



**National Council for  
State Authorization  
Reciprocity Agreements**

MHEC • NEBHE • SREB • WICHE

# SARA INSTITUTION WELCOME KIT

**Dear New SARA Participating Institution or SARA Staff Member,**

Welcome to SARA! We are so glad to welcome you to the SARA community, and we look forward to working with you and helping you learn all about SARA and the very important role you fulfill for your institution and in the SARA community!

Your [SARA State Portal Entity](#) is your first and primary contact for SARA-related purposes. However, NC-SARA is pleased to share with you this Welcome Kit, a compilation of NC-SARA's resources for institutions. These resources may be in addition to what your State Portal Entity and/or regional compact SARA staff may provide.

If you need assistance at any time, please don't hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Emily Jacobson

Director for Student and Institution Support, NC-SARA

Contact: [info@nc-sara.org](mailto:info@nc-sara.org)



# WHO TO CONTACT FOR WHAT?

Generally speaking, your [SARA State Portal Entity](#) (SPE) will be your primary contact for SARA purposes. Contact your SPE if you want to:

- Change your contact information
- Discuss your SARA participation status (including renewal dates and fees)
- Alert about any changes at your institution such as accreditation status, mergers, acquisitions, or student complaints that would impact your institution's participation in SARA
- Discuss other SARA policy questions or state-specific requirements

- Review any required statements about participating in SARA, such as SARA student complaint language and Professional Licensure Disclosure statements

In some situations, you may wish to contact others, including:

Your institution's [Regional Compact SARA Staff](#):

To connect with regional compact staff and learn about their SARA-related trainings and communications they may offer to institutions.

NC-SARA General Questions: [info@nc-sara.org](mailto:info@nc-sara.org)



## STAYING IN TOUCH WITH NC-SARA

NC-SARA posts [Announcements](#) on the NC-SARA website and frequently emails institutional contacts with SARA-related news.



To learn more, please visit NC-SARA's website.

# WHAT I NEED TO DO AS A SARA PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION



## COMPLYING WITH SARA POLICY

The [SARA Policy Manual](#) articulates all the applicable policies for participating institutions and state members.

The [SARA Quick Start Guides](#), available on the [SARA Learning Station](#), are intended to help institutions easily understand SARA requirements to help them maintain compliance, communicate with colleagues regarding SARA, and explain SARA to colleagues, students, and other stakeholders.



## COMPLETING REQUIRED ANNUAL DATA REPORTING

The [Institution Directions for Annual Data Reporting webpage is your one-stop-shop](#) for all of NC-SARA's resources and tools for your institution's required annual reporting of exclusively distance education enrollment (EDEE) and out-of-state learning placements (OOSLP) data to NC-SARA.

The reporting window is May 15 - June 15 annually.

For questions about annual data reporting, please email: [data@nc-sara.org](mailto:data@nc-sara.org)



## PAYING ANNUAL PARTICIPATION FEES & BILLING

The [Participation Fees](#) webpage includes the annual NC-SARA fee as well as any specific state fees that may be required.

The [SARA Fees Quick Start Guide](#) will provide you with an explanation about NC-SARA fees and state-specific SARA fees.

[You may need NC-SARA's W-9 Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification](#)

For questions about billing, please email: [accounting@nc-sara.org](mailto:accounting@nc-sara.org)



## RENEWING YOUR INSTITUTION'S SARA PARTICIPATION ANNUALLY

[An overview of the Application and Renewal process is available on NC-SARA's website.](#)

[The form is called Application and Approval Form for Institution Participation in SARA](#)

[The Institution Applications Quick Start Guide will provide you with general](#) guidance in completing the application form.



## MAKING ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

NC-SARA provides a collection of [resources and administrative forms](#) to support administrative changes, including but not limited to:

- **New Institution:** Request an extension to complete the SARA participation process (AF1)
- **Renewing Institution:** Request an extension to renew SARA participation (AF2)
- Approval for SARA Institution Non-Ability to Report Data (AF7)



## ENGAGING WITH OTHER SARA-PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

[Institution Directory](#): A public listing of all SARA-participating institutions.

[NC-SARA Institution Advisory Committee](#): NC-SARA collaborates with a key group of institutional personnel about needs, engagement priorities, and programming for institutions. The member list of this Advisory Committee is maintained on NC-SARA's website.



To learn more, please visit [NC-SARA's website](#).



## LEARNING MORE ABOUT SARA AND STATE AUTHORIZATION

Calculate your institution's [SARA Cost Savings](#)

[Get a sense of the SARA landscape using NC-SARA's Data Dashboards](#)

[Review NC-SARA's Professional Licensure Resources](#)

[Learn more about SARA's Student Consumer Protections](#)

The [SARA Learning Station](#) offers an ever-growing collection of resources for understanding SARA

- Make sure to check out the SARA 101 online course for a good introduction to all things SARA.
- Check out the SARA Quick Start Guides to help you navigate SARA policy and process.

The [State Authorization Guide](#): The Guide is a collection of state laws, regulations, and requirements for institutions serving out-of-state students outside of SARA.

NC-SARA also hosts a variety of events and programs for institutions:

- [Webinars](#) for institutions (e.g., Annual Data Reporting) (recordings, slides, and other resources are shared publicly)
- Virtual meetings, workshops, or other convenings hosted by NC-SARA

**For questions about educational programs or events, please email: [education@nc-sara.org](mailto:education@nc-sara.org)**



## ADDING DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS INTO SARA SOURCE (OPTIONAL BENEFIT)

[SARA Source](#) is a searchable catalog of distance education programs offered by SARA-participating institutions. Institutions may voluntarily add their distance education programs to SARA Source.

See the [SARA Source for Institutions webpage for information](#).

For questions about SARA Source, please email: [sarasource@nc-sara.org](mailto:sarasource@nc-sara.org)

# ABOUT SARA

Recognizing the growing demand for distance learning opportunities, higher education stakeholders - including state regulators and education leaders, accreditors, the U.S. Department of Education, and institutions - joined together in 2013 to establish the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA).

SARA helps expand students' access to educational opportunities and ensures more efficient, consistent, and effective regulation of distance learning programs. SARA is a voluntary agreement among 49 member states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The agreement establishes comparable national standards for interstate offerings of postsecondary distance education; participating colleges and universities must adhere to stringent requirements, including accreditation and remaining in good financial standing. To learn more, please visit NC-SARA's website. As of July 2023 nearly 2,400 institutions in 49 member states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands all voluntarily participate in SARA.

# ABOUT NC-SARA

The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) is a non-profit organization that provides national leadership, in partnership with the four regional compacts, of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) for distance education regulation across the member states and territories.

NC-SARA helps ensure consistent compliance with distance education rules for state authorization among member states and participating institutions. NC-SARA also works with states, institutions, policymakers, and students to understand the purpose, benefits, and value of SARA.

## NC-SARA's mission is:

- To provide broad access to postsecondary education opportunities to students across the country;
- To increase the quality and value of higher learning credentials earned via distance education; and
- To assure students are well served in a rapidly changing education landscape.



To learn more, please visit [NC-SARA's website](#).