TNA recognizes the value of suspending nursing occupational licensing laws and requirements in emergency situations to manage short-term crises, like the COVID-19 pandemic. TNA also recognizes that temporary suspension of these requirements efficiently addresses the immediate demand for nurses in emergencies.

As such, TNA members value and believe in:

- Fostering high standards of nursing practice through verification of continued competency
- Advocating on health care issues that affect the public
- Acting with integrity, respect, and transparency

However, ensuring continued competency protects Texans and should not be waived beyond a crisis. While a state emergency may justify the need to waive licensure reactivation requirements for nurses without an active license so they may return to the workforce without delay, such waivers should not extend beyond the emergency situation.

Nurse licensure is intended to assure the public that the license holder is competent to practice. Initially established via passing a national licensure examination, ongoing nurse competency is demonstrated each two year relicensure cycle by active engagement in the practice of nursing and completion of a minimum of 20 contact hours of continued nursing education in the nurse’s area of practice. A nurse who has not practiced nursing in four or more years must comply with Board of Nursing requirements prior to practice re-entry. While these requirements cannot guarantee competency, they do provide a minimum level of assurance that the nurse is current in knowledge and skill to practice safely.

Nursing is considered a safety-sensitive occupation; that is, nursing errors can cause patient harm. Continued competency requirements help assure the public that the nurse maintains the current knowledge, psychomotor skills, and professional judgement to practice nursing safely. The Standards of Nursing Practice require that nurses promote a safe environment and be responsible for their own continuing competence in nursing practice and individual professional growth. The Code of Ethics for Nurses holds that nurses are responsible to promote a safe environment for patients, and one way nurses do this is to maintain their own competency.