

The Pathway to Licensure for New Graduates and the Possible Pitfalls

We will soon welcome another class of graduates of Respiratory Therapy (RT) Programs. This is an exciting time as many make the transition from student to licensee. It is our intention to help both students and RT Directors/employers see both the best pathway to licensure and also the possible pitfalls. First, ASBRT does not offer a student license, but rather a student exemption status. It is important to clarify the difference because students are exempted from licensure only if currently enrolled in a RT Program and under direct clinical supervision. This exemption expires immediately upon graduation. Therefore, students should not be allowed to work after graduation and prior to providing proof to their employers of their licensure. We have recently seen investigations conclude with disciplinary action taken against both students and RT Directors who did not follow this mandate. Make sure not to allow students to work after graduation if they are not licensed to comply with State Law.

Students may make application for licensure up to thirty (30) days prior to their graduation date. ASBRT strongly encourages making application at the first opportunity to do so in order to allow adequate time to complete possible application deficiencies. We understand that applications cannot actually be completed until we receive proof of their graduation and proof that they have registered to take the examination, but applying early will assist in reviewing the other requirements for licensure including completing a criminal background check which typically adds a couple of days to application turn-around.

Graduation time is an especially busy time administratively for ASBRT. Therefore, applications are processed in order of receipt and we ask that applicants allow for up to a ten (10) day turn-around time. Applicants are written right away of any application deficiencies that need their attention. Therefore, it is important that applicants provide accurate contact information to receive these notifications and eventually their licensure materials.

Due to the privacy act, ASBRT cannot release specific application information to employers - only to the applicant. However, the live on-line roster will reflect both the expiration of student exemptions and the issuance of new licenses in real time. Both applicants and employers can utilize this service for immediate confirmation of license issuance.