



# **RAMP**

# **Recovery &**

# **Monitoring Program**

# **Participant Guide**

Recovery & Monitoring Program

*A Program of the Institute for Nursing*

1479 Pennington Road | Trenton | New Jersey | 08618

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# Table of Contents

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<a href="#">Introduction</a> .....	3
<a href="#">History and Mission</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Program Overview</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Case Managers</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Peer Assistance Program</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Participant Rights and Responsibilities</a> .....	7
<a href="#">Release of Information</a> .....	7
<a href="#">Intake and Referral Process</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Eligibility</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Terms of Participation</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Compliance</a> .....	11
<a href="#">Communication</a> .....	11
<a href="#">Monthly Reporting</a> .....	12
<a href="#">Toxicology Screening</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Return to Work</a> .....	14
<a href="#">Restrictions on Employment</a> .....	16
<a href="#">Controlled Substances</a> .....	17
<a href="#">Prescriptions</a> .....	17
<a href="#">Monitoring Interruptions and Relocation Policies</a> .....	19
<a href="#">Treatment and Relapse</a> .....	20
<a href="#">Evaluations</a> .....	21
<a href="#">Successful Completion</a> .....	22
<a href="#">Dismissal and Withdrawal</a> .....	23
<a href="#">Glossary</a> .....	24
<a href="#">References and Resources</a> .....	27
<a href="#">Appendix A – Procedures for Reinstatement of License</a> .....	28
<a href="#">Appendix B – The Participant Guide Release form</a> .....	30

# Introduction

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Welcome to the Recovery and Monitoring Program (RAMP). This guide will serve as a primary source of information during your participation in RAMP. This guide includes a description of RAMP and the Peer Assistance Program, terms of participation and policies of the program. Additional program information and documents are posted on the New Jersey State Nurse Association (NJSNA) website [www.NJSNA.org](http://www.NJSNA.org) and on your Electronic Monitoring System. Please read this guide carefully and refer to the website periodically for updates. Contact your case manager with any questions regarding your participation in the program.

RAMP is a program of the Institute for Nursing (IFN), the foundation of the New Jersey State Nurses Association. Since 1988, the IFN's mission has been to support the advancement of nurses through education, research and clinical development.

RAMP is an alternative to discipline program that is contracted with the New Jersey Board of Nursing (NJBON) to provide monitoring services.

**Health professionals are not immune to mental illness and substance use disorders. In fact, approximately 6-20% of nurses suffer from mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Many of these nurses do not seek or receive the help they need. RAMP's priority is the well-being of nurses and the safety of the public by supporting nurses in their wellness.**

RAMP will provide monitoring while the nurse/nurse applicant takes control of their physical, emotional, spiritual and social health. Congratulations on taking this step towards making positive changes!

RAMP, was established in January 2003. The aim of the program is to protect the public's safety and assist participants with impaired practice issues. RAMP encourages participants to seek recovery before their impairment harms a patient or damages their career through disciplinary action.

For more than three decades, NJSNA and the IFN have identified the support of nursing with substance use disorders as a priority requiring awareness, advocacy and support. The NJSNA was instrumental in the passage of Alternative to Discipline legislation allowing New Jersey nurses, the opportunity to seek treatment and protect their nursing licenses.

RAMP, NJSNA and the IFN recognize that nurses face a broad range of potential issues, which may impair their abilities to practice nursing safely. RAMP has expanded beyond substance use disorders to further support nurses in safe practice.

## Mission

The mission of RAMP is to protect the public while safeguarding the well-being of nurses.

RAMP achieves its mission through:

- Advocacy for nurses
- Education of nursing and consumer communities
- Ongoing program evaluation to assure the implementation of best practices and outcomes

RAMP works collaboratively with the NJBON, the nursing community and the consumer public as put forth in the mission of NJSNA and the IFN.

## Impaired Nursing Practice

Nursing practice is impaired when the individual is unable to meet the requirements of a professional code of ethics and standards of practice because of cognitive, interpersonal or psychomotor skills that are altered by conditions of the individual within the environment. These factors include psychiatric illness, excessive alcohol or drug use or addiction.

*(Impairment) Means an inability to function at an acceptable level of competency or incapacity to continue to practice with the requisite skill, safety and judgment as a result of alcohol or chemical dependency, psychiatric or emotional disorder, senility or a disabling physical disorder*

New Jersey Board of Nursing Laws, posted 6/2011

**RAMP encompasses a comprehensive, structured plan for Recovery and Monitoring that promotes public protection and safe practice. The program is voluntary and participation will remain non-public if eligible for alternative to discipline. RAMP monitoring consists of the following approach:**

- Random toxicology screening and daily check-ins
- Peer support meetings
- Support meetings (such as 12 step meetings, etc.)
- Treatment
- Return to work process and workplace monitoring

## **Services**

- Assisting with communication to licensing boards and other sanctioning agencies
- Third party toxicology screening
- Confidential data collection to document maintenance of recovery
- Independent resource regarding treatment options for and recovery from impaired practice

**The participants are responsible for all costs related to the program including the application fee, costs of evaluation, peer assistance meetings and toxicology screens.**

## **Case Managers/Health Care Professionals**

RAMP case managers are nurses and other healthcare professionals who possess educational and clinical expertise in substance use disorders and mental health.

Case managers:

- Provide participants with information and support
- Conduct a preliminary assessment
- Monitor participants compliance, progress in recovery and safety to practice
- Act as **liaisons between all parties** involved with the program's participants
- Educate participants, employers and the community

## **Peer Assistance Program**

The Peer Assistance Program has been in existence since 1981. The primary activity of the Peer Assistance Program is nurse-led support meetings for nurses with substance use disorders and mental illness. The peer meetings are self-help, smoke & drug free facilitated by nurses, who understand addiction and the recovery process.

The Peer Assistance Program also provides:

- Confidential 24 hour assistance thru the crisis hotline
- Assistance for nurses with problems of impaired practice
- Information for nurses who need medical interventions
- Information on treatment facilities
- Educational programs to public about identification, intervention and referral

**24 Hour Crisis Hotline for Impaired Nurses 1-800-662-0108**  
**Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week**

**Please note – Participants already enrolled in RAMP that are calling during off hours should ask to speak to the case manager on call.**

## **RAMP and Peer Assistance Program**

The peer support meetings are forums where nurses can discuss:

- Nursing issues and problems
- Gain support from nurse peers
- Support RAMP's Recovery and Monitoring practices

All participants are required to actively participate in peer support meetings weekly and abide by the rules of the meeting.

Participants are:

- Required to identify a "home" meeting to which they will be required to attend weekly
- Expected to make up missed meetings at another meeting either the week before or the week after the missed peer support meeting
- Expected to attend and participate in these meetings
- **Financially responsible for the costs related to the peer meetings**

Peer Meetings are confidential. Documenting and/or recording of meetings are prohibited.

RAMP staff and Peer facilitators will communicate as needed regarding the participant's compliance.

***Please note: The Peer Support Meeting is not a substitute for therapy, treatment or 12 step meetings.***

**Fees:** The participants are responsible for the cost of the peer support meetings.

**Group Changes:** Participants must have the permission of their case manager and peer facilitators prior to transferring home meetings. Refer to page 9 for the policy on changing peer meetings.

# Participants Rights and Responsibilities

## Rights

As a participant in RAMP, you have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Have your privacy maintained in accordance with state and federal guidelines
- Timely communication with RAMP staff
- Accept or decline participation in any research
- Know the length of anticipated RAMP participation and expected completion date
- Refuse participation at any time and to be informed of possible consequences
- Be informed of costs involved with participation
- Know the name and qualifications of assigned RAMP case manager

## Responsibilities

As a participant in RAMP, you are responsible to:

- Adhere to the terms of your RAMP monitoring agreement
- Maintain open, honest and timely direct communication with RAMP case manager, peer facilitator, healthcare provider, therapist and employer
- Submit all required/requested documentation in a timely manner
- Actively participate in program
- Complete all recommendations made by the RAMP team
- Maintain compliance with daily check-ins and toxicology testing when selected
- Ensure that your personal information is updated and accurate
- Absorb all financial cost incurred (e.g. lab fees, peer meeting fees, and initial application fee)
- Attend 12 Step meetings, if required by RAMP
- Refrain from nursing practice until granted approval by RAMP
- Refrain from the use of substances that have not been approved by the RAMP team
- Notify all other states where you are licensed

## Team Review Resolution

Participants should attempt to discuss issues directly with Director/designee.

## Release of Information

The release of information is a mandatory component of RAMP's monitoring program. The purpose of the release of information is to facilitate monitoring, recovery and return to safe nursing practice. RAMP case managers must be able to communicate with all individuals who

support the participants' health and nursing practice. This includes, but is not limited to, primary care provider, pain management specialists, therapists, supervisor and peer facilitators.

RAMP requests that participant sign releases to allow this exchange of information. Refusal to sign consent forms will lead to dismissal from RAMP.

## **Privacy and Confidentiality**

All personal information and health records maintained by the program will be kept non-public, which means it will not be disclosed to the public but it may be known to the Board of Nursing and may be required to be shared with employers, treatment providers and other state boards of nursing.

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## **Intake and Referral Process**

### **Referrals**

- Self - The nurse can contact RAMP prior to being confronted or be requested to do so by an employer, co-worker, friend, or family member
- Employer - An employer may refer a nurse to RAMP
- Board of Nursing - A Board of Nursing may refer a nurse to RAMP as a result of a complaint and/or discrepancies in a background check or profile
- Other - Family members, co-workers, and friends may refer a nurse in need to RAMP

The Intake Coordinator will begin the intake and determine category for RAMP participation.

### **Eligibility**

Nurses are eligible to participate in RAMP if they:

- Are identified as having their practice impaired by a substance use disorder or mental illness
- Are willing to refrain from practice and seek evaluation and treatment
- Agree to abide by a contract that sets the requirements for safe return to practice

Eligibility may also be determined by the licensing board. Those licensees with disciplinary action may still be monitored for maintenance of recovery.

### **Enrollment and Intake Process**

**Intake Interview** - The participant will have a telephone interview with the intake coordinator. The intake coordinator may require the participant to complete the interview in person.



**Enrollment Paperwork** - The participant will receive an enrollment packet that must be completed. Once completed, the packet, along with all signed documents will be returned to RAMP. The document packet may include, but not limited to, the following forms:

- RAMP Application
- RAMP Release of Information
- RAMP Monitoring Agreement (Please note: Any change in monitoring or practice will require a contract revision)
- Legal Representation Form
- Financial Responsibility Form
- Board of Nursing documentation including (but not limited to) Private Letter Agreement
- Any admission or discharge summaries requested by RAMP
- Forms must be signed as stated, forms altered in any way will not be accepted

**Toxicology Screening** – The electronic monitoring system will send an online enrollment packet to the participant. Once she or he receives this packet and completes an intake, the participant must activate their account and begin checking-in daily.

**Peer Meetings** - Participants are required to attend peer meetings. The intake coordinator will assist the participants in selecting a peer meeting during the intake. Once selected, participants are required to contact the peer facilitator prior to attending first meeting.

A complete list of peer meetings and contact information for the peer facilitators is on the NJSNA website at <http://njsna.org/ramp/peer-support-meetings/>.

**Peer Meetings on Holidays** - If a peer support meeting falls on the following holidays, the participants do not need to attend and do not need to make-up the meeting.

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- 4th of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

**Policy for Changing Peer Meetings** - Once assigned to a peer meeting, the participant is to remain in their peer meeting unless an unforeseen event occurs. The following is the order and process for changing meetings. This must be followed PRIOR to a participant changing meetings:

- 1- Participants are to FIRST notify their assigned Case Manager if a change in peer meeting is needed. The participant is to discuss the reasons and rationale for the peer meeting change with their Case Manager.
- 2- Participant is to discuss the change with the current Peer Leader after discussion with Case Manager.

- 3- The Case Manager and current Peer Leader will discuss if change is beneficial to the well-being of the participant. If approved, the potential accepting Peer Leader will be contacted for approval by the Case Manager.
- 4- Once approved by Case Manager and both the current and potential Peer Leader, then the change may occur.

**Orientation Intake Conference Call-** There will be a one-time mandatory orientation call with the RAMP communications coordinator. Once you receive your RAMP paperwork, please call the communications coordinator at 609-883-5335 ext. 115. The communications coordinator will review your entire packet with you and answer any questions that you may have regarding participation in the program.

## **Terms of Participation**

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The following are general guidelines related to the monitoring agreements. For specific questions, participants should refer to their monitoring agreement and contact the RAMP case manager.

As a participant, you will be required to sign a monitoring agreement. The monitoring agreement outlines your requirements as a RAMP participant. These requirements may include, but not limited to, the following:

- **Weekly Attendance at Peer Meetings is Mandatory**
- For participants with a substance use disorder: Attendance at 12 step meetings is required
- Treatment at a location approved by the RAMP staff
- An evaluation will be requested by RAMP or Board of Nursing
- Compliance with all recommendations made by the evaluator and/or treatment providers
- Daily check-in's and submitting to toxicology screens when requested.
- **Abstinence from addictive substances, including alcohol**
- Monthly reporting including self-reports, 12-Step attendance sheets, therapy evaluation report (as long as therapy continues), employer evaluation report (if working as a nurse), and pain management report
- Submit all controlled medication prescriptions in AOS monthly and include a copy of the prescription or pharmacy report.
- Abstention from practice as a nurse until granted approval by the RAMP team

If you have questions, please refer to your monitoring agreement and your case manager.

**Please note that refusal to participate in any portion of the monitoring agreement and recommendations of RAMP is considered noncompliance and reportable to the NJBON.**

### Communication

RAMP participants are responsible for maintaining communication with case manager, peer facilitators, employers, and treatment providers. Participants are required to have verbal communication with RAMP minimally every 90 days. Participants are required to respond to communication from RAMP such as email, telephone calls, and electronic messages within 24 hours. Participants are required to have their own personal email address. Participants are required to notify case managers in the event of:

- Change in address/phone number/email
- Change in health care provider (s)
- Change of employment/supervisor
- Receipt or use of any prescriptions or substances
- Travel plans

**Failure to inform RAMP of any changes will be considered non-compliant and may result in a review by the RAMP team.**

## Monthly Reporting

A key aspect of monitoring is the monthly reporting by participant, peer facilitator, employer, health care providers and therapists. The following reports must be received by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month for the previous month.

<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Method of Submission</b>
Self-Report	Monthly	Electronic monitoring system by participant
Attendance Reports	Monthly	Electronic monitoring system by Participant
Peer Support Report	Monthly	Electronic monitoring system by Facilitator
Controlled Prescription Medications	Monthly	Electronic monitoring system by participant & upload documentation i.e. prescription or pharmacy report

**If applicable:**

Therapy Evaluation	Monthly	Completed by therapist; submit by fax
Employment Report	Monthly	Completed by supervisor; submitted online to Electronic monitoring system
Pain Management Report	Monthly	Completed by Pain Management Practitioner; submit by fax

Confidential Fax Number 609-883-1544

# Toxicology Screening

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Participants must establish an account with an Electronic monitoring system, for required toxicology screens and reporting. At the time of enrollment, the participants will receive an online enrollment packet from RAMP that includes instructions on how to use the system and Chain of Custody (COC) forms. Participants will be required to fund their account to pay for toxicology screens as well as Peer meetings.

Participants must provide a specimen on the day requested. This may include urine, hair, blood or nail samples. **RAMP does not excuse missed tests and does not allow self-testing.**

**Chain of Custody** - Chain of Custody or COC forms are provided to assure the validity of the specimen and for the protection of all involved in the screening process. It is signed by the participant, the collector and the lab personnel at the collection site. For the participants' protection, please be sure that protocol is followed and that the test is sealed and initialed when you submit the sample.

## **What does an “Abnormal” test result mean?**

An abnormal result usually means that the creatinine and/or specific gravity of the specimen are below or above normal limits. It can also mean the temperature and /or color is outside of normal limits. Additional testing may be required.

## **What does a “Dilute Urine” test result mean?**

Dilute urine means that both the specific gravity and the creatinine are above or below normal limits. If a specimen is dilute there will be a concern that the participant has attempted to alter the results in some way. This may be considered a positive screen.

If a participant has dilute urine they will be required to submit to higher level toxicology screening. This is not negotiable and the participant will need to ensure funds are available in their AOS account to cover the additional expense.

Products to be aware of, but not limited to:

- **Poppy seeds, CBD oil and hemp seeds/oil products** contain substances that may cause a positive drug test result
- **Alcohol-containing products will cause a positive drug test. Clients must abstain from alcohol including over-the-counter medications containing alcohol, such as liquid cold medications, alcohol-based mouthwashes, Kombucha, food containing alcohol and electronic cigarettes that contain alcohol**
- Certain hand sanitizers have also been known to produce a positive test

**Please note: Read labels of products ingested or used topically.**

**The use of any of these above mentioned products will not excuse a positive test.**

RAMP works with each participant and employer on an individual basis to put appropriate limits and toxicology screens in place to assure safe practice. **The decision to return to work is a collaborative process between the participant, the RAMP team, their case manager, therapist (if applicable), peer facilitator and peer group, this is to ensure the safety of the public and the participant.**

### **Step 1: Compliance with RAMP**

Prior to returning to work the following must have been completed:

1. All in-patient, intensive out-patient, and weekly out-patient treatment must be completed successfully and there is enrollment and compliance in a biweekly individual therapy, as appropriate.
2. Demonstrate a period of sobriety/strong recovery/stability after treatment is completed (minimum of 1 month after discharged from treatment).
3. Compliance with daily check-ins.
4. The participant demonstrates full compliance with toxicology testing. A record of checking-in and testing for 90 days is expected. All toxicology screens must be negative, there can be no missed check-ins and participants must test when they are selected.
5. If required, a minimum 90 (12 step) meetings in 90 days, with sponsorship, must be completed and documented. Thereafter, the participant is required to attend a minimum of 3 meetings weekly.
6. All monthly reports are filed by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month.
7. Participants must be free of any controlled substances, unless under the care of a Board Certified Pain Management Specialist, has been evaluated and deemed safe to practice by RAMP.
8. Participants cannot work while taking medication assisted treatment. Cases will be reviewed by the RAMP team.

**At this point, contact your case manager to obtain permission of your intention to speak with your peers about working as a nurse.**

### **Step 2: Peer Facilitator and Peer Assistance Input**

The next step in the return to work process is to discuss return to work with the peer facilitator and peers:

1. Ask for feedback and discuss readiness to return to work.
2. The Peer Facilitators will complete the return to work check list.

This step may require several meetings to complete the discussions.

### **Step 3: File review with your Case Manager**

Upon completion of steps one and two, contact your case manager by the electronic monitoring system of your progress and request a RAMP team review.

After the RAMP team review is complete, the participant will be notified whether or not they are approved to return to work. If they are not eligible to return to work, they will be advised what they must do to be considered eligible.

Once approved, the participant will be notified of any additional limitations on their practice. The participant and the case manager will discuss appropriate nursing settings and positions.

### **Step 4: Job Searching, Interviewing and Accepting a Position**

Once the participant is approved to return to work, they may interview for positions keeping in mind any restrictions/limitations on practice.

**Prior** to accepting a position the participant must discuss their RAMP enrollment with the nursing supervisor and Human Resources, if applicable.

When an offer of employment is made:

1. Contact your RAMP case manager for **final approval** of position.
2. Submit signed release allowing RAMP to speak with supervisor.
3. Send your case manager:
  - A. Supervisor's full name and credentials
  - B. Supervisor's telephone number and email address
  - C. Organization's complete address, including zip code
4. Your case manager will call your supervisor and discuss the offer and confirm that they are aware of your enrollment in RAMP.
5. A contract revision will be completed and sent to the participant. The participant and supervisor will sign the contract revision letter. The participant is responsible for returning the signed contract revision by both parties to RAMP. The participant will provide a copy of the signed contract revision to their employer.
6. Any change in practice will require a contract revision.

### **Step 5: Working while Monitored**

The participants are responsible for:

1. Understanding and complying with the work restrictions
2. Assuring their supervisor completes the monthly employment evaluation by the assigned due date.
3. Checking in daily and submitting to random toxicology testing.
4. A participant who is a **No Show** for a test is required to immediately stop working and will be required to remain out of work until the next random toxicology test is resulted.
5. A positive test requires participant to **IMMEDIATELY** be removed from work
6. Keeping their case manager updated on any supervisor or employment changes.

**Failure to adhere to this policy may result in the loss of permission to work and/or a report to the NJBON.**

## Restrictions on Employment

RAMP enforces restrictions on practice and employment to assure **safe practice**.

**\*\* Supervisor must be on premises. Supervisor must be a registered nurse.**

**The participant monitored by RAMP will agree to:**

- Not function in an autonomous or unsupervised role \*\*
- Not work more than 40 hours a week or Not more than 3 consecutive 12 hour shifts
- Not work longer than 12 hours a shift
- Not work nights unless authorized by the RAMP team
- Not work for multiple employers or engage in self-employed practice
- Not accept employment with registries, staffing agencies or a float/pool position
- Not float or rotate to other units unless authorized by the RAMP team
- Not work overtime
- Not have access to controlled medications for **at least** the first six months of work unless otherwise agreed
- No on call

**No Access to Controlled Substances refers to, but is not limited to:**

- Not counting or administering controlled substances
- Not having access to narcotic keys or codes for automated dispensing systems
- **Not witnessing wastage**, signing pharmacy receipts for controlled substances, or having the ability to access storage areas where controlled substances are stored
- Not calling, faxing, or otherwise electronically authorizing prescriptions for controlled substances

**Restrictions on controlled substance** will be lifted when authorized by the RAMP team.

**RAMP case managers must always speak to the employer prior to participants resuming work or changing employers.**



# Controlled Substances

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Participants must **abstain** from the use of all potentially addictive substances including:

- Alcohol and alcohol containing substances
- Illicit substances
- Controlled substances (with or without prescription)
- Uncontrolled substances that contain alcohol or other abusable substances (prescription or over-the-counter medications)

**Medications used to treat psychiatric disorders are not included in this list and should not be stopped unless under the direction of a healthcare provider.**

## Prescriptions

**For all new or changed prescriptions of controlled substances:** Participants must notify their case manager about the prescription within 24 hours of receipt of the prescription and upload a copy of prescription into the electronic monitoring system.

Each month participants are responsible for listing all medications, including controlled substances in the electronic monitoring system. When a prescription is filled or refilled a prescription report must be submitted in the electronic monitoring system and include:

- Start and end date
- Physician's name
- Dosage
- Frequency
- Quantity
- Pharmacy name
- The corresponding prescription or pharmacy report

This must be updated with every filled or refilled prescription for controlled substances.

**The participant will be considered noncompliant if they test positive and if currently working as a nurse, will be removed from work.**

All other medications must be reported to the case manager with documentation. **The case manager must be notified of all changes or discontinuations.**

## The Medication Guide for a Safe Recovery

Please reference **The Medication Guide for a Safe Recovery** for a comprehensive listing of potentially addicting medications, substances containing alcohol, and safe alternatives.

<http://paulearley.net/download/pamphlets/8-medication-guide-for-a-safe-recovery/file>

**RAMP strongly recommends that participants work with their healthcare providers to find an alternative to taking potentially abusable substances.**

## Chronic Pain Management

A participant in RAMP requiring chronic pain management must have the following:

- A board certified **Pain Management Specialist** who is the only prescriber of pain medications; the specialist will also:
  - Provide RAMP with an evaluation including history and alternatives tried in the past
  - Provide regular reports regarding the participant
- Agree to comply with a **Pain Management Plan** which is developed with the Pain Management Specialist and/or the Addiction Specialist.

The Pain Management Plan must include:

- Identification of pain precipitants and stressors
- Use of non-pharmacological, non-opioid analgesic interventions to manage the pain
- The inclusion of adjunctive approaches to the management of pain, that may include acupuncture, massage, physical therapy, and other appropriate measures
- Clear indications for when the client shall use the pain medications
- A plan to handle break-through pain

Participants with conditions requiring the long-term use of pain medications must sign the Chronic Pain Management Agreement. The Chronic Pain Management Agreement outlines how the client facilitates his or her health care between a pain management provider, addiction specialist, neuropsychologist, and therapist.

A participant who signs the Chronic Pain Management Agreement must comply with all requirements set forth in the Chronic Pain Management Plan.

**Re-evaluation must be done annually/biannually/PRN.**

# Monitoring Interruptions and Relocation Policies

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## Monitoring Interruptions

A **monitoring interruption request** is submitted through the electronic monitoring system and must include the details of the interruption. The participant is responsible to follow up with case manager.

- Participants are required to submit a monitoring interruption at least 72 hours before the start of the interruption.
- Participants are required to check in daily
- Participants must be prepared to submit to a toxicology screening if selected
- Participants are responsible to find an available lab at their destination prior to travel and bring COC forms on their trip.

Unless participants are out of the United States or on a cruise, **they may be selected to test.**

12-step meetings remain **mandatory** for participants with a substance use disorder, even if you are on a cruise or out of the country. The discontinuation of 12-step meetings has been identified as a primary relapse antecedent for persons in recovery.

## Relocation Policy

If a participant is moving out of New Jersey, it may be possible to transfer to another state's monitoring program. The participant should contact the state's monitoring program and RAMP case manager prior to the relocation.

The transfer will be approved by the RAMP team if the participant is accepted in a similar program.

If transferred, the participant is responsible for:

- Submitting their signed current state contract to RAMP
- Signing an Out-of-State RAMP Contract
- Facilitating quarterly reports to RAMP

**Failure to alert RAMP of the relocation within 15 days may result in a dismissal from RAMP.**

## Treatment

If initial treatment is required, the Intake Coordinator/Case Manager will facilitate the admission to a RAMP approved treatment facility.

Emergent issues are always referred to the closest emergency room. Should the RAMP staff believe that a participant may be at medical or psychiatric risk and the participant is non-cooperative, RAMP staff may call 911 in the participant's local area for assistance.

Participants may be required to submit to an evaluation for treatment. Failure to do so or to follow the recommendations by the RAMP team will result in a report to the New Jersey Board of Nursing and/or dismissal from RAMP.

### **The participant may not work as a nurse while in treatment.**

The participant will be asked to voluntarily inactivate their nursing licenses with an *Inactive Letter* to the New Jersey Board of Nursing while in treatment. This is **NOT** a disciplinary action against the license and will be activated once treatment is complete and approved by the RAMP team.

## Relapse

In the event of a relapse, the participant **must stop work** immediately and the relapse protocol is implemented, and may include the following, but not limited to:

- The case managers will assist nurses in finding appropriate treatment programs
- The participant will be required to sign a new RAMP monitoring agreement and voluntarily inactivate their nursing license.
- The participant will be required to enter appropriate, recommended treatment and begin a new 90 meetings in 90 days.

## Evaluations

New participants in RAMP will be required to be evaluated by a RAMP approved evaluator. The Intake Coordinator will provide the participant with the names of approved evaluators.

In order to provide a comprehensive evaluation, the evaluator is provided with pertinent information including but not limited to: NJBON documents, toxicology screening results and compliance information. The participant should bring copies of any documents relating to the incident which referred them to RAMP.

Admission to inpatient or intensive outpatient treatment program may take the place of the independent evaluation.

Refusal to participate in the evaluation process may lead to dismissal from RAMP and will be reported to the New Jersey Board of Nursing. **The participants are responsible for the costs related to the evaluations.**

## Successful Completion

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The monitoring agreement, including the length of participation in RAMP, is determined by a specific situation, recommendations of the RAMP team and the requests of the New Jersey Board of Nursing. The standard length of monitoring is five years. The participant is eligible for completion when all requirements are satisfied.

**RAMP reserves the right to extend the contract in the case of relapse and/or noncompliance.**

To facilitate the discharge process it is recommended that the participant contact their case manager prior to anticipated completion date, to ensure all required documents and toxicology screening have been completed.

**Note: Prior to discharge, higher level toxicology screening will be scheduled.**

The participant will be informed when they are no longer required to check in for random toxicology screening. **DO NOT STOP** checking in until you receive notice from your case manager.

**It is recommended that you keep the completion letter in a safe place for future evidence of your successful completion. You may also want to provide a copy of the letter to your employer.**

# Noncompliance and Dismissal

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Non-compliance with any parameters set in the Board of Nursing orders, Private Letter Agreement, RAMP Monitoring Agreement or RAMP policy will be reported to the New Jersey Board of Nursing through the Director or their designee. **Failure to remain compliant with any of the parameters may lead to dismissal from the program.**

## Noncompliance with Requirements

A participant who demonstrates noncompliance with the requirements of the monitoring agreement and rules of the program will be reported to the New Jersey Board of Nursing. Noncompliance includes but is not limited to:

- Failure to regularly attend peer meetings
- Failure to submit to toxicology screening
- Failure to submit necessary reports
- Working in a non-approved nursing position
- Taking non-approved medications and/or controlled substances
- Failure to follow treatment recommendations

## Dismissal from RAMP

Dismissal from RAMP may occur for the following reasons but not limited to:

- Habitual noncompliance with any aspect of the monitoring agreement requirements
- Not progressing satisfactorily in recovery
- No longer "willing" or "able" to comply with monitoring agreement
- Refusal to cease practice (continuing practice despite not being authorized by the program)
- Failing to inform another licensing board of their participating and practicing or attempting to practice in that jurisdiction
- **Attempts to alter or manipulate toxicology screens**

## Withdrawal from RAMP

A participant may withdraw from RAMP at any time by notifying the case manager in writing.

Once a participant withdraws from RAMP or is dismissed, RAMP will report this to the New Jersey Board of Nursing and their employer (if working as a nurse).

**12 Step Programs:** These are self-help groups (AA, NA, etc.) governed by 12 Steps and 12 Traditions that provide a way of thinking and managing life events that are positive and productive. Attendance at 90 meetings in 90 days (90/90) is required if you have a Substance Use Disorder. Sponsorship is also a suggestion by AA etc., and a requirement for RAMP. Participation in a 12 Step program is the best documented way to maintain recovery.

**Alternative to Discipline (ATD):** A voluntary, non-public, non-disciplinary program, which offers an alternative to traditional discipline authorized by statute and rule by the Board of Nursing. (NCSBN 2011)

**Alternative to Discipline and RAMP participation:** Should you have a disease or condition that impairs your ability to practice safely and you are willing to enter RAMP and participate in the monitoring program the NJBON will keep this private and include you in the ATD committee of the NJBON. This is a five year program that assists nurses in developing life skills, disease management techniques that assure recovery and decreases the chance of relapse. It is not treatment. Please note that the NJBON does not recognize any monitoring program except RAMP. With that understanding, should you still choose another monitoring program; the nurse will no longer be eligible for ATD. The participant will then receive a public, permanent order against your license.

**Drug Diversion:** the obtaining of drugs illegally; the misappropriation of drugs from a patient, health care employer or other source. (NSCBN 2011)

**Inactive License:** A participant may be asked to temporarily inactivate their license. This is done by signing the provided letter stating that the participant and case manager will discuss the best time to re-activate the license. The reactivation process should take about five days and is facilitated by your case manager.

**Office of the Inspector General (OIG) list:** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) protects the integrity of Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) programs as well as the health and welfare of program beneficiaries. The OIG has the authority to exclude individuals and entities from Federally funded health care programs for a variety of reasons, including a conviction for Medicare or Medicaid fraud. Those that are excluded can receive no payment from Federal healthcare programs for any items or services they furnish, order, or prescribe. This includes those that provide health benefits funded directly or indirectly by the United States (other than the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan).

**Public Order:** (Consent Order, Order of Suspension or Revocation, Order of Surrender): A public order by a licensing board is a public action that cannot be removed from your license. Since it is a public action anyone can petition the board for the information surrounding the suspension and receive all of the details about it. This includes consent orders, orders of suspension or revocation. This may lead to placement on the National Practitioners Data Bank (NPDB) and/or the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) list.



**Private Letter Agreement (PLA):** This is a letter you may receive when the NJBON offers you the opportunity to participate in Alternative to Discipline (ATD). This may be a result of a complaint filed against you. The PLA outlines requirements to participate in ATD. Should you choose to ignore the letter or choose not to cooperate with them, you may be referred for disciplinary action against your license.

**RAMP Monitoring Agreement:** This is the document that is signed upon enrollment into RAMP. It indicates the requirements that must be met for compliance in the program. Should compliance not be maintained a negative report may be made to the NJBON. Further noncompliance may result in an action against your license.

**Recovery Minded Thinking:** RAMP determines Recovery Minded Thinking by the behaviors of the participants. Your recovery must be the primary focus and is demonstrated by participation and compliance with RAMP.

**Reinstatement:** If your license has been suspended or revoked, you must petition the NJBON through a written letter and request the reinstatement of your license. This letter should be sent to your case manager who will forward it to the BON along with a letter of RAMP's support. [See Appendix A](#). You will receive a reinstatement packet from the NJBON and when you have accurately completed the packet and returned it to the NJBON they will give you further direction that you must follow to be reinstated. Any monies owed to the NJBON must be paid in full or a payment arrangement made for your license to be reinstated. Should you have a suspended or revoked license for longer than 5 years, you will be required to retake your NCLEX Exam.

**Substance Use Disorder:** The state of dependency on mind altering chemicals with continued use that persists despite negative consequences. (NCSBN 2011)

National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Substance Use Disorder in Nursing a Resource Manual and Guidelines for Alternative and Disciplinary Monitoring Programs. 2011 ISBN 978-0-9826465-6-4.

Smith, Linda L., Recovery Maintenance Workbook for Nurses, Psychosocial Press, Madison, CT, 2004. ISBN 1-887841-54-7.

New Jersey Board of Nursing

<http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/nur/Pages/default.aspx>

National Council State Boards of Nursing

<https://www.ncsbn.org/index.htm>

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

<http://www.samhsa.gov/>

The New Jersey Department of Human Services  
Division of Disability

<http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dds/home/index.html>

The New Jersey Department of Health

Integrated Health includes the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

<http://nj.gov/health/integratedhealth/>

The Medication Guide for a Safe Recovery

<http://paulearley.net/download/pamphlets/8-medication-guide-for-a-safe-recovery/file>

Alcoholics Anonymous

[www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

Narcotics Anonymous

[www.na.org](http://www.na.org)

Al-anon

<https://al-anon.org/>

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)

Helpline: 1-800-950-NAMI [6264]

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Peer Assistance

<https://www.aana.com/practice/health-and-wellness-peer-assistance>

An updated list of resources is on the New Jersey State Nurses Website at [www.njsna.org](http://www.njsna.org).

# Appendix A

## REINSTATEMENT OF LICENSES – SUSPENDED

### FOR PARTICIPANTS:

Write an informal letter outlining what you have done to come into compliance with RAMP and/or what you have done to establish your recovery. (Treatment, AA/NA, Sponsor, Peer Support etc.)

1. Participant letters are **addressed to the Executive Director** and **emailed to Case Manager**

Executive Director (Case Manager will supply name)  
New Jersey Board of Nursing  
124 Halsey Street, 6th Floor  
PO Box 45010  
Newark, NJ 07101

2. **DO NOT MAIL TO THE BOARD OF NURSING**

3. **EMAIL** your letter to your case manager no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.
4. If reinstatement is granted, participant will receive an **Order of Reinstatement** in the mail in approximately 2-3 weeks.
5. Participant will sign the **Order of Reinstatement** and make **three** copies.
6. Participant will return the signed **Order of Reinstatement to Deputy Attorney General in Newark**

Deputy Attorney General (Case Manager will supply name)  
Division of Law  
PO Box 45029  
124 Halsey Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Newark, NJ 07101

7. Participant will send a copy of the signed **Original Order of Reinstatement** to RAMP.
8. Participant will go to the BON Web site:  
<http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/nur/Pages/applications.aspx>, print and complete the **reinstatement application**. Make one copy for your personal file.
9. Participant will send a copy of the signed **Order of Reinstatement** and the original **reinstatement application to Sameerah Bond at the BON**

Sameerah Bond  
New Jersey Board of Nursing  
124 Halsey Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Newark, NJ 07102

10. Participant will keep a copy of the signed **Order of Reinstatement** and a copy of the **reinstatement application** for your personal file.
11. The license will be sent to participant from the BON by mail.

**This entire process could take at least 6 months or more.**

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**In order to request reinstatement of license, participant must be 100% compliant with monitoring agreement including check-ins, drug screens, peer group attendance, monthly reporting and fees.**

# Appendix B

# The RAMP Participant Guide Release

Name:

Participant #:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read *The RAMP Recovery and Monitoring Participant Guide* found on the RAMP & Affinity Web sites, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures set forth in the Guide. If there is anything I do not understand, I will request an explanation from my case manager or RAMP director.

I understand that all information presented to me in this Guide is subject to change, with or without notice, at the discretion of RAMP.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date