

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0127

Health care facilities and clergy.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Angelos, Chestek, Haroldson, Heiner, Knapp, Lawley, Penn, Rodriguez-Williams, Slagle, Smith and Ward and Senator(s) Barlow, Brennan, Hutchings and Steinmetz

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to public health and safety; requiring  
2 health care facilities to allow clergy members to visit  
3 health care facilities as specified; providing definitions;  
4 and providing for an effective date.

5

6 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

7

8 **Section 1.** W.S. 35-2-122 is created to read:

9

10 **35-2-122. In-person visitation with clergy members.**

11

12 (a) As used in this section:

13

1           (i) "Clergy member" means a rabbi, priest,  
2 minister or any person acting as a lay religious counselor  
3 of any religious denomination or sect;

4

5           (ii) "Health care facility" includes but is not  
6 limited to as defined in W.S. 35-2-901(a)(x);

7

8           (iii) "Public health emergency" means as defined  
9 in W.S. 35-4-115(a)(i).

10

11           (b) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this  
12 section, no health care facility shall prohibit a resident  
13 or patient of that facility from receiving in-person  
14 visitation with a clergy member during a public health  
15 emergency, provided that the visitation is at the request  
16 of:

17

18           (i) The patient or resident; or

19

20           (ii) The patient's or resident's legally  
21 authorized representative, including a family member of the  
22 patient or resident, if the patient or resident is  
23 incapacitated.

1

2 (c) During a public health emergency, a health care  
3 facility may impose and enforce requirements promulgated  
4 under W.S. 35-1-240 or by the centers for disease control  
5 and prevention, the centers for Medicaid and Medicare  
6 services, the state health officer under W.S. 35-1-240, the  
7 joint commission on the accreditation of healthcare  
8 organizations or other accredited organizations that  
9 provide deemed status on behalf of the centers for Medicaid  
10 and Medicare services for health care for clergy members to  
11 comply with to visit patients or residents of that  
12 facility. A health care facility shall not prohibit a  
13 clergy member from visiting a patient or resident in that  
14 facility unless the clergy member refuses to follow the  
15 requirements that the health care facility has required in  
16 accordance with this subsection.

17

18 **Section 2.** This act is effective July 1, 2023.

19

20

(END)