



NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Proposed addendum and update, N-SARA Regional Procedure Handbook:

To address regional and national policy proposals for the annual State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) policy revision process in accordance with the latest policy modification cycle, in consultation with N-SARA leadership, the NEBHE SARA (State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements) RSC (Regional Steering Committee) will follow the outlined process until final language is formally approved and incorporated into the “N-SARA Regional Procedure Handbook”. The proposed language would update and replace page 10 of the “N-SARA Regional Procedure Handbook”; “requests for consideration of modifications to SARA policy”.

Summary

On June 27th, 2022 the NC-SARA Board unanimously approved a revised process for policy changes. This process, developed by an interregional group of regional steering leaders and with feedback and final endorsement from the four compact RSCs and inclusive of a period of public comment, includes a strong state voice and requires that any policies to be adopted must secure the approval of each regional compact and the NC-SARA board. The most up to date SARA policy manual as well as updates on the process and link to submit a proposal, can be found on the NC-SARA website: <https://www.nc-sara.org/sara-policy-overview>

To represent the NEBHE region’s vote in approving or rejecting SARA policy proposals, the N-SARA RSC considers and votes on all policy proposals. The RSC is also responsible for making related decisions, providing feedback, and receiving updates on developments throughout the process.

N-SARA Policy Proposal Review Process

- A. The annual policy review cycle is expected to take place from January to October of each calendar year. In anticipation, the N-SARA RSC (ensuring engagement from our region’s states via the State Portal Entity (SPE) representatives, whether or not they are members of the RSC), should begin considering and discussing priorities and potential regional proposals by fall of the previous year. While the region may or may not decide to endorse and submit their own proposal(s) in each cycle, these preliminary discussions and considerations should help when their feedback is needed throughout each annual cycle.
- B. With the commencement of the new policy cycle, all N-SARA regional leaders (RSC and SPEs) will be sought for frequent and collective meetings for the purpose of focusing on policy proposals and discussions therein. Discussions, decisions, feedback, and general updates on the cycle will consistently be sought and/or provided to N-SARA leaders from the beginning to the end of each cycle (from the NEBHE SARA staff and from regional representatives involved in the process).
- C. The annual policy cycle, in general, will commence with a proposal period at the beginning of a given calendar year, followed by a period of merging similar proposals, two rounds of broader public feedback, and ongoing interregional dialogue throughout.



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This will culminate in a period for RSCs in each region separately and together discussing and seeking consensus on policy proposals that could gain approval from all four regions for the proposal to move forward to final consideration of the NC-SARA Board at their annual Fall meeting.

- D. To formally endorse or approve any proposal(s), to either submit on behalf of the region during the annual proposal period through making a final decision as a region on a proposal that would then go to the NC-SARA Board, the N-SARA RSC will vote. Affirmative support of the N-SARA RSC is gained by a majority vote of present members (for any official endorsement and/or approval as necessary throughout this process).
- E. The N-SARA RSC Chair and RSC Vice Chair, as well as other select members as needed, will be asked to serve on various NC-SARA and/or interregional (I-RSC) committees for the purpose of discussion and decisions on developments, gathering feedback, and generally representing the region in advance of and throughout the annual process.
- F. The N-SARA Compact President and CEO, as an ex-officio member of the RSC and as an NC-SARA Board member, may request broader feedback from other NEBHE region leaders (ex: NEBHE Board members) on policy proposals in sensitive, significant, or potentially controversial matters. In turn, N-SARA regional leaders may decide to ask for the input or feedback from broader NEBHE region stakeholders, as can refine and enhance a given proposal.