

# State Professional / Occupational License Requirements for Immigrants

## **Important Disclaimers:**

- This information is based on outreach to each state's specific licensing boards from April to July 2023. To get up to date information on licensure application requirements, you should verify this information with the appropriate licensing board in your state.
- This information does not constitute legal advice. Consult with an attorney for legal advice.
- If you qualify for professional licensure (refer to your state chart) and you do not have work authorization, you cannot work as an employee. You may be able to use your license as an independent contractor or business owner.
- Federal law prohibits states from issuing professional licenses to immigrants who are not lawfully present in the U.S. unless the state passes a law expressly providing eligibility for professional licensure. You can check the law for your state at this link: <https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/states>

## Licensure Checklist

### **Before you rely on the information below, take these steps:**

1. Contact the state licensing board and ask for the latest guidance on whether you will need lawful status, a social security number (SSN), or an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) to:
  - a. Obtain a license;
  - b. Complete required clinical hours; or
  - c. Complete a background/fingerprint check. *(Note, the Board may direct you to a separate agency or third-party vendor for this information).*
2. If you do not have an SSN or an ITIN, you can find out how to get an ITIN on TheDream.US website: [thedream.us/itin](https://thedream.us/itin)

## Virginia Professional License Requirements

Professional License	Available with SSN & Lawful Presence*	Available with ITIN	Available without SSN or ITIN
Nurse	Yes	No	No
Physician's Assistant	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Counselor	Yes	Yes**	No
Psychologist	Yes	Yes**	No
Medical/Clinical Lab Technician	Yes (not regulated by state)	Yes (not regulated by state)	Yes (not regulated by state)
Dentist / Hygienist	Yes	Yes**	No
Educator	Yes	Unknown	No
Attorney	Yes, with Affidavit of Non-Immigrant/Immigration Status	No	No
Accountant	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social Worker	Yes	Yes**	No
Professional Engineer	Yes	Yes**	No

\*For purposes of this guide, lawful presence is defined under [8 CFR § 1.3](#), which includes DACA and TPS holders.

\*\*An applicant may provide a control number issued by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) instead of an SSN. The Virginia DMV offers Virginia residents Virginia Driver privilege cards to drive, which require an SSN or ITIN but do not require proof of legal presence or U.S. citizenship.