



HOUSE BILL 231: Social Work Interstate Licensure Compact.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Finance. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	March 25, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Reeder, Campbell, Potts, Blackwell	Prepared by:	Trina Griffin*
Analysis of:	Second Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 231 would make North Carolina a member of the Social Work Licensure Compact (Compact), facilitating the licensure of social workers across state lines. Twenty-two states are currently participating in the Compact.*

The Finance components of this bill include authorizing the North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board to conduct criminal background checks for which the applicant would be required to pay a fee and to charge a fee for granting the multistate license. Finally, the Compact Commission would also levy an annual assessment on the Board to cover its operations and activities.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 231 would make North Carolina a member of the Social Work Licensure Compact. Under the Compact, a social worker licensed in a member state would be able to practice in any other member state.

The bill would add a new Article 2 to Chapter 90B (Social Worker License and Certification Act) with the following provisions:

G.S. 90B-20. Purpose. Describes the purpose of the Compact

G.S. 90B-21. Definitions. Creates definitions for "active military member," "adverse action," "alternative program," "charter member states," "Compact Commission," "current significant investigative information," "data system," "domicile," "disqualifying event," "encumbrance," "executive committee," "home state," "impairment," "licensee," "licensing authority," "member state," "multistate authorization to practice," "multistate license," "qualifying national exam," "regulated social worker," "remote state," "rule of the Commission," "single-state license," "social work," "state," and "unencumbered license."

G.S. 90B-22. State participation in Compact. Requires all states who are Compact members to do the following:

- Have licensure, education, examination, and discipline standards.
- Participate in the Compact Commission's (Commission) data system, follow the Commission's rules, and nominate a delegate to participate in Commission meetings.
- Implement procedures to conduct criminal background checks and notify the Commission about any criminal or disciplinary activity of the state's licensees.
- Authorize individuals holding a multistate license to practice in the state.
- Designate the categories of social work that are eligible for multistate licenses. Member states may charge an additional fee for granting a multistate license.

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G.S. 90B-23. Social worker participation in the Compact. All social workers participating in the Compact must:

- Hold an unencumbered license in a home state.
- Pay applicable fees.
- Pass a criminal background check.
- Notify the home state of any adverse action taken by any other state.
- Meet continuing education requirements.
- Follow the laws of the state in which the client is located when care is provided.

In addition to these requirements, different levels of licensure must meet additional competency and educational requirements. Multistate licenses may be revoked or encumbered by any state in which the social worker practices.

G.S. 90B-24. Issuance of a multistate license. Once a state determines an applicant has submitted a valid application for multistate licensure, it must issue the multistate license at the appropriate licensure level.

G.S. 90B-25. Authority of Interstate Compact Commission and member state licensing authorities. Nothing in the Compact may be construed to limit a state licensing authority's ability to enforce its own laws and regulations, issue single-state licenses, or take adverse action against a single- or multistate licensee practicing in the state.

G.S. 90B-26. Reissuance of a multistate license by a new home state. Social workers who move from a member state to another member state must be issued a new multistate license after submitting a valid multistate application in their new home state. Social workers moving to or from non-member states will be subject to their new state's single-state licensure rules.

G.S. 90B-27. Military families. Home state designations of military members and military spouses will remain valid when the member is on active duty.

G.S. 90B-28. Adverse action. Only home states may take adverse action against a multistate license. Remote states may only take action against the authorization for an individual to practice remotely in that one state. Remote states may report conduct warranting adverse action to a licensee's home state. Member states may take notice of the investigation results of any other member state. Results of any investigation must be reported to the Compact's data center where it will be accessible to all member states.

G.S. 90B-29. Establishment of Social Work Licensure Compact Commission. The Commission will be established to administer the Compact. Each member state will have one delegate with one vote on the Commission. The Commission will have the following powers:

- Establish a code of conduct, conflict of interest policy, rules, bylaws, and a fiscal year.
- Maintain financial and business records and conduct annual financial reviews.
- Take action, including initiating legal proceedings, as necessary to ensure compliance with Commission rules.
- Hire or contract with employees.
- Assess and collect fees, accept gifts, dispose of property, and borrow money.
- Establish a budget.

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- Cooperate with law enforcement.
- Appoint committees, including an Executive Committee, which will be composed of 11 members, removable by the Commission, and which will oversee the day-to-day operations of the Commission and exercise the powers of the Commission.
- Conduct open meetings unless confidential legal matters are being discussed.
- Levy fees on member states to fund its operations.

Commission members will be immune from suit for their official duties, and the Commission must defend them, indemnify them, and hold them harmless from any suit or judgment arising out of their official duties.

G.S. 90B-30. Data system. The Commission will develop a data system for all member states to submit information to, including the following:

- Identifying information.
- Licensure data.
- Adverse actions and investigative information.
- Disciplinary information.

All member states will have access to the information in the data system, but each state may designate certain information that cannot be released publicly without permission.

G.S. 90B-31. Rulemaking. The Commission will have the power to adopt rules that have the force of law in each member state. Rules may only be adopted after at least 30 days' notice, a public hearing, which may be via videoconference, a request for comments, and a majority vote of the Commission. Emergency rules may be adopted with 48 hours' notice, provided the full rulemaking process is retroactively applied no later than 90 days after the emergency rule goes into effect. Rules rejected by a majority of the legislatures of member states will be void.

G.S. 90B-32. Oversight; dispute resolution; enforcement. The government of each member state will enforce the Compact provisions. Suit against the Compact must be brought in a court in the jurisdiction where the principal office of the Compact is located. The Commission will receive any service of process against the Compact and may intervene in any suit against the Compact.

The Commission must notify any member state that it is in default of its obligations under the Compact. If the member state refuses to cure the default after notice and remedial training, the Commission may terminate that state's membership in the Compact. A defaulting state may challenge its termination from the Compact in court.

The Commission will attempt to resolve disputes between member states through mediation or binding arbitration.

G.S. 90B-33. Effective date; withdrawal; amendment. The Compact will be effective on the day the seventh member state enacts it. States may withdraw from the Compact by repealing the legislation enacting the Compact. Nothing in the Compact will affect any agreements a member state has with non-member states that does not conflict with the provisions of the Compact.

G.S. 90B-34. Construction and severability. Rulemaking authority under the Compact will be broadly construed to effectuate the purposes of the Compact. Any provision of the Compact found to be unconstitutional will be severed from the rest of the Compact provisions. A member state may be removed from the Compact if a constitutional requirement of the state is a material departure from the Compact.

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G.S. 90B-35. Consistent effect and conflict with other state laws. Licensees providing services in remote states must comply with the laws of the states where the client receiving the care is located.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This bill would become effective October 1, 2025.

BACKGROUND: As of March 10, 2025, the Compact has been enacted by 22 states.

Jason Moran-Bates, counsel to House Health, substantially contributed to this summary.