

REFERENCE GUIDE for the State Council Achievement Award Application

The ENA State Council Achievement Award recognizes ENA state councils for achieving best practices and organizational excellence in the core areas of association management including Administration/Governance, Communication/Public Relations, Education, Membership, and Advocacy/Government Affairs.

State councils that wish to apply for the State Council Achievement Award must do so through the online application process. The online application is available on the [State Council Achievement Awards](#) page in the State and Chapter area of the ENA website.

The application and review process take place on an annual cycle.

Eligibility Requirements

The period covered shall be ENA's *program year*, which is **January 1, 2023**, through **December 31, 2023**. State councils must meet **ALL** of the following compliance requirements in order to be eligible to begin the State Council Achievement Award application. **If any of these requirements are not met, you cannot apply this year.**

- 2022 state council annual report submitted by January 31, 2023
- 2023 state council budget submitted to ENA by January 31, 2023 (must be final/state board approved)
- 2024 STATE COUNCIL OFFICERS submitted by October 31, 2023
- State council's 501(c)(3) incorporation status with the IRS must be current for the entire program year (January 1 through December 31)
- Copies of the state council IRS tax filing for the 2022 tax year **must** be submitted to ENA Headquarters by the September 15, 2023, deadline
- Implemented all required policies in accordance with [ENA State Council and Chapter Compliance and Operational Procedures](#) (ENA must have copies of required policies on file)
- Current state council bylaws submitted to ENA (ENA must have a copy on file). State Bylaws must be in compliance with ENA's Bylaws and approved by ENA

Preliminary Steps

Before you begin the online application, complete the following preliminary work that will assist you in completing the application:

1. **You must contact componentrelations@ena.org to verify if your state council has met the above requirements PRIOR to beginning the application.**
2. Completely review both this Reference Guide and the Best Practices document.
3. Gather the data needed from reports or other leaders to respond to the questions. You may utilize the application questionnaire available as a reference if necessary.
4. If feasible, delegate other leaders to assist in retrieving needed responses.

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Application

The State Council Achievement Award application includes questions requiring narratives that highlight your state council's (includes chapters) excellence, innovation, outcomes, and accomplishments. This Reference Guide encompasses clarification of evidence that must be included in your responses.

- Narratives should be written in complete sentences and kept within the maximum word limit that is identified in the application.
- It is recommended to develop each narrative in a word processing program such as Microsoft Word, using spell-check, the word count feature, and then cutting and pasting the text into the application.
- **If any question does not pertain to your state council, enter “not applicable” in the text box, and it will be scored accordingly.**

De-identifying Your Responses

For the purpose of ensuring a blinded review process, it is essential to omit information (***unless requested otherwise – ENA staff will then de-identify those responses prior to review by the Awards Committee***) from your application that could be used to potentially identify your state council.

Specifically, do not include any of the following information in your narrative responses:

- Names of all individuals – use **[name]** instead
- Name and acronym of committees, state councils, chapters, local hospitals, etc. – use **[committee, state council, chapter, or local hospital]** instead
- Names of cities, states – use **[city] [state]** instead
- Names or acronyms of local/regional organizations and companies – use **[organization]** or **[company]** instead
 - National organizations such as the National Library of Medicine or NIH are acceptable
- All logos
- Any other information that could be used to identify your state council

If application responses are not de-identified (unless requested otherwise), there may be a delay in the review of the application, or it may not be accepted.

The contact information you enter at the beginning of the online application is maintained by ENA staff for record-keeping purposes and will not be shared with the Awards Committee. Instead, a unique numerical identifier is assigned to each application.

If you have questions about how to de-identify information you want to include in your application, please contact AnnualAwards@ena.org.

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Submission Deadline and Review Process

- The deadline to submit your online application is **Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 12:00 pm (Noon) Central**.
- The application is to be completed with approval and verification by the state council president.
- Once your application is submitted, it cannot be altered.
- The primary contact noted will receive a confirmation email of receipt within three business days.
- If there are questions regarding clarification of the information you have submitted, an ENA staff member will contact the primary contact person.
- Applications are reviewed and scored by the ENA Awards Committee.
- A state council's application must meet a minimum score of 80% to receive the award.
- Notification will be emailed to the primary contact person.
- A public announcement will be made on the ENA website and in ENA publications.
- Award recipients will be recognized on ENA's website, in ENA publications and during the annual Emergency Nursing Conference.

Additional Information

For inquiries regarding the State Council Achievement Award program not covered in these guidelines, please contact componentrelations@ena.org.

Guidelines by Application Sections

In the remainder of this document, each section of the award application provides background information for each question and **includes what supporting evidence is required in the response**. This information is provided to assist you in submitting a fully compliant State Council Achievement Award application. Note: Successful applications demonstrate a variety of diverse responses throughout the application with measurable outcomes, sustained improvements, and innovative processes.

SECTION A – ADMINISTRATION/GOVERNANCE

State council's ENA Bylaws Revision Process.

- 1a. Describe your state council's bylaws review/revision process. Response must include all five items listed in "The evidence" below.**
- 1b. The bylaws should include a reviewed/revised date.
Does your bylaws document include a reviewed/revised date? Choose yes or no.
ENA staff will verify.**

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1c. The bylaws on your state’s website must be the most current version.

Provide a link to the bylaws on your state website.

ENA staff will verify and de-identify the response prior to review by the Awards Committee.

The evidence

1a. Describe your review/revision process. Response must include:

1. how revisions take place (including ENA’s Review and Approval)
2. who reviews, approves, and submits the bylaws (*provide only position(s) within the council, and the state’s legal counsel - not any individual names*)
3. how members are notified of recommended changes
4. dissemination of documents, and
5. the voting process.

1b. The bylaws should include a reviewed/revise date.

1c. The bylaws on your state’s website must be the most current version.

Background

It is good practice for your bylaws to be reviewed by ENA and the state council’s legal counsel and/or parliamentarian at least every three years to ensure they are compatible with ENA’s Bylaws, as well as state and federal laws.

2a. **THREE-TIER STATES only:**

The 2024 **CHAPTER OFFICERS** are submitted to ENA by October 31, 2023.

The evidence

ENA will verify that each chapter has entered all officers by the deadline.

Background

Three-tier state councils are responsible for their chapters; therefore, assurance that the chapters are meeting ENA compliance requirements is required.

2b. **TWO-TIER STATES only:**

The state council has Special Interest Groups (SIGs)/Regional Chapters established to service the local members in the state. **Choose yes or no.** (*If no is selected, go to question 3.*)

2c. Describe how these SIGs/Chapters are structured.

2d. Provide the names of the SIGs/Chapters.

ENA staff will verify that the groups exist by reviewing the state council website and/or bylaws or

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procedures and will de-identify the response prior to review by the Awards Committee.

The evidence

If checked yes in 2b., you must include a narrative (in 2c.) on how these groups are structured and the benefits of incorporating them locally. You must also include the name of the SIGs and/or Regional Chapters (in 2d).

Background

It is good practice for two-tier state councils to incorporate special groups to service the members locally whether the group is determined by location or interest.

- 3. The state council's 2024 committee chairpersons, including core leadership role positions, have been submitted to ENA by December 31, 2023.**
Core leadership role positions include Government Affairs chairperson, Membership chairperson, QSIP chairperson, Trauma chairperson, Pediatric chairperson, and Fundraising chairperson.

The evidence

If checked yes, ENA will verify that the core leadership role positions have been entered by the deadline. **All** the above positions must be entered to receive points.

Background

State councils are responsible for ensuring their committee chairs are submitted by the compliance deadline of December 31. This deadline ensures that your committee chairs are selected prior to the beginning of the year (term) and enough time for the committee to review their charges and prepare for the year.

- 4. Describe and provide examples of your state council's succession planning process.**

The evidence

The response must describe your succession planning process. Provide in detail:

How do you:

1. evaluate current volunteer roles (confirm relevancy)
2. establish a "line of succession" for positions (evaluate/update job descriptions/customize)
3. analyze the member roster for potential volunteer leaders and determine the key leaders for whom successors will be identified
4. evaluate a plan for attracting/retaining volunteer leaders
5. identify the competencies of current key leaders and the selection of high-potential members who will participate in succession planning, and

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6. know the member selection process for the leadership position.

Background

Succession planning is a process for identifying and developing leaders to fill key leadership positions in the association. Leadership transition is an important process that begins long before (months or even years) the outgoing leader departs. Having a strong plan in place will ensure successful development of new leaders.

5. **Provide 3-5 examples of your state council's interaction with, and oversight of, all chapters and/or committees.**

The evidence

The response requires at least three examples of the directions above. Your narratives should describe:

1. the roles state council leaders have with chapter and committee leadership outside of your state meetings
 2. how your state council ensures chapter or committee leaders are managing their chapters/committees per their responsibilities/charges related to their role while complying with ENA's mission, and
 3. how your state council engages chapter or committee leaders into state council programs.
6. **Describe your orientation or mentoring program for newly elected officers and committee chairs other than what is offered by ENA.**

The evidence

The response requires a description of your program or workshop. Programs/workshops must have taken place on or before December 31 (prior to the start of terms). Programs/workshops offered after December 31 will only receive partial credit.

Response must include:

1. Dates of the program/workshop
2. Who is required to attend (positions, not individual names)
3. What materials are provided (i.e., handouts, handbook)
4. Review of roles and expectations of officers or committee chairs
5. Review of state governance documents (policies, bylaws, strategic plan, budgets, etc.)
6. Review of ENA governance documents ([ENA State Council and Chapter Compliance and Operational Procedures](#), [ENA Bylaws](#)), and

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7. An outline of measures taken to ensure they are learning and carrying out administrative procedures.

7. How does your state council promote and encourage voting in ENA's national election?

The evidence

Identify your methods to promote and encourage members to vote in the ENA national election. Be specific and include the results of your efforts and any incentives offered. Key methods should be:

1. a link on your website to ENA's election page and/or
2. through social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) and
3. provide viewing of the candidate forum video and/or
4. displayed candidate photos at a state council or chapter meeting or
5. promotion through correspondence (email, postcards, newsletters, etc.).

Background

There are other options that states, and chapters may have to promote the ENA election. In addition to the above items, you are encouraged to include additional practices in your response.

8a. What was your state's voting percentage in the most recent ENA national election?

8b. If it was less than 10%, what two action plans have been put in place to increase voting participation next year? (If greater than 10%, you will automatically skip this question.)

The evidence

[Click here](#) to locate your state council voting percentages (pages 7-8).

If less than 10%, describe two new methods your state council will employ to increase voting participation.

9a. Describe your process of development and/or review of the State Council's Strategic Plan. Include development/revision dates in your response.

9b. Provide a link to your current strategic plan.

ENA staff will verify the strategic plan and will de-identify the response prior to review by the Awards Committee.

The evidence

9a. Describe the process for developing and/or reviewing your strategic plan. Include:

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- Development/revision dates
- How often it is reviewed
- How members are involved with providing input, and
- How updates are implemented and communicated to members.

Also, describe how ENA’s Strategic Plan is incorporated in your process.

Background

Strategic plans must be well thought out and developed. Responses providing only goals and bullet points will not receive a score.

SECTION B – COMMUNICATION/PUBLIC RELATIONS

- 1. Describe three methods your state council uses to communicate with your members, three examples of what is included in the communications, and the frequency (i.e., quarterly, monthly, bimonthly, weekly, daily).**

The evidence

Response must include three methods used to communicate, three examples of what is being communicated, and the frequency of the communications.

- 2a. If ENA visited your state council’s website today, describe what could be found there (e.g., bylaws, meeting dates, link to ENA, etc.).**

- 2b. Provide the link to your website.**

ENA staff will verify the information on the state council website and will de-identify the response prior to review by the Awards Committee.

The evidence

2a. The response must describe key items on your website. The following key items are strongly recommended to be included on your site and will be scored accordingly:

- 1) Official state council logo (ENA issued - Newly Branded Logo)
- 2) Link to ENA (www.ena.org)
- 3) Link to your state council Facebook page and/or ENA’s Facebook page
- 4) Link to ENA Foundation (www.ena.org/foundation)
- 5) Current membership application (or link to the application on ENA’s website)
- 6) State council governance documents including bylaws, your council’s strategic plan, state policies and procedures
- 7) State council meeting dates including meeting agendas and minutes

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- 8) State council officers and committees (with at least chairpersons listed)
- 9) State council contact information
- 10) Educational calendar or educational offerings
- 11) Access to chapter information (three-tier states only)

3. What strategies has your state council used to promote ENA’s belief “In a team-based delivery of resources that meet the highest quality standards of excellence for patients and emergency nurses” to the public?

The evidence

The response must describe at least three public interactions your state council has made to promote ENA’s belief “In a team-based delivery of resources that meet the highest quality standards of excellence for patients and emergency nurses” to the public?

Background

The “public” includes communities or various outlets within your state (e.g., high schools, churches, hospitals, newspaper articles, white papers, media news releases) to be informed about legislative advocacy, injury prevention activities, state boards of nursing practice issues presentations, community service projects and events, promoting clinical practice guidelines, etc.

SECTION C – EDUCATION

1a. Describe your state council’s educational (academic and/or conference) scholarship program.

1b. Provide a link to the scholarship information and recipient list.

ENA staff will verify the scholarship information and will de-identify the response prior to review by the Awards Committee.

The evidence

1a. The response must include details about your scholarship program. Include:

1. How it is advertised
2. Criteria/qualifications
3. Award amounts
4. How applications are reviewed
5. How recipients are determined and notified, and
6. How and when it is presented

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Background

The monies provided for scholarships are specific for enhancing one's nursing education. This program does not include funding for the General Assembly or free membership to ENA.

- 2. Describe your state council's collaboration efforts with other professional organizations or agencies to provide educational offerings.**

(e.g., American Nurses Association, National Student Nurses Association, American College of Emergency Physicians, EMS for Children State Partnership grantees)

The evidence

The response requires a description of your state's collaboration with other professional organizations.

Responses must include:

1. names of the professional organizations
2. dates of educational offerings, and
3. what was offered.

Background

Collaboration with other professional organizations may include joint or co-sponsored educational conferences or events, and/or as an invited guest speaker for state meetings.

- 3a. State councils must hold at least one annual continuing educational conference for their members.**

Describe your state council's conference and the process of how sessions and speakers are determined.

***** If your conference was cancelled due to COVID-19, did you hold virtual education throughout the year? If so, please describe. *****

- 3b. Provide date(s) and location(s) of the conference.**

The evidence

3a. Response must include a detailed account of your planning process and how educational sessions and speakers are selected. Data from your evaluation summary, needs assessment, or peer reviews should also be referenced.

- 4. Describe two other unique educational opportunities provided through your state council (*not mentioned in response to Question 3a*).**

The evidence

Response must include two unique educational opportunities not mentioned in response to Question 3a.

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Background

Examples of non-conference-related education may include online continuing education (CE) or CE opportunities at state/chapter meetings. This does not include TNCC/ENPC, poster presentations, or journal articles.

- 5. Describe the measures your state council has taken to collaborate with, recognize, and strengthen vendor partnerships.**

The evidence

A narrative is required describing your vendor partnerships including how they are contacted, how they are maintained and recognized, and the follow-up process.

Background

Examples of vendors may include, but not limited to, Stryker, Physio Control, and Vidacare, etc. Vendors should be healthcare related and/or support the healthcare profession.

- 6. Describe and provide two examples of how your state council supports TNCC/ENPC courses throughout your state.**

The evidence

Descriptions of two examples are required of how your state council supports TNCC and/or ENPC courses. Include details on any financial support, if the course is coordinated by the state council or chapter, and how you ensure course integrity throughout the state.

- 7. Describe how your state council assists members in obtaining specialty certifications (i.e., CEN, CFRN, CPEN, CTRN).**

The evidence

A descriptive narrative is required that outlines your state's efforts to assist members in obtaining specialty certifications. Responses must include one of the following efforts:

- providing partial or full funding for testing or review courses through a scholarship
- offering a state review course, or
- providing review classes at state conferences.

- 8. Describe two methods how you recognize members who have obtained CEN, CFRN, CPEN, or CTRN certifications.**

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The evidence

A descriptive narrative is required that outlines two methods to recognize members who have obtained CEN, CFRN, CPEN, or CTRN certifications. Include data that show how often or how many members you recognized this past year.

Background

There are many ways in which state councils can recognize certification recipients such as via print and online communications like newsletters and e-blasts, social media, meetings, conferences, or ribbons to be worn at meetings.

9. Explain how your state council supports evidence-based practice.

The evidence

A narrative is required that describes how your state supports evidence-based practice throughout the year. Be specific and include supporting data on outcomes or results from your support.

Background

Evidence-based practice efforts may include resolutions, mentoring and educational programs, position statements, white papers, research, committees/workgroups, obtaining funding to support research, or collaboration with ENA or ENA partner organizations (e.g., ACEP).

SECTION D – MEMBERSHIP

1. Describe three methods your state council uses to contact new or prospective members, AND the results/outcomes of your efforts.

The evidence

Three methods must be provided, including the outcomes or results of your methods.

Background

Methods of outreach may include:

- an invitation to join ENA, along with a six-month follow-up to those who have not yet joined
- an invitation to attend state council meetings/conferences, with recognition to attendees
- membership discounts for those who attend state educational conferences
- an incentive program to attend the state meeting, and
- member recruitment programs.

2. Describe three methods your state council uses to contact student nurses AND the results/outcomes of your efforts.

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The evidence

Three methods, including the outcomes or results of your methods must be provided.

Background

Methods of outreach may include:

- invitations to attend state council meetings
- sending newsletters to nursing schools
- offering special student rates at state conferences
- recognizing students at meetings/conferences
- exhibiting at the annual national student conference; speaking at schools, and
- appointing a student nurse liaison.

3a. Describe your strategies to engage members and nonmembers in ENA activities.

3b. Provide the results/outcomes of your efforts.

The evidence

3a. A narrative is required that describes your strategies.

3b. Provide the results/outcomes of your efforts.

Background

Strategies may include:

- invitations for committee involvement
- encouraging members to volunteer for small projects
- state/chapter booths at safety days
- Emergency Nurses Day/Nurses Day activities/events
- community meetings/conferences other than state council-supported activities/events
- representation on community healthcare or EMS committees
- Legislative Day
- events/activities
- open-door invitations
- local leaders visiting facilities in their area
- delivering gifts of recognition during Emergency Nurses Week
- utilizing social media, and
- offering educational opportunities.

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- 4a. Describe how and when you contact members whose memberships have expired.**
4b. Provide the results/outcomes of your methods.

The evidence

- 4a. A narrative is required describing your methods, including when you contact expired members (i.e., one to two months prior to expiration).
4b. Data describing the outcomes must include how many of those with expired memberships renewed as a result of your efforts.

Background

Methods may include letters, postcards, email, and/or phone calls.

- 5. Describe three methods how your state council invites feedback from members AND how your state responds to feedback, including timeframe and outcomes.**

The evidence

Explain three methods for inviting feedback. These methods may include:

- website contact information
- social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)
- annual survey/needs assessment (Survey Monkey)
- a link to contact the Board on the website
- evaluation forms from conferences
- speakers at meetings, and
- blogs.

- 6. Provide and describe two examples of your member recognition program.**

The evidence

The narratives must include:

1. an explanation of the programs
2. how it is disseminated/marketed
3. award incentives/prizes
4. how the programs have impacted your membership and state council (outcomes/achievements)

Background

There are numerous forms of member recognition:

- award programs

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- recognition for authoring articles in local, state, or national publications
- recognition for participation on local, state, or national committees
- certifications
- new member welcoming
- first meeting attendance recognition.

Incentives may include:

- acknowledgment via your state council's website
- social media
- door prize giveaways
- ribbons
- award plaques, etc.

7. Describe your member mentorship program.

The evidence

A descriptive narrative must include:

1. your state council's mentoring program
2. how you match participants (mentors and mentees)
3. the roles of the mentors and mentees
4. the terms of the assignments
5. and how many members took advantage of the program in the past year.

Background

Mentor programs create an environment that nurtures new members and provides a means for them to become more engaged with ENA and its variety of benefits and resources. Mentorship programs come in many different forms based on individual state councils, including new delegate mentors/mentees for the General Assembly, member liaisons as a resource, and board liaison assignments. Member mentorship programs do not include officer or committee orientation/mentoring.

8a. Describe how you engage members to participate on the local, state, and/or national level.

8b. Provide data that highlight the outcome/result of your efforts.

The evidence

8a. Provide a narrative that describes your state council's efforts to encourage members to

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participate, especially on the local, state, and/or national level.

8b. Provide data that highlight the results/outcomes of your efforts.

Background

Engagement initiatives may include, but are not limited to:

- scholarships to attend conferences
- hosting a meeting
- promoting calls for committee/SIG involvement
- participation at General Assembly
- volunteer opportunities, and
- utilizing social media.

SECTION E – ADVOCACY AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- 1. Describe four specific examples how your Government Affairs chairperson communicates with members to share information and news relevant to government affairs.**

The evidence

Outline four specific communication efforts with your members. Include:

- the frequency of the communications
- an overview of what is included in the communication.

- 2. Describe how your state council collaborates with other professional organizations and/or the community on public policy matters or issues related to emergency healthcare.**

The evidence

The response should include a descriptive narrative on how your state council has taken the lead with forming a coalition of, or partnering/collaborating with, other affected professions, and/or conducted a forum at a state council meeting that included all relevant parties.

Background

Examples of professional organizations may include ACEP, EMS for Children Advisory Council, state trauma committees, or emergency preparedness and disaster organizations.

Forms of collaboration may include:

- partnering with outside agencies to support policies or issues related to healthcare
- hosting a state “Day on the Hill”
- requesting a member of the local or state legislation to speak at meetings, and

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- providing training or workshops for members on strategies for speaking or writing to a professional organization or your legislator.

3a. How did your state council contact legislators this year, outside of ENA’s “Day on the Hill?” (Choose: *in person/face-to-face; phone call(s); letter(s)/email(s) or did not make any contact*)

(If ‘did not make any contact’ is chosen, application will automatically skip to Question 6a, and will be scored accordingly.)

3b. Provide the legislator’s name(s), date(s), and location(s).

The evidence

3b. Provide the legislator’s name(s), date(s), and location(s) of contact.

4. Provide a summary of discussion(s)/correspondence of policy issues discussed with legislators at the state and local levels?

The evidence

Response must provide a summary of discussion(s)/correspondence of policy issues. Include any bills introduced to state legislatures on items such as:

- workplace violence
- workplace issues (e.g., safe staffing at the state level)
- opioid crisis
- behavioral health
- human trafficking
- nursing scope of practice
- RN title protection.

Monthly legislative reports are provided to state leaders that include background on any relevant legislation that has been introduced or had some sort of action taken by a state legislature in the past month. Discuss how these reports have assisted you with your process.

5. What specific policy issues have been discussed with legislators at the federal level?

The evidence

The response should outline specific policy issues discussed. Include any bills introduced to federal legislatures on items such as:

- workplace violence

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- workplace issues (e.g., safe staffing at the federal level)
- opioid crisis
- behavioral health
- human trafficking
- nursing scope of practice
- RN title protection.

6a. Describe any specific Government Affairs efforts over the past year.

6b. Provide a list of names of bills, members of congress, meetings attended, etc.

The evidence

6a. The response should outline:

- legislation introduced, progressing forward, signed into law, or stopping
- action from your state board of nursing, or
- any other legislative/regulatory type event you have been involved with.

6b. Provide a list of names of bills, members of congress, meetings attended, etc.

7a. Has your state council hosted or sent any of your members to attend/participate in a Government Affairs-related workshop (either in-person or virtual) at the state level? This does not include ENA's "Day off the Hill." Choose Yes or No.

(If 'No' is chosen, application will automatically skip to the end, and will be scored accordingly.)

7b. If yes, list the event name(s), date(s) and location(s) OR provide a link to the event information or program (if available).

7c. Describe the event(s) listed above.

The evidence

7a. Choose Yes or No.

7b. Provide the event name(s), date(s) and location(s) of the workshop OR provide a link to the event information or program (if available).

7c. The response must describe the event, including:

- how members were invited
- how many nurses and organizations participated, and
- any reimbursement awarded.