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## **An Explanation of NCSBN's Authority and Discipline Regarding Licensed Nurses**

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NCSBN has recently received complaints about nurses or people representing themselves as nurses making offensive, and in some cases, racist statements.

NCSBN is the vehicle through which nursing regulatory bodies, including boards of nursing (BONs), act and counsel together on matters of common interest and concern affecting public health, safety and welfare. NCSBN has no authority over individual nurses.

Individual state BONs regulate and oversee nursing practice in the U.S. by enforcing the nursing laws of their state. BONs uphold their nurse practice acts and are charged with disciplining nurses who violate them.

A nurse's practice and behavior is expected to be safe, competent, ethical and in compliance with applicable laws and rules. Any person who has knowledge of conduct by a licensed nurse that may violate a nursing law or rule, or related state or federal law, may report the alleged violation to the BON where the conduct occurred. Most states require a written and signed description of the practice or behavior that is being reported. Many states have complaint forms available on their websites, or you may call the BON to request information on how to file a complaint.

[Contact a board of nursing.](#)

[Learn more about filing a complaint.](#)