

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1073

As of March 2, 2023

Title: An act relating to medical assistants.

Brief Description: Concerning medical assistants.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Harris, Tharinger, Ryu, Leavitt, Macri, Caldier, Santos and Ormsby).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/15/23, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long Term Care: 3/09/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the expiration of a medical assistant-certified interim permit to the issuance of a medical assistant-certified certification.
- Allows an applicant for a medical assistant-phlebotomist credential or a medical assistant-hemodialysis technician credential who has completed the training program to work, under the level of supervision required for the training program, for up to 180 days after filing their application.
- Makes changes to the authorized duties of a medical assistant-certified and a medical assistant-registered.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

Staff: Julie Tran (786-7283)

Background: The Department of Health licenses several different types of medical assistants, including medical assistants-certified, medical assistants-hemodialysis technician and medical assistants-phlebotomist.

Certification. A person meets the qualifications for certification as a medical assistant-

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certified if they satisfactorily complete a medical assistant training program approved by the Secretary of Health (Secretary), pass an examination approved by the Secretary, and meet any additional qualifications established by the Secretary in rule. A person who has completed the other requirements, but has not passed the examination, may practice as a medical assistant-certified under an interim permit. The permit expires upon passage of the examination or after one year, whichever occurs first, and may not be renewed.

Authorized Duties and Supervision. A medical assistant-certified may perform authorized duties only when delegated by, and under the supervision of, a health care practitioner. For tasks requiring supervision, the supervising health care practitioner must generally be physically present and immediately available in the facility. When administering intravenous injections for diagnostic or therapeutic agents, a medical assistant-certified must be under the direct visual supervision of a health care practitioner and meet certain minimum standards established by the Secretary in rule.

A medical assistant-registered may perform authorized duties only when delegated by, and under the supervision of, a health care practitioner. Authorized duties include preparing patients for, and assisting with, routine and specialty examinations, procedures, treatments, and minor office surgeries using no more than local anesthetic.

Summary of Bill: Certification. An interim permit for a medical assistant-certified expires upon passage of the examination and issuance of a certification, or after one year, whichever occurs first.

An applicant for a medical assistant-phlebotomist credential or a medical assistant-hemodialysis technician credential who has completed their training program is allowed to work, under the level of supervision required for the training program, for up to 180 days after filing their application.

Authorized Duties and Supervision. A supervising health care practitioner is not required to be present during procedures to administer vaccines or obtain specimens for, or perform diagnostic testing.

A medical assistant-certified may establish intravenous lines for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes, without administering medications, under the supervision of a health care practitioner if the medical assistant-certified meets minimum standards established by the Secretary in rule.

A medical assistant-registered may perform diagnostic testing and electrocardiography and prepare patients for, and assist with, routine and specialty examinations, procedures, treatments, and minor office surgeries, including those with minimal sedation. A medical-assistant registered may also administer intramuscular injections for diagnostic or therapeutic agents under the immediate supervision of a health care practitioner if the medical assistant-registered meets minimum standards established by the Secretary.

A medical assistant-registered may administer medications for intramuscular injections if the drugs are:

- administered only by unit or single dosage, or by a dosage calculated and verified by a health care practitioner;
- limited to legend drugs, vaccines, and Schedule III through V controlled substances authorized by a health care practitioner; and
- administered pursuant to a written order from a health care practitioner.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 28, 2023.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.