

# Augusta University

## Policy Library

# State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements Policy for Online Education and Licensure

**Policy Manager: Office of the Provost**

### POLICY STATEMENT

Augusta University (AU) is committed to addressing all requirements of accreditation, disclosure, quality and accountability required by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. This ensures all students have access to high quality online degree programs and can sit for licensure upon completion of their academic programs.

### AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS

*Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:*

- Alumni     Faculty     Graduate Students     Health Professional Students  
 Staff     Undergraduate Students     Vendors/Contractors     Visitors  
 Other: Academic Units Offering Online Programs

### DEFINITIONS

These definitions apply to these terms as they are used in this policy:

**Professional Licensure Program:** An academic program that is designed to meet, or that advertises itself as meeting, regardless of modality, educational requirements for a specific professional license or certification that is required for employment or practice in a recognized occupation.

**State Authorization:** The formal approval granted by a state, territory, or jurisdiction allowing the University to offer educational activities (including distance education and experiential learning) to students located in that state or territory. Authorization may be obtained through direct state approval or participation in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

**State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA):** A voluntary agreement among member states, territories, and institutions that establishes comparable national standards for offering interstate postsecondary distance education. SARA participation allows the University to offer many distance education and field experience activities in other member states while maintaining compliance with state and federal regulations.

**The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity (NC-SARA):** A private, nonprofit organization recognized as a 501(c)(3) entity that oversees the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA).

**Student Location:** For purposes of state authorization, professional licensure disclosures, and NC-SARA compliance, a student's location is defined as the place where the student is physically present when

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engaging in educational activities, regardless of their permanent or legal residence. The University relies on information self-reported by students and determination will be as follows:

- At the time of application: The Office of Admissions collects and records the students' physical location and desired licensure or certification state at the time of application. The student's physical location at the time of application for admissions is used to determine whether the University is authorized to offer the program in that state or territory and whether the program meets or does not meet the educational requirements for professional licensure or certification.
- During enrollment: The student's current physical location will be updated whenever the student self-reports an address change or relocation to another state or territory.

## **PROCESS & PROCEDURES**

### **Background:**

The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA) provides a streamlined, reciprocity-based process for participating postsecondary institutions to gain approval to offer distance education in SARA member states without individually applying to each state for such approval.

NC-SARA authorizes member institutions to offer many out-of-state activities, such as online courses and field experiences, in NC-SARA member states and territories. Institutions approved by their states to participate in SARA must be appropriately accredited and meet academic and financial requirements designed to protect and benefit students. Not all out-of-state activities are covered by NC-SARA; some professional licensure programs may need to seek separate authorization from state licensing boards and regulatory agencies.

### **Institutional Requirements for Participation in NC-SARA:**

Augusta University is an institutional participant in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA), which allows the University to conduct specific educational activities in other NC-SARA member states. Augusta University will comply with the requirements of NC-SARA, as specified in the most recent version of the *SARA Policy Manual*.

#### **1. Programs Leading to Professional Licensure**

Programs are responsible for a state-by-state determination of whether their programs meet or do not meet the state's educational requirements for licensure or certification in the field of the program. When applicable, they will obtain approval or exemption from the appropriate state licensing boards or regulatory agencies before offering the program or allowing students to participate in out-of-state educational activities (such as clinical placements, practicums, internships, or rotations) in states or territories that require registration or prior approval. Program will maintain accurate professional licensure disclosure statements published on the admissions website for their respective programs, in coordination with the Quality Assurance Compliance

Analyst. They will provide Enrollment Management with the finalized disclosure information for distribution to applicants and admitted students and submit out-of-state educational data each semester.

**2. Guidelines for Distance Education/NC-SARA Policy Manual:**

Augusta University complies with the provisions of The Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education in the most recent NC-SARA Policy Manual. Online Learning is fully integrated into the institution’s curriculum planning, course design, student support, and assessment processes, ensuring quality, accountability, and student success in distance education.

**3. Complaints:**

As a participating institution under NC-SARA, Augusta University agrees to work cooperatively with the Georgia SARA (GA-SARA) State Portal Entity to resolve any complaints that arise from students located in other SARA member states. Augusta University publishes this NC-SARA student complaint policy in the institutional catalogs and makes it readily accessible on the University’s website.

All complaints must first be addressed through the University’s internal complaint resolution process. If a complaint remains unresolved after exhausting the University’s procedures, the complaint should be referred to GA-SARA for further review in accordance with NC-SARA complaint policy guidelines. Augusta University’s NC-SARA complaint resolution process is available online at: <https://www.augusta.edu/vpii/disclosure.php>

**4. Professional Licensure/Certification Disclosures:**

Augusta University will provide public notifications related to the professional licensure programs offered by the institution that are designed to lead to professional Licensure or certification or advertised as leading to licensure.

Disclosures: Institution provides students or applicants with the appropriate disclosure information about programs leading to professional licensure.

- **General disclosures** - AU’s websites disclose whether professional licensure programs meet or do not meet the educational requirements for licensure or certification in a student’s state or territory. At Augusta University (AU), each professional licensure program determines, for each state, whether its curriculum meets these requirements. These determinations are regularly reviewed and updated on the program website. Updated lists are also shared with Enrollment Management to ensure compliance with federal disclosure rules.
- **Direct disclosure** – are individual written notifications (electronic or printed) provided to a student when the University determines that their program does not meet the educational requirements for professional licensure or certification in the state or territory where the student is located.

- Direct disclosures are sent to prospective students prior to enrollment when the program does not meet state educational requirements.
- Direct disclosures are sent to enrolled students within 14 calendar days of the University learning that the student’s current location is in a state where the program does not meet those requirements.

Attestations: When a prospective student’s physical location at the time of application is in a state where the professional licensure program does not meet the educational requirements for professional licensure or certification, the Office of Admissions will provide the applicant the option to complete a written attestation. This legally binding document confirms the applicant’s intent to seek employment or licensure in a state where the program meets the educational requirements upon graduation. Completion of the attestation is voluntary; however, if an applicant chooses not to submit the attestation, Enrollment Management cannot proceed with admission into the program. Each professional licensure program maintains an updated list of all states and territories where the program’s curriculum meets or does not meet the educational requirements for professional licensure or certification. This list is shared with Enrollment Management prior to each admission cycle to ensure applicants receive accurate disclosures and that the attestation process is applied when required.

**5. Address Changes:**

The university will monitor and identify when students currently enrolled in professional licensure programs report a change in location. They will use the updated address information to determine whether a student’s new location is in a state or territory where the program is not authorized to be offered or does not meet educational requirements for licensure.

**6. Data reporting:**

Augusta University agrees to provide annual data reporting as required by NC-SARA. This reporting includes, but is not limited to, data on the physical location of students enrolled in distance education and students participating in out-of-state learning placements, submitted in accordance with NC-SARA’s established reporting timelines. Professional licensure programs will collaborate with the Office of Faculty Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness to ensure accurate and timely submission of required information related to student locations and placements.

**REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- [SARA Policy Manual](#)

**RELATED POLICIES**

- NC-SARA Authorizing Legislation: [34 CFR 600.9 and 668.43](#)

**APPROVED BY:**

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Augusta University

Date: 5/25/2026

President, Augusta University

Date: 5/26/2026