



IDFPR

Illinois Department of
Financial and Professional Regulation

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IDFPR Announces New Pathway to Licensure for Internationally Trained Physicians to Work in Illinois

CHICAGO – As part of the Pritzker Administration’s commitment to expanding the health care workforce and providing needed care to the people of Illinois, the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) today announced a new licensure process that will better enable internationally trained physicians to provide their services to the people of Illinois. International Medical Graduate physicians (IMGs) may now apply for an International Medical Graduate Limited License that allows them to practice under a supervising physician and begin the pathway to full licensure in Illinois. IMGs may now apply for this new license by [going here](#).

"Today marks a transformative step forward in the landscape of health care in Illinois," said **IDFPR Secretary Mario Treto, Jr.** "This new process opens doors for skilled professionals to provide their expertise to the people of Illinois while ensuring they receive the support and supervision necessary for success. Together, we are strengthening Illinois’ health care system and embracing the rich diversity of medical knowledge from around the globe."

The International Medical Graduate Limited License is valid for two years, during which the IMG must practice under the supervision of a fully licensed physician at an approved sponsoring institution. IMGs may then apply for an International Medical Graduate Restricted License upon successful completion of the two-year supervised practice. This license allows for more independent practice within designated [health professional shortage areas](#) and [populations](#). IMGs are then eligible to apply for a full Illinois medical license after two years of practicing under the International Medical Graduate Restricted License.

"The physicians of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS) send our thanks to the Governor, the members of the Illinois General Assembly, and IDFPR for recognizing the need to expand the physician workforce in the state," said **Richard C. Anderson, M.D., President of the Illinois State Medical Society**. "This new measure will help fill the gaps in our state where access to medical care and/or certain physician specialists is not easy for people, with ISMS advocating to ensure that there are safeguards in place to protect patient safety while IMGs are pursuing licensure. It is a win-win for patients that helps alleviate the shortage of medical professionals in key areas of Illinois."

“I am thrilled that Illinois is taking these important strides in allowing IMGs to have a meaningful pathway to re-licensure here in our state,” said **Rep. Theresa Mah (D-Chicago)**. “This step will help address our healthcare worker shortage while also providing opportunities for talented, valuable, skilled professionals to make their home and build their careers here in Illinois.”

IDFPR also recognized the importance of enabling IMGs during the COVID-19 pandemic, working with Illinois lawmakers and industry groups to enact a series of innovative measures so IMGs could provide critical health care services. Those steps included allowing licensed physicians to delegate “any and all authority” to IMGs (subject to recordkeeping requirements to ensure the IMG is certified) and IDFPR adding a full-time employee as a licensing liaison to assist international licensure applications. These proactive steps were recognized in a [2023 report by Upwardly Global](#), a national organization that supports work-authorized immigrants and refugees with international credentials to restart their careers in the United States.

Furthering the State of Illinois’ efforts to assist IMGs and ensure their integration into our health care workforce, IDFPR recently convened the Task Force on Internationally Licensed Health Care Professionals. Established under Public Act 102-0812 in an effort to address the ongoing health care worker shortage, this body is comprised of 12 members tasked with identifying ways to remove barriers to licensure and practice in Illinois for internationally trained health care professionals.

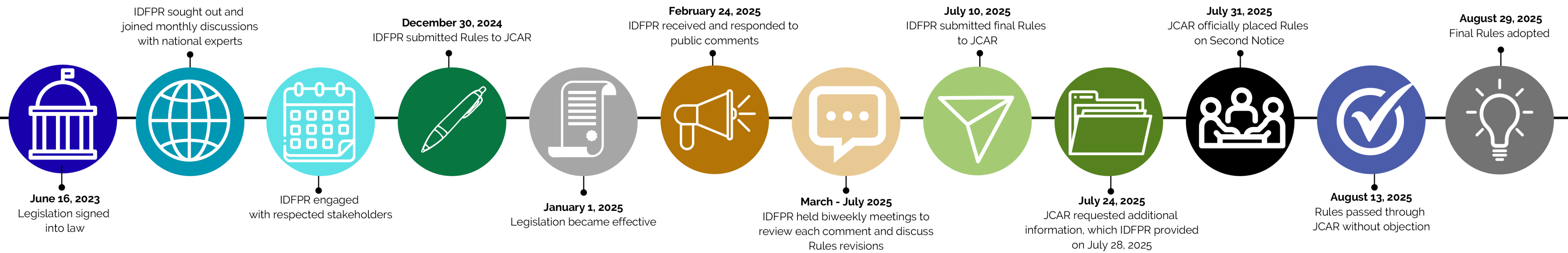
Every stage of the rulemaking process for the new IMG pathway to licensure was precisely executed and carefully completed to benefit the public, ensure patient safety, and secure buy-in from the medical community. This rulemaking involved review and feedback from myriad sources, including the medical community, Governor JB Pritzker’s Office, the Illinois State Medical Board, and the General Assembly’s Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR). These steps were designed to protect patients and uphold the integrity of licensure. More about the implementation timeline can be found in the included infographic.

Additionally, IDFPR announced today that three other license types joined the International Medical Graduate Limited License on the Department’s online licensing system, [CORE](#). Ninety-nine license types are now available on CORE. The new license types added to CORE are:

- Visiting Physician Permit
 - Visiting Professor
 - Visiting Resident

Information about other innovative IDFPR successes can be found on the [Department’s new Hub webpage](#).

IMG License Pathway: Built Thoughtfully. Built Right.



PROCESS AND DEVELOPMENT

Every stage of this rulemaking process was precisely executed and carefully completed to benefit the public, ensure patient safety, secure buy-in from the medical community, and comply with the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act. This rulemaking involved review and feedback from myriad sources, including the medical community, the Governor's Office, the Illinois State Medical Board, and the General Assembly's Joint Committee on Administrative Rules ("JCAR"). The Department has treated these steps not as hurdles to clear, but as opportunities to strengthen the final set of rules.

Since the statutory language requiring an International Medical Graduate ("IMG") pathway was signed on June 16, 2023, IDFPR worked tirelessly to create the rules governing this completely new licensure option in advance of the law's January 1, 2025, effective date.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Within months of the law's passage, the Department sought out national expertise, meeting with a former Midwest state regulator with experience implementing similar programs, and joining monthly national discussions hosted by the Federation of State Medical Boards ("FSMB") on emerging best practices on alternative routes to licensure for IMGs. IDFPR also participated in FSMB's June 2024 symposium in Washington, D.C., bringing the latest national insights back to Illinois to inform this important work.

The Department also actively engaged respected Illinois and national stakeholders, including the Illinois State Medical Society ("ISMS"), Illinois State Medical Board, Illinois Hospital Association ("IHA"), Northwestern University, the American Board of Medical Specialties ("ABMS"), the Illinois Department of Public Health ("IDPH") and the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians ("IAFP"). IDFPR also worked hand in hand with the Governor's Office and JCAR. Each of these partners contributed critical expertise throughout each stage of development.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Rules were filed with JCAR on December 30, 2024, and placed on First Notice on January 10, 2025. The required 45-day public comment period concluded on February 24, 2025, and the Department thoughtfully reviewed and addressed every written and verbal comment received. IDFPR accepted comments beyond the 45-day comment period to ensure all voices were heard.

From March through July 2025, the Department held biweekly meetings to review each comment in detail and discuss potential revisions. This process was completed by July 1, 2025, and the Department incorporated all agreed-upon edits.

FINAL ADOPTION

The final Rules were submitted to JCAR for Second Notice on July 10, 2025. On July 24, 2025, JCAR requested additional information, which IDFPR gathered and submitted by July 28, 2025.

The Rules were officially placed on Second Notice on July 31, 2025, and were scheduled for consideration by JCAR at its August 13, 2025, meeting in Springfield, where they passed without objection. On August 29, 2025, the Rules were formally adopted.



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