

POLICY 324: Candidacy for a Sponsoring Organization/Advanced Practice Provider Program Seeking Joint Initial Accreditation

A sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program seeking joint initial accreditation with the ACEN and ARC-PA must apply for Candidacy. The sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program seeking joint initial accreditation must:

1. Demonstrate that the sponsoring organization and advanced practice provider program are eligible for joint ACEN and ARC-PA joint accreditation; See Policy #303.
2. After the eligibility of the sponsoring organization and advanced practice provider program have been established by ACEN and ARC-PA staff, pay the required Candidacy fee(s).
3. Demonstrate that the advanced practice provider program has the potential to achieve joint initial accreditation based on requirements for the Candidacy Presentation and within the timeframe established by the ACEN and ARC-PA.

Approval, Deferral, or Disapproval of Candidacy

Based on the established requirements, the ACEN Chief Executive Officer and ARC-PA Executive Director may (a) approve an advanced practice provider program for Candidacy, (b) defer an advanced practice provider program for Candidacy, or (c) disapprove an advanced practice provider program for Candidacy.

A program may be approved for Candidacy to pursue joint initial accreditation for a maximum of two years. Once approved for Candidacy, an advanced practice provider program must host an initial accreditation site visit prior to the expiration of Candidacy.

Approval of Candidacy

Approval of Candidacy is granted when, in the professional judgment of the ACEN Chief Executive Officer and ARC-PA Executive Director, informed by the professional judgement of the ACEN and ARC-PA staff, the advanced practice provider program either:

- h. Makes a Candidacy Presentation that demonstrates the advanced practice provider program is currently compliant with the requirements for the Candidacy Presentation and based upon the Candidacy Presentation, has the potential to achieve joint initial accreditation; or
- i. Makes a Candidacy Presentation that demonstrates the advanced practice provider program has the potential to be compliant with the requirements for

the Candidacy Presentation within two calendar years of the date of notification, and based upon the Candidacy Presentation, has the potential to achieve joint initial accreditation.

Being approved for Candidacy informs the sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program and the public that the advanced practice provider program demonstrated the potential to achieve joint initial accreditation based upon the staff's professional judgment regarding requirements for the Candidacy Presentation at the time the advanced practice provider program was approved for Candidacy. Being approved for Candidacy does not guarantee that the ACEN Board of Commissioners and ARC-PA Commissioners will determine that the advanced practice provider program is in compliance with all the Advanced Practice Provider Standards and Criteria at the time the ACEN Board of Commissioners and ARC-PA Commissioners reviews the advanced practice provider program for joint initial accreditation. See Policy #304.

Advanced practice provider programs approved for Candidacy must publicly disclose the following information exactly as illustrated below.

Effective [insert date of notification letter], this advanced practice provider program is a candidate for joint initial accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing and Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). This candidacy status expires on [insert expiration date in notification letter].

The disclosure must include the name, address, telephone number, and web address of the ACEN and ARC-PA as illustrated below.

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400
Atlanta, GA 30326
404-975-5000
www.acenursing.org

Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA)
3325 Paddocks Parkway, Suite 345
Suwanee, GA 30024
770-476-1224
www.arc-pa.org

Note: Upon granting of joint initial accreditation by the ACEN Board of Commissioners, the effective date of joint initial accreditation is the date the advanced practice provider program was approved as a Candidate program by the ACEN that resulted in the ACEN Board of Commissioners granting joint initial accreditation.

Deferral of Candidacy

Deferral of Candidacy is granted when, in the professional judgment of the ACEN Chief Executive Officer and ARC-PA Executive Director, informed by the professional judgement of the staff, the advanced practice provider program:

- a. Makes an inconsistent Candidacy Presentation that does not demonstrate that the advanced practice provider program is currently compliant with the requirements of the Candidacy Presentation. Deferral indicates the advanced practice provider program may have the potential to demonstrate compliance with the Candidacy Presentation with the opportunity to resubmit the Candidacy Presentation.

Being deferred for Candidacy informs the sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program that the advanced practice provider program demonstrated that it may have the potential to achieve Candidacy based upon the staff's professional judgment regarding requirements for the Candidacy Presentation at the time the advanced practice provider program was deferred for Candidacy. Being deferred for Candidacy does not guarantee that the advanced practice provider program will be approved for Candidacy if the advanced practice provider program resubmits the Candidacy Presentation.

Deferral of Candidacy is not an appealable action.

If deferred, the advanced practice provider program has up to one calendar year of the date of notification to resubmit the Candidacy Presentation for reconsideration without restarting the entire Candidacy Process and paying related fee(s) again. Upon resubmission of the Candidacy Presentation, the advanced practice provider program must be (a) approved for Candidacy or (b) disapproved for Candidacy.

Disapproval of Candidacy

Disapproval of Candidacy is made when, in the professional judgment of the ACEN Chief Executive Officer and ARC-PA Executive Director, informed by the professional judgement of the staff, the advanced practice provider program either:

- a. Does not make a Candidacy Presentation that demonstrates that the advanced practice provider program is currently compliant with the requirements for the Candidacy Presentation and based upon the Candidacy Presentation, does not have the potential to achieve joint initial accreditation; or
- b. Does not make a Candidacy Presentation that demonstrates that the advanced practice provider program has the potential to be compliant with the requirements for the Candidacy Presentation within two calendar years of the date of notification, and based upon the Candidacy Presentation, does not have the potential to achieve joint initial accreditation.

Disapproval of Candidacy is not an appealable action.

If disapproved, to seek joint initial accreditation with ACEN and ARC-PA, the advanced practice provider program is required to restart the Candidacy Process and pay related fee(s) again. The advanced practice provider program may restart the entire Candidacy process at any time after being disapproved for Candidacy.

Failure to Meet Any Timeline

During the Candidacy process, failure to meet any established timeline established will result in an advanced practice provider program losing its approval for Candidacy status. If an advanced practice provider program fails to meet any required timeline prior to hosting an initial accreditation site visit, then the advanced practice provider program must restart the entire Candidacy process, pay related fee(s), and submit a new Candidacy presentation, which may result in approval, deferral, or disapproval. Submission of a new Candidacy Eligibility Application and Candidacy Presentation reinitiates the Candidacy process for the advanced practice provider program, and the effective date of joint initial accreditation will be based on the new date that the advanced practice provider program is approved to pursue joint initial accreditation.

The Candidacy process can be restarted at any time after an advanced practice provider program loses its approval for Candidacy status or voluntarily withdraws from the Candidacy process.

Obligations of Sponsoring Organization and Advanced Practice Provider Program Approved for Candidacy

Each sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program making a Candidacy Presentation or approved for Candidacy agrees to certain requirements concerning financial obligation, choice of law, jurisdiction, and venue. As a condition of reviewing any Candidacy Presentation or of being approved for Candidacy, each sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program agrees to the following:

- a. The sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program agrees to abide by Policy #320 Litigation.
- b. It is the obligation of every sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program seeking Candidacy to pay all fees and expenses when due. Failure to pay all fees and expenses when due shall be deemed a voluntary withdrawal from the Candidacy process. A schedule of current fees and expenses is available at [HYPERLINK].

The sponsoring organization/advanced practice provider program must notify the ACEN and ARC-PA, in writing, of (a) all unexpected changes that occur within 30 calendar days of the change or (b) all expected changes that are planned to occur no less than 120 calendar days prior to the change occurring. Failure to report an unexpected or expected change may delay

or jeopardize an advanced practice provider program from being approved for Candidacy; hosting an initial accreditation site visit; or being granted joint initial accreditation by the ACEN Board of Commissioners and ARC-PA Commissioners.

Changes requiring notification include but are not limited to:

- a. change in the program administrator
- b. the advanced practice provider program relocates to a new location
- c. change in the sponsoring organization's and/or advanced practice provider program's status with a regulatory agency or for international programs a change in the approval status with any regulatory agency that oversees nursing in the country
- d. change in the status with the sponsoring organization's accrediting agency
- e. change in the sponsoring organization's accrediting agency
- f. change in the advanced practice provider program's curriculum
- g. addition and/or deletion of a new location where the advanced practice provider program is offered

The written notification must address the requirements for the Candidacy Presentation related to the change (e.g., for a change in the curriculum and/or new program option, all the required Criteria in the Candidacy Presentation for Standard 4 Curriculum).

If the ACEN Board of Commissioners and ARC-PA Commissioners grant initial accreditation but determines there is an unreported change, the Commissioners may decide to exclude the unreported change in its joint initial accreditation decision of the advanced practice provider program. If the Commissioners excludes the unreported change in its joint initial accreditation decision, then the advanced practice provider program is required to submit the unreported change through the program change policy, undergo the subsequent review process, and is obligated for any related expense(s) that results from the program change process. See Policy #312.

Policy 324 History
Initial Approval: ___ 2023