



NOW THAT YOU'VE GRADUATED . . .

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"I've graduated! Now what?" You are a newly graduated physician assistant, now entering the real world. How do you get from your graduation ceremony to your first job? While the sequence of events may differ for each student, there are general items that must be checked off your list before day one on the job. In this article you will find an example of a general checklist as well as further details on each item listed. Students can modify the checklist to make it personal and applicable. Be sure to celebrate when you are done!

It should also be noted that you may start the job application process at any point in time. (This article does not go into detail on the job application process) In some situations, it may be helpful to have a job when filling out certain portions of the required paperwork.

The "I've Graduated PA School" Checklist:

- √ Graduation Ceremony!
- √ Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE)
- √ State Licensure
- √ National Provider Identifier (NPI) Number
- √ Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) License
- √ Hospital Credentialing (when applicable)

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT NATIONAL CERTIFYING EXAM (PANCE)

Students are eligible to take the PANCE after graduation from an accredited PA program. Registration for the exam occurs through the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), which is the certifying organization for physician assistants in the United States. You must work with your individual PA program to be sure all requirements have been met prior to registering for the exam. The NCCPA website provides specific details regarding the PANCE.

NCCPA WEBSITE: <http://www.nccpa.net/become-certified>

Requirements: Graduation from accredited PA program¹

Cost: \$475

STATE LICENSURE

Applying for licensure is typically the next step after successfully passing the PANCE! Each state medical board or licensing authority will have different paperwork requirements. Check with the state you intend to practice in and visit the state medical board website for specifics on the



requirements. The American Academy of PAs (AAPA) website provides a list of all of the state medical boards and licensing authorities.

AAPA LIST OF LICENSING BOARDS: <https://www.aapa.org/advocacy-central/state-advocacy/state-licensing/list-of-licensing-boards/>

Requirements: Things you may need include *passport style photos, letters of reference, proof of certification**, *criminal background check or fingerprinting***, *copies or verification of other professional licenses/certifications held, educational transcripts, proof or documentation of your PA education****.

Cost: be prepared to pay a licensing fee, exact cost varies by state

Additional Notes: If you have a job lined up, you will likely be asked to submit a copy of your “Practice Agreement” to the state medical board for approval prior to starting your job. The state license can also take time for processing, so be sure to check with your medical board on the expected wait time.

* Currently the NCCPA provides an option for “Certification Information Release” when you log in to view your PANCE scores. This can be used to send proof of certification to most medical boards.

** The state licensing board will give specific instructions if these are needed.

*** This typically means an official letter from the director of your PA program.

NPI NUMBER

The NPI is a 10-digit, unique identification number for health care providers covered under Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).⁴ You may find it best to wait on this application until you can list a practice/business address, otherwise your personal address will appear publicly with the NPI number.

Website: <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do>

Requirements: Social Security Number

Cost: None

DEA LICENSE

The Drug Enforcement Administration Office of Diversion Control requires that practitioners have a license to prescribe controlled substances. PAs must meet requirements for state licensure as well as be authorized by the state to prescribe the controlled substances prior to obtaining a DEA license.²

DEA Forms and Applications:

http://www.deaiversion.usdoj.gov/online_forms_apps.html

Requirements: State license number, NPI number

Cost: \$731³



HOSPITAL CREDENTIALING

Hospital credentialing allows you to have clinical privileges at a hospital. Each hospital will have a medical staff office that will have individual requirements for membership.

Requirements: Things you may need include *State license, DEA number, NPI number, passport style photos, professional references, criminal background check or fingerprinting, copies or verification of other professional licenses/certifications held, malpractice record, practice agreement.**

Cost: varies by hospital

** This list is intended to be an example of possible items required for credentialing and is not comprehensive.*

Disclaimer: This article is simply intended to give students a general idea of what to expect after graduation. It is not intended to be an authority on PA certification and licensure, nor a substitute for academic guidance from an accredited PA program.

REFERENCES

1. National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). PANCE Registration Information. <http://www.nccpa.net/pance-registration>. Accessed August 12, 2016.
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3. The Drug Enforcement Administration Office of Diversion Control. Application for Registration Under Controlled Substances Act of 1970 (New Applicants Only). <https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/webforms/jsp/regapps/common/newAppLogin.jsp>. Accessed August 12, 2016.
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AASPA
American Association of Surgical Physician Assistants