

PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE LICENSING POLICY

When it comes to professional licensing, no single policy model is right for every state or every profession. There are, however, recurring areas of concern in bills that have been introduced in several states. The Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL) has drawn from its experience to develop the following “Principles of Responsible Policy.”

If you are considering licensing reform, we encourage you to incorporate these principles to ensure that licensing standards for highly complex and technical professions with high impact on public health, safety, and welfare are maintained.

1 Provide for adequate public protection

Licensing reform should be grounded by the need for each state to protect its citizens from harm. Licensure clearly demonstrates to the public that a professional has the knowledge, skills, and abilities to practice safely and is held accountable for his or her work.

2 Ensure the public has vital recourse

Licensing reform solutions must ensure the public is provided with adequate and accessible recourse should harm occur. Relying solely on the civil litigation process as the only means of recourse is costly and burdensome to consumers.

3 Begin with the most targeted approach

To put it another way: work the problem you have. Good reform policy should focus on clearly defined and documented problems with a specific, targeted approach as opposed to a one-size-fits-all approach.

4 Define clearly which occupations and professions are included or excluded

Many broad-brush reforms do not adequately distinguish the occupations and professions that would be deregulated. It is important to ensure that deregulation does not create new problems by inadvertently extending to professions that are not the problem or where licensing is necessary to ensure public health, safety, and welfare.

5 Recognize mobility and reciprocity systems that work

Many reform efforts do not recognize that there are current mobility and reciprocity systems in place that are working well. Many national associations of regulatory boards have worked with state licensure boards to implement model legislation and mutual recognition programs that get licensees to work quickly.

ARPL believes that responsible professional licensing policy is achievable through collaboration with state licensing boards, their respective national associations, and other stakeholders. We are here to be a resource during the policy process and can offer solutions to serve as models that work for the public and members of a given profession.