



# **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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# 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, the 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. 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 nurses with substance use disorders, & practice issues. The NJSNA was instrumental in the passage of Alternative to Discipline legislation allowing New Jersey nurses, the opportunity to seek treatment and to protect their nursing licenses.

## 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

According to the New Jersey Board of Nursing Laws, posted 6/2011 & revised 10/2019:

*(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*

# Program Overview

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**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
- Daily check-ins
- Professional Facilitated Support Group Meetings
- Support meetings (such as 12 step meetings, etc.) and as recommended
- Treatment as recommended
- Return to work process and workplace monitoring
- Self-Reports (Monthly)

## Services

- Assisting with communication to licensing boards and other sanctioning agencies
- Third party toxicology screening
- Confidential data collection to document maintenance of recovery

**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 for urgent matters only.**

## 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

# Professional Facilitated Support Group Program

Oversight of the Professional Facilitated Support Group Program is managed by Birchwood Solutions.

## RAMP and the Professional Facilitated Support Group Program

The support group meetings are forums where nurses can discuss:

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

All participants are required to actively participate in the Professional Facilitated Support Group 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 meeting
- Expected to attend and participate in these meetings
- **Financially responsible for the costs related to the meetings**

The Professional Facilitated Support Group 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 Professional Facilitated Support Group Meetings are not a substitute for therapy, treatment or 12 step meetings.***

**Fees:** The participants are responsible for the cost of the Professional Facilitated Support Group 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
- 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/staff

## Responsibilities

As a participant in RAMP, you are responsible to:

- Adhere to the terms outlined in your Private Letter Agreement (PLA), if applicable and of your RAMP monitoring agreement
- Maintain open, honest and timely direct communication with RAMP case manager, healthcare provider, therapist and employer
- Submit all required/requested documentation as requested
- 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
- **Pay for all costs related to the program including the application fee, costs of evaluation, peer assistance meetings and toxicology screens.**
- 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 have an active nursing license. RAMP will require written confirmation from the other states.
- Contact RAMP of all changes in employment status (hours, supervisor, change in job responsibilities, all other duties).
- **All Nursing Jobs MUST be approved by RAMP**

## Team Review Resolution

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

## Release of Information and Emergency Contact Release

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 team 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 and supervisors. RAMP also requires an Emergency Contact Release in order to contact someone in the event of an emergency.

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 attorneys, employers, treatment providers and other state boards of nursing.

## Referrals

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### 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 RAMP team will begin the intake phase 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 that pose a safety risk to patients
- Are willing to refrain from practice and seek evaluation and/or 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 by RAMP.



## 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 **within 15 days**. Extensions for returning paperwork must be approved by the RAMP team. 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)
- Direct Communication with RAMP
- Emergency Contact Release
- 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 by RAMP.**

**Orientation Intake Conference Call- There will be a one-time mandatory enrollment 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.

**Toxicology Screening** – RAMP will send an online enrollment packet to the participant. Once the participant receives this packet and completes an intake, the participant **must** activate their account and begin **checking-in daily**.

**Professional Facilitated Support Group Meetings** - Participants are required to attend peer meetings. Participants must contact Birchwood Solutions for more information.

# 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:

- **Abstinence from addictive substances, including alcohol**
- **Weekly Attendance at the Professional Facilitated Support Group 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 and the RAMP team
- **Daily check-in's** and submitting to **toxicology screens when selected**
- Monthly reporting including self-reports, 12 Step attendance, 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 electronic monitoring system monthly and include a copy of the prescription or pharmacy report
- Abstention from practice as a nurse until approved by the RAMP team

If you have questions, please refer to your **Private Letter Agreement (PLA)**, monitoring agreement and your case manager.

**Please note that refusal to participate in any portion of the PLA, 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, employers, treatment providers and peer facilitators. Participants are required to have verbal communication with their case manager as needed. 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 the RAMP staff in the event of:

- Change in **name**, address/phone number/email. **Changes must also be sent to the Board of Nursing**
- Change in health care provider (s)
- **Change of employment/supervisor**
- **Attendance at nursing school PRIOR to the semester starting and have a plan for clinical rotations.**
- 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, employer, health care providers, therapists and peer facilitators. The following reports **must** be received by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month for the previous month.

| Report Name                                   | Frequency | Method of Submission                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Self-Report                                   | Monthly   | Electronic monitoring system by participant                                                             |
| 12- Step Attendance Reports                   | Monthly   | Electronic monitoring system by Participant<br>*all meetings must have a start and end time*            |
| Professional Facilitated Support Group Report | Monthly   | Electronic monitoring system by Facilitator                                                             |
| Controlled Prescription Medications           | Monthly   | Electronic monitoring system by participant & upload documentation i.e. prescription or pharmacy report |

**\*\*\*\* Participants may not submit the following reports**

|                        |              |                                                                           |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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                  |
| Clinical Evaluations   | Per Rotation | Completed by Clinical Instructor                                          |

Confidential Fax Number 609-883-1544

# Toxicology Screening

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Participants must establish an account with RAMP's 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 are responsible for the costs of all toxicology screens.

Participants must provide a specimen on the day requested. This may include urine, hair, blood, saliva, 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 diluted urine, they will be required to submit to higher level toxicology screening. The participant is responsible for additional costs.

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 may 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. See Appendix C.**

**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 and stability after treatment is completed (minimum of 1 month after discharged from treatment).
3. Compliance with daily check-ins.
4. The participant demonstrates compliance with toxicology testing. All toxicology screens must be negative.
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 return to work as a nurse.**

### Step 2: Peer Facilitator and Professional Facilitated Support Group Feedback

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

The peer facilitator will document the outcome in facilitator notes.

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

Upon completion of steps one and two, contact your case manager through 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 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. A job description may be requested by your case manager.

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

#### **When an offer of employment is made AND prior to accepting a position:**

1. Contact your RAMP case manager that an offer had been made.
2. Submit completed release form 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 job approval letter will be completed and sent to the participant. The participant and supervisor will sign the job approval letter. The participant is responsible for returning the signed job approval letter by both parties to RAMP. **The participant will provide a copy of the signed job approval letter to their employer. The signed job approval letter must be returned to RAMP 15 days after the start date of employment.**
6. **Any change in practice will require a job approval revision letter.**
7. **All Nursing Jobs MUST be approved by RAMP**

#### **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. **Keeping their case manager updated on any supervisor or employment changes.**

#### **Issues with testing while working:**

1. 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.
2. A positive test requires participant to **IMMEDIATELY** be removed from work

**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**.

**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. (NO DOUBLE SHIFTS)
- 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 scheduled overtime
- **Not have access to controlled medications for at least the first six months to a year of work unless otherwise approved by the Ramp Team.**
- No on call
- Not work in critical care areas unless authorized by the RAMP team

**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 substances** will be lifted when authorized by the RAMP team.

**RAMP case managers must always speak to the employer prior to participants resuming work, change in work responsibilities as previously agreed or changing employers.**

**\*\* Supervisor must be on premises. The supervisor must be a registered nurse. If you work as a nurse unsupervised, you will be discharged and reported to the New Jersey Board of Nursing. APNs can be supervised by a physician (LIP) with the same restrictions as required. \*\***



# Controlled Substances

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

- Alcohol and alcohol containing substances
- Marijuana
- 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, psychotropic medications and other medications as requested:** 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. **RAMP does not accept pictures of prescription bottles.**

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
- Healthcare provider'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.

<https://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. Participants will be required to have further evaluations.**

## **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

**Re-evaluation must be done annually/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.

**Monitoring interruptions are required to be submitted 72 hours before the start date of the interruption, unless it is an emergency situation.**

All monitoring interruptions must be approved by the case manager. Participants are eligible for a monitoring interruption if they are out of the country, on a cruise or have medical issues. Medical issues will be reviewed by the RAMP team.

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:

- Inactivating their New Jersey nursing license
- 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

Participants may be required to submit to an evaluation for treatment. If initial treatment is required, the Intake Coordinator/Case Manager will provide the necessary information.

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.

Failure to submit to an evaluation for treatment 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 *Inactivation Letter* to the New Jersey Board of Nursing while in treatment. This is **NOT** a disciplinary action against the license and will be reactivated upon approval by the RAMP team.

## Relapse

“RELAPSE: (From the Physicians Federation 2016)

In specific reference to substance use disorders: Meeting criteria for a substance use disorder after a period of sustained remission and abstinence, as demonstrated by a return to repeated substance use and/or misuse, excluding appropriate use of medical substances for therapeutic purposes and under appropriate medical supervision

In specific reference to psychiatric mood disorders, a return of symptoms meeting criteria for a depressive, mixed or manic episode. In reference to other behavioral conditions, a return of active symptoms at an intensity level capable of significantly affecting one's level of interpersonal, social, or occupational functioning.

RELAPSE BEHAVIOR- Behavior without documented chemical use that is suggestive of significant risk of impending 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 may provide information to assist in finding appropriate treatment programs
- The participant will be required to enter appropriate, recommended treatment and begin a new 90 meetings in 90 days.
- The participant will be required to sign a new RAMP monitoring agreement and voluntarily inactivate their nursing license.

## Evaluations

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 will be requested in lieu of and 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.

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.

A letter of successful completion will be sent to the participant.

**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 processes 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

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

## 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).

Returning participants will need approval from the New Jersey Board of Nursing.

**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.

**Abstinence:** the practice of restraining oneself from indulging in something, typically alcohol or drugs.

**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).



**Professionalism:** the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person (Merriam-Webster). Merriam-Webster defines a profession as "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation."

**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 Services

<https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dds/>

The New Jersey Department of Health

The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

<https://www.nj.gov/health/integratedhealth/services-treatment/>

The Medication Guide for a Safe Recovery

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

Alcoholics Anonymous

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

Narcotics Anonymous

<https://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 Anesthesiology Health and Wellness/Peer Assistance

<https://www.aana.com/membership/here-for-you/health-and-wellness/wellness-educational-resources/>

# 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,
4. If reinstatement is granted, participant will receive an **Order of Reinstatement** in the mail.
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> and **complete the online reinstatement application**. Make a copy for your personal file.
9. Participant will send a copy of the signed **Order of Reinstatement 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 - 2025

Name:

Participant #:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read *The RAMP Recovery and Monitoring Participant Guide* found on the RAMP & Vault Health 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

## Appendix C

# RAMP COMPLIANCE Client Contract when Monitoring with EtG/EtS

**Ethylglucuronide (EtG) and Ethylsulfate (EtS)** are metabolites of alcohol that are excreted more slowly from the body than alcohol itself. They are therefore better at picking up drinking and better at documenting abstinence. When being monitored with EtG/EtS, it is important, as in any monitoring situation, to be aware of items to avoid so that **inadvertent “incidental” exposure does not cause a positive test**. In other words, it's important to know what items contain alcohol and to avoid them. With reasonable caution it is rare for “incidental” alcohol exposure to cause a positive test.

It is **YOUR** responsibility to limit and avoid exposure to the products and substances detailed below as well as any other substance that contains ethyl alcohol. It is **YOUR** responsibility to read product labels to know what is contained in the products you use and to inspect these products **BEFORE** you use them. Terms used to describe alcohol in products that must be avoided include; denatured alcohol, ethanol or ethyl alcohol, methylated spirits, tincture and elixir. *Use of the products detailed below or any other product containing alcohol is a violation of this contract and **will not** be allowed as an excuse for a positive test result.* **When in doubt, don't use, consume or apply anything that might contain alcohol.**

**Mouthwash:** Many mouthwashes (Listerine, Dr. Tichenor's, Scope, Listermint, Cepacol, etc.) contain ethyl alcohol. Use of alcohol containing mouthwashes can cause positive test for alcohol because they contain a significant amount of alcohol. Many may contain as much as 70 % alcohol. Non-alcohol mouthwashes are readily available and are an acceptable alternative. If you have questions about a particular product, call or bring it in to discuss a Recovering Nurse Program Monitoring Counselor.

**Over-the-counter (OTC) Medications:** It is prohibited to use cough syrups or cold preparations containing alcohol (e.g. Nyquil) while in monitoring. Nutritional supplements, such as Ginseng or Ginko Biloba liquid, can contain alcohol and should be avoided. Ethyl alcohol is frequently used in liquid medications as a solvent. Read labels and if the product contains alcohol, don't use it. Alcohol Free cough and flu medications are readily available and are acceptable alternatives.



**Non-Alcohol Beer and Wine:** These beverages (e.g. O'Douls, Sharps, etc.) contain enough alcohol that they can result in a positive test. While in monitoring you are not permitted to ingest these products.

**Kombucha** is a fermented drink made with tea, sugar, bacteria and yeast. The fermentation process used to create kombucha may create trace amounts of alcohol. While in monitoring you are not permitted to ingest Kombucha.

**Food and Other Consumable Products:** flavoring extract, such as vanilla extract or almond extract, if consumed in excess (e.g. to flavor coffee) can cause a positive test. Some main dishes, side dishes, sauces and desserts, (e.g. Tiramisu-Rumcake) are prepared with large amounts of alcohol and can cause a positive test. Be especially careful of any food item that is described as flaming such as crepe suzettes. Chocolates containing liquid filling can contain alcohol. Some churches use wine or fortified wine for communion and depending on how much is consumed can cause a positive test. All of these foods should be avoided.

**Breathing Alcohol Vapor Can Cause A positive Test:** Avoid breathing fumes of products containing alcohol, such as lacquers, shellac, solvents, or ethanol fuel. If you must use these products use them sparingly in a wellventilated area while wearing a respirator. Avoid breathing the fumes and limit skin contact. When using alcohol containing hand sanitizers keep the hands at waist level or below to avoid inhalation.

**Not related to EtG/EtS but important:** Avoid any ingestion of **Poppy Seeds**. All food products containing Poppy Seeds (e.g. bagels, muffins, rolls, chicken casseroles, etc.) must be avoided. Poppy Seeds ingestion may result in a positive drug screen for Morphine or Codeine. Positive results will yield disciplinary action.

**Products such as perfumes and colognes, and makeup containing alcohol have not been shown to normally cause false positives. When using hand sanitizer, it is best to use Isopropyl alcohol-based hand sanitizer.**

**Remember. When in doubt, don't use, consume or apply!!!**

# RAMP COMPLIANCE Client Contract when Monitoring with EtG/EtS

I have read and understand my responsibilities detailed above:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Participant #: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature Date