued their licenses through the Interstate Medical License Compact (IMLC) must renew their licenses through the compact application process, as opposed to renewing directly through each individual state board's process. Renewal application and payment comes from the compact and must be manually processed to update license information in the state board databases. This is a resource-intensive process, and the growing number of compact licensees means this renewal process consumes more board staff and compact staff time each year.

One of the major sources of burden in the renewal process is that the person processing applications must interact with the record at multiple points to complete a renewal—creating a state database record when the notice arrives from the compact, coming back to that record when funds have been credited to the record, manually tracking it to make sure they are not missing any records, then going back to the compact database (iStarsII) to finalize renewal with the renewal date and expiration date. This manual process is naturally prone to human error.

The API Development Process

Compact staff provides project leadership, and the compact absorbs its programming and development costs, as well as its expenses in consulting with state developers. API development requires resources from state boards in the form of programming/developer time. On the board side, the state database will need configuration, and state developers will need to coordinate with the compact developers. For states that have undergone renewal API configuration, development costs have been \$10,000-15,000 and it has taken two to three months to complete. This expense to state boards may be offset by available grants, and will likely be offset by efficiencies gained by shortening the processing time and by reducing the number of phone calls and emails to customer service, executive leadership, and application processors, and fiscal technicians. In many cases, external grant opportunities are available for board technology enhancements.

IMLCC Annual Meeting

The Commissioners of the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact Commission met in Greenwood Village, Colorado for the annual meeting. Dr. Humayun Chaudhry delivered the keynote address, reviewed how the IMLCC has changed physician licensure and created an important new pathway for license portability.

Professor Darwyn Deyo, Ph.D., from San Jose State University, presented her study “Access to Care and Physician Practice Growth After the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact”. The study was done independently and found that states who join the IMLCC show significant growth in physician populations, especially in rural and underserved areas. The paper is available on the IMLCC’s webpage, under the “News” tab, then clicking on “Publications”.

Several Bylaws and Rules were considered as part of a rulemaking hearing

The following rules were amended as part of the hearing:

- **IMLC Rule Chapter 3**
- **IMLC Rule Chapter 4**
- **IMLC Rule Chapter 5**
- **IMLC Rule Chapter 6**

The IMLC Rules can be found on the webpage by clicking “IMLC Commission” then selecting “Compact Policies, Rules and Laws”

Finally, the Commissioners elected a slate of officers

- **Karen Silas** from Alabama was elected as Chair.
- **Jake Manahan** from Minnesota was elected as Vice Chair.
- **Ken Cleveland MD** from Mississippi was re-elected to a second term as Treasurer.
- **Mark Spangler** will assume the role of Past-Chair.

Just before the conclusion of the meeting, the Commissioners decided to hold the November 2024 Meeting of Commissioners in Phoenix, Arizona. The tentative dates are November 11 and 12, 2024.

*Helping Physicians
Since 2017*



Executive Director's Report

By Executive Director Marschall Smith

The IMLCC continues to grow and change how physicians are licensed. A data study was completed that showed that 31% of all the new licenses issued by member boards were through the IMLCC process in 2022. (IMLCC staff are working on 2023's study.)

It is a testament to the hard-working member board and IMLCC staff who process the applications, answer the questions, and get the job done. Physicians report receiving their requested licenses in 7 to 10 days, with some states issuing licenses within 48 hours of the request. In the 10 years since the concept

was first discussed, that concept has been successfully implemented, a robust and reliable system created, and a financially secure organization has been created. As of April 2024 – over 100,000 licenses have been requested and issued to physicians. Amazing work, any way you look at it.



ALABAMA *Continued from page 1*

Committee, as Treasurer, Vice Chair, and is the current Chairperson of the IMLC. Both commissioners are very involved in the day-to-day operations of their Board and its utilization of the IMLC processes. Alabama also proudly hosted the IMLC Annual Meetings in 2020 and 2022 in Gulf Shores.

To date Alabama has issued over 3,700 licenses via the IMLC, with nearly half of all physician licenses issued in Alabama in 2023 being issued via the IMLC process. Additionally, Alabama has issued 512 Letters of Qualification (LOQ) to date. In April 2023, the FBI ordered Alabama to discontinue conducting criminal background checks for the purpose of verifying eligibility for an LOQ. Since that time, Alabama has been unable to act as an IMLC State of Principal License (SPL). Alabama and the IMLC continue in their efforts to find a resolution that will satisfy the FBI's requirements in this matter so that Alabama can resume issuing LOQs.

Participation in the Compact has been extremely beneficial for healthcare in the State of Alabama by expediting licensure for physicians in many different specialties as well as those practicing in rural areas. Licensure portability became very important during the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing Alabama to quickly access additional physicians to provide medical care for our citizens. In 2015, the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact was one of the solutions to a crisis that we would not know until 2020.

Alabama recently implemented the first of several Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) that are currently provided by the IMLC Technology Department. The renewal API made a measurable difference in reducing staff time and energy during the renewal period; we highly recommend that other member states also explore this benefit.

Alabama strongly believes in the mission of the IMLC and is grateful for the outstanding group of IMLC staff, Commissioners, and member board staff who make it all possible. We look forward to working alongside each of you as we continue to streamline the licensing process for physicians across the United States and increase access to healthcare in America.

**INTERESTED IN HAVING YOUR STATE
BECOME PART OF THE COMPACT?**

Contact Marschall Smith at imlccexecutivedirector@imlcc.org.