

## ILA Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) FAQs

### 1. Who is eligible for the ILA OPI?

All internationally educated candidates for nursing licensure are eligible to sit for the ILA OPI.

### 2. What is the ILA OPI?

The ILA OPI is an oral proficiency interview that is designed to determine your maximum sustained level of English language proficiency. During the interview, you will be asked a series of questions and engage in professional and social conversations with a professional interviewer. A portion of the interview will concern the procedures and tasks that nurses are exposed to on a daily basis. However, much of the time you will simply be talking with the interviewer on a variety of topics. The interviewer may ask you to interpret or explain letters, forms, or drawings. You will not be evaluated on your knowledge of nursing practices. The ILA OPI is conducted solely to evaluate your English language proficiency.

### 3. Are there *timed tasks* on the OPI?

The **interview is not timed** and there are **no timed tasks**. The interview is “open-ended,” that is, it has no set number of topics or questions. This means that any number of topics may be discussed by you and the interviewer. Each interview is unique. The typical interview lasts approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

### 4. What is a passing rating?

Proficiency ratings range from 1 to 5. A rating of 5 is equivalent to the proficiency of an educated, native English speaker. A “+” sign, for example 3+, indicates that your rating is on the high end of the range of the proficiency level indicated. The Maryland Board of Nursing has determined that an ILA OPI rating of 3 constitutes evidence of acceptable English language proficiency. A candidate with a rating of 3 demonstrates sufficient control over grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary to effectively participate in most formal and informal conversations on social and professional topics. A rating of 3 also indicates a high level of comprehension when listening to English spoken at a normal speed.

Candidates who earn an ILA OPI Proficiency Rating of 3 or higher meet the English language proficiency requirement for Maryland State Licensure.

### 5. What do I bring to the interview?

You must provide on the day of your interview:

⇒ **A Photo ID. Bring a Valid Passport, State Issued Driver’s License, or a Valid Permanent Resident Card.**

**For security purposes, we will take a digital photo of you at the interview. The photo will appear on your score report.**

## 6. Who determines my Proficiency Rating?

An experienced professional interview evaluator will make an initial evaluation of your skills after review of your interview. A second evaluator, who has no knowledge of the initial rating, may also rate your recorded interview and assign a rating. **There are strict rating procedures to which the professional interview evaluators adhere.** These procedures assure consistent evaluations and produce reliable proficiency ratings.

## 7. Can I cancel my registration or change my test dates?

**Your registration can not be cancelled. No refunds will be issued.** If, for any reason, you cannot be present for the test on the confirmed date, you will receive a credit of \$30.00 toward a future interview session. The remainder of your payment will be retained by ILA to cover expenses related to processing your registration, holding space, reserving your interview appointment time, as well as reserving the time of the professional interviewer. **You are permitted to change your interview date and time.** We must receive your request for a change in your interview date **at least seven (7) business days (M-F) before your scheduled interview.** No requests for changes can be honored if your request is received fewer than seven business days prior to your interview.

**Please note that we can not honor interview appointments if candidates arrive more than 45 minutes late for their interviews.** No refunds or rescheduling of interviews are permitted under these circumstances. Candidates arriving more than 45 minutes late should submit a new registration form for a future interview date. ILA can not assume responsibility for registration confirmations and interview reminders lost in the mail.

## 8. How soon will I receive my OPI score report?

You will normally receive your proficiency score report 10-14 days after your interview. Your score report will automatically be sent to you **and** the Maryland Board of Nursing unless you have indicated otherwise on your ILA OPI registration form.

## 9. Will the interviewer give me any feedback immediately after my interview?

The interviewer can not share his or her impressions about the quality of your interview or a probable proficiency rating. Please resist asking such questions as “How did I do?” or “Was it good?” **The absence of feedback from the interviewer does not indicate in any way that the interview did not go well.** Comments regarding your performance and language skills will appear on your OPI Rating Report.

## 10. What can I do to prepare for the OPI?

The most effective way to prepare for the ILA OPI is by practicing your English as much as possible. Engaging in social and professional conversations on a daily basis will increase your language proficiency and best prepare you for the ILA OPI. No texts or test preparation materials are available for the ILA OPI. You may wish to consider taking advanced ESL courses in oral communication skills to hone your skills before your interview. Such courses are available at area community colleges and universities.

There is no single, short-term action that you can take to prepare for the ILA OPI. Get a good night's sleep the night before the interview, eat properly and do not change your normal routine. Do not spend the hours before your interview reviewing nursing practices or English vocabulary and grammar. Experience has demonstrated that this type of preparation is rarely beneficial. It is natural to feel a little nervous during your interview. Your interviewer is aware of the role that nervousness plays during the interview process and will attempt to make you feel more relaxed.