

INFORMATION FOR GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES AND REGULATORY AGENCIES

The following is a summary that describes our cooperative efforts with governmental authorities regulating or licensing users of health care laser systems. More information on NCLC policies is in the handbook available at https://lascertification.org/NCLC_Certification_Candidates_Handbook.pdf

Licensing and Regulatory requirements for laser use seem to vary widely among jurisdictions both in the U.S. and internationally. Most jurisdictions have no requirements at all. We believe that a more consistent application of licensing requirements will better serve the interest of public safety, rather than widely varying requirements in different locations that have no reciprocity among them. The NCLC was formed in the year 2000 to address the issues of credentialing for laser use and is a credentialing division of the non-profit Professional Medical Education Assn formed in 1980. In the U.S. the certifications are primarily for non-physician use of lasers such as aesthetic laser use, but in some other countries even physicians are required to have an NCLC Laser Certification prior to practicing with lasers. For others where no licensing requirements exist, they serve as a professional credential to differentiate the holder from other providers. The American National Standard Institute Z136.3 has already recommended Certification for Medical Laser Safety Officers, which the NCLC provides.

The goal of the NCLC is to provide a credible credentialing system, based on criteria from experts in the field of health care lasers, that will be used as the principle base requirement for licensing and regulation of health care laser operators in most jurisdictions worldwide. This has precedence with the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) in the U.S... In the 1970's the NBRC was a professional credentialing organization just as the NCLC is now. The NBRC began cooperating with State licensing agencies back then. Now, when someone applies for their respiratory license in any State, the State simply goes online to confirm their Registry or Certification credentialing with the NBRC and then accepts the application and fees from the applicant to grant a license to practice in that State. The State imposes no other requirements other than to meet the requirements of the NBRC. This is systematic, consistent and relies on criteria from a professional organization in that field. The NCLC was based exactly on the policies and procedures of the NBRC, except that it applies to laser use.

NCLC Laser Certifications are currently used as a prerequisite for some State and other Governmental licensing agencies regulating medical and aesthetic laser procedures, both in the U.S., and International Licensing Agencies in other countries. The NCLC Certification is adjunctive to the medical certification or licensing process. Some States/Governments may opt to require this National Laser Certification, in addition to specific additional clinical experience, as part of an application for licensing in that State. ***The NCLC will assist State/Governmental agencies with integrating the Laser Certification process into the agency's other licensing requirements.*** Each State's specific requirements may vary.

Interested parties may contact Gregory Absten from the NCLC to discuss ways in which to best harmonize the NCLC Laser Certifications with the requirements of specific health care authority agencies to best promote public safety and ease of administration on the part of the agency and applicants.

Gregory Absten, absten@lascertification.org
Chairman, National Council on Laser Certification