



College of  
Registered Nurses  
of Manitoba

# Practice Direction:

## Registered Nursing Agency Practice

*The College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (the College) Council must, by regulation, establish standards of practice to regulate the quality of practice of registrants of the College.*

*The Council approves practice directions which are written statements to enhance, explain, add, or guide registrants with respect to matters described in the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba General Regulation or any other matter relevant to registered nursing practice. Compliance with practice directions is required; these expectations also serve as a legal reference to describe reasonable and prudent nursing practice.*

*It is the responsibility of all registrants to understand all practice expectations and be accountable to apply them to their own nursing practice, regardless of roles or practice settings. Responsibility is the duty to satisfactorily complete your obligations. Accountability means being capable of explaining why you did or did not meet these expectations.*

*The policies of employers do not relieve individual registrants of accountability for their own actions or the primary obligation to meet practice directions. Employer's policies should not require a registrant to practise in a manner that violates practice directions.*

**NOTE:** the use of the word registrant refers to registered nurse, registered nurse (authorized prescriber), registered nurse (nurse practitioner), registered nurse (graduate nurse practitioner), and graduate nurse.

### Contact a Quality Practice Team Member:

204-774-3477 ext. 301

1-800-665-2027

[practice@crnm.mb.ca](mailto:practice@crnm.mb.ca)

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## Defining Nursing Agency and Agency Practice

For the purposes of this document:

“**Nursing agency**” refers to a private, for-profit organization that employs, brokers contracts for, or assigns registered nurses (RNs) on a temporary or contractual basis to individuals, public or private organizations, and service delivery organizations (SDOs), for the purposes of direct care provision. Nursing agencies are often engaged to address specific service needs or staff shortages. Nursing agencies may engage, employ, or contract with one or more RNs or businesses.

“**Agency practice**” refers to any registrant practicing with a “nursing agency” whether it is in the capacity of self-employment, as an employee, contractor, or subcontractor.

“**Agency RN**” is any registrant engaged in agency practice.

## Purpose

The purpose of the Practice Direction: Registered Nursing Agency Practice, is to outline additional expectations to which RNs engaged in agency practice are accountable. Note: The practice expectations outlined in this document are in addition to all other practice directions, expectations, and requirements to which a registrant is otherwise accountable.

Agency practice often takes place in unfamiliar practice settings, where the nature and extent of supervision and oversight can vary significantly. This variability can result in several additional risks and challenges:

- It is more difficult for agency RNs to assess the knowledge, skill, and judgment required within an unfamiliar practice setting prior to accepting work.
- It is more difficult for agency RNs to receive timely or effective feedback about their practice.
- It is more difficult for agency RNs to seek resources and assistance in unfamiliar practice settings.
- As a result of the lack of direct and consistent oversight within the practice setting, concerns about an RN’s practice may not be adequately addressed or reported.
- It is often not apparent to members of the public or colleagues when RNs are practising with a nursing agency.

## Practice Expectations

**Before accepting work with a nursing agency:**

1. Agency RNs must ensure they have reviewed and understand the following College documents:
  - a. Self-Employed Practice Overview: Agency Practice on the College’s website and linked documents.
  - b. Practice Direction: Self-Employed Practice.
2. Agency RNs must complete and submit to the College, the approved Agency Nursing Declaration form, which includes:
  - a. Confirmation that they have at least **2,015** practice hours in a Canadian jurisdiction.
  - b. Agency contact information, including the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all nursing agencies with which they are practicing.
  - c. Any required details about their agency nursing practice requested by the College.
3. Agency RNs must maintain an up-to-date CRNM registrant profile that accurately reflects their current agency employment or association, including the name, address, and phone number of the nursing agency.
4. Agency RNs who are self-employed must consult the liability coverage provider to ensure they carry adequate liability coverage for their self-employed practice.
5. Before accepting work for the first time in a practice setting, agency RNs must:
  - a. Ensure they have the requisite knowledge, skill, and judgment to meet the needs of the practice setting; and
  - b. Inform an appropriate representative from the practice setting if they are unable to meet the needs of the practice setting safely, and outline what would be required to provide the necessary care.

6. Before or immediately after accepting work in a practice setting, agency RNs must ensure that they either have or will receive the necessary training, as well as access to the tools, technology, and supplies they need to practise in compliance with the practice directions and facility policies and procedures, including:
  - a. Access to the practice setting;
  - b. Access to the health record;
  - c. Access to policies and procedures relevant to the care they are providing; and
  - d. Access to any required equipment and medications.
7. Before accepting a patient assignment, agency RNs must reassess their knowledge, skill, judgment and ability to meet the client's needs.
8. Agency RNs must complete any orientation recommended or directed by the agency and/or practice setting.

#### While engaging in nursing practice with a nursing agency:

9. Agency RNs must inform their clients/families and members of the healthcare team that they are practicing with a nursing agency. They must also provide the name of the agency, when requested.
10. Agency RNs must cooperate and comply with any quality assurance or incident reporting requirements or policies and procedures present in any setting where they practice.

#### When ceasing agency practice:

11. Agency RNs who cease agency practice, for any reason, must inform the College, promptly and in writing, to request the withdrawal of their agency declaration.
12. Agency RNs must update their College registrant profile to accurately reflect the conclusion of their employment or association with a nursing agency.

#### Record-keeping requirements:

13. Agency RNs must ensure they can provide the following details about their agency practice, to the College, when requested:
  - a. The date(s) they engaged in agency practice;
  - b. The location(s) of the agency practice (facility, unit, department, as applicable);
  - c. The number of hours worked in each location; and
  - d. Copies of any related contracts or agreements.

Agency RNs are required to cooperate with any requests made by the College to verify or confirm this information.

#### References

CRNM (2025). *Self-Employed Practice Overview: Agency Practice*. <https://www.crnmb.ca/rns-nps/practice-support/self-employed-practice>

CRNM (2022). *Practice Direction: Self-Employed Practice*. <https://www.crnmb.ca/resource/4405/>