

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1478

By: Representative Schulz

By: Senator Hill

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO REPEAL THE REGISTRATION OF DISEASE
INTERVENTION SPECIALISTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REPEAL THE REGISTRATION OF DISEASE
INTERVENTION SPECIALISTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 98, is repealed.

~~Chapter 98 — Registration of Disease Intervention Specialists~~

~~Subchapter 1 — General Provisions~~

~~17-98-101. Purpose.~~

~~Since the profession of disease intervention specialist significantly affects the lives of the people of this state, it is the purpose of this chapter to protect the public by setting standards of qualification, training, and experience for those who seek to represent themselves to the public as disease intervention specialists and by promoting high standards of professional performance for those engaged in the practice of disease intervention.~~

~~17-98-102. Restriction of registry.~~

~~It is the intent of the General Assembly to restrict registry to those individuals who are qualified under this chapter to be disease intervention specialists. It is not the intent of the General Assembly to register~~



~~persons, such as state employees, in the job classification of disease intervention specialist.~~

~~17-98-103. Definitions.~~

~~As used in this chapter:~~

~~(1) "Associate disease intervention specialist" means a person who meets the educational and specialized training requirements of this chapter, but does not meet the experience requirements established for a registered disease intervention specialist;~~

~~(2) "Continuing education unit" means value given for participation in organized continuing education experience under reasonable sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction approved by the State Board of Health;~~

~~(3) "Disease intervention" means activities used to prevent disease transmission by ensuring that those people who have a sexually transmitted disease and those who have been exposed to a sexually transmitted disease are promptly located, examined, and adequately treated before any signs or symptoms of a disease appear or before any laboratory evidence of a disease is demonstrable or before an infected person would have sought treatment voluntarily;~~

~~(4) "Disease intervention specialist in training" means a person who meets the educational requirements of this chapter, but does not meet the specialized training requirements established for an associate disease intervention specialist; and~~

~~(5) "Registered disease intervention specialist" means a trained healthcare professional meeting the educational, specialized training, and experience requirements of this chapter who practices sexually transmitted disease intervention with patients, sex partners, and others suspected of having a sexually transmitted disease.~~

~~17-98-104. Exemptions.~~

~~(a) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to limit members of the clergy, Christian Science practitioners, and licensed healthcare professionals, such as physicians, nurses, psychologists, and counselors, from doing work within the standards and ethics of their respective professions, provided that they do not hold themselves out to the public by~~

~~any title or description of services as a disease intervention specialist.~~

~~(b) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to limit the employment by healthcare facilities of persons who commonly perform services within the definition of disease intervention, so long as the services are performed within the course of and scope of their employment as employees of healthcare facilities and they do not hold themselves out to the public by any title or description of services as disease intervention specialists. This chapter does not require an employee of a healthcare facility to be registered as a disease intervention specialist as a condition of employment.~~

~~(c) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as limiting the activities of a student or other person preparing for the profession of disease intervention specialist, provided that disease intervention is performed only under qualified supervision.~~

~~17-98-105. Unlawful practice — Penalties.~~

~~(a) If any person shall practice or hold himself or herself out to the public as being engaged in the practice of disease intervention and is not then currently registered to practice as a disease intervention specialist, he or she shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor.~~

~~(b) Upon conviction, he or she shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty dollars (\$50.00) nor more than two hundred dollars (\$200) or by imprisonment not exceeding three (3) months, or by both fine and imprisonment.~~

~~(c) Each day the violation continues constitutes a separate offense.~~

~~(d) The State Board of Health shall assist the prosecuting attorney in the enforcement of this chapter, and any member of the board may present evidence of a violation to the appropriate prosecuting attorney.~~

~~17-98-106. Disclosure of information.~~

~~No registered disease intervention specialist or certified disease intervention specialist, disease intervention specialist in training, or his or her secretary, stenographer, or clerk, may disclose any information he or she may have acquired from persons consulting him or her in his or her professional capacity to any person except with the written consent of the person or persons whose history is to be disclosed.~~

~~17-98-107. Disposition of fees or payments.~~

~~(a) All fees or payments collected by the State Board of Health under this chapter shall be deposited into a bank designated by the board, and the board shall make a report annually to the Governor showing all receipts and disbursements of moneys and a summary of all business transacted during the year.~~

~~(b) Expense reimbursement for the board in accordance with § 25-16-901 et seq. and other expenses provided hereunder shall be paid by the board from the fees collected by it.~~

~~Subchapter 2 — Administration by State Board of Health~~

~~17-98-201. [Repealed.]~~

~~17-98-202. [Repealed.]~~

~~17-98-203. Rules.~~

~~(a) The State Board of Health shall adopt such rules as are reasonably necessary to administer this chapter.~~

~~(b) The Secretary for the State Board of Health may administer oaths and subpoena witnesses.~~

~~(c)(1) The board shall promulgate rules establishing standards for continuing education as a means to maintain professional competency.~~

~~(2) The standards shall be established in a manner to assure that a variety of approved continuing education programs are available to registered disease intervention specialists, including, but not limited to, academic studies, in-service education, institutes, seminars, lectures, conferences, workshops, extension courses, home study programs, articles published, and scientific papers published.~~

~~(3) The continuing education units shall be awarded for direct participation in courses approved by the board.~~

~~(d) The board may contract with another agency or association to perform part or all of the duties in establishing procedures to record and retain data on all registered disease intervention specialists in good standing.~~

~~Subchapter 3 — Examination and Registration~~

~~17-98-301. Examinations.~~

~~(a) The State Board of Health shall hold examinations to test the fitness of applicants for registration at such times and places within this state as the board shall determine. The board shall conduct at least one (1) examination every year. The scope of the examination shall be determined by the board.~~

~~(b) Within ninety (90) calendar days after an application is filed with the Secretary for the State Board of Health, the board shall notify the applicant whether his or her application for examination was accepted or rejected and, if rejected, the reason therefor.~~

~~(c) The secretary shall give reasonable notice by mail of the time and place of the examination to each applicant accepted for examination.~~

~~(d) Within sixty (60) calendar days after the examination, the board shall notify by mail each examinee as to whether he or she has passed the examination.~~

~~(e) Each person who passes the examination to the satisfaction of the board shall be issued a certificate of registration upon payment of a registration fee set by the board.~~

~~17-98-302. Admission to examination.~~

~~(a) The State Board of Health shall admit to examination any person who makes application to the Secretary for the State Board of Health on forms prescribed and furnished by the board, pays an application fee set by the board to defray the expense of examination, and submits satisfactory proof to the board that he or she:~~

~~(1) Meets the minimum educational requirements;~~

~~(2) Meets the minimum specialized training requirements, as determined by the board;~~

~~(3) Has had two (2) years of field experience in human immunodeficiency virus/sexually transmitted disease intervention; and~~

~~(4) Is actively engaged in the field of human immunodeficiency virus/sexually transmitted disease intervention at the time he or she makes application.~~

~~(b) The minimum educational requirements for admission to examination~~

~~for registration as a disease intervention specialist shall be as follows:~~

~~(1) A bachelor's or master's of public health degree with specialization in disease intervention from a school of public health approved by the board; or~~

~~(2) A bachelor's degree with a minimum of thirty (30) semester hours or its equivalent in biology, chemistry, physics, math, sociology, psychology, or criminal justice, plus two (2) years' experience in disease intervention or training courses approved by the board.~~

~~(c) Any person meeting the educational and specialized training requirements of this chapter who does not meet the experience requirements of this chapter may make application to the board, through a process prescribed by the board, for acceptance as an associate disease intervention specialist. The board shall accept such an application when submitted, if accompanied by the required fee.~~

~~(d) Any person who meets the educational requirements of this chapter but does not meet the specialized training requirements established for an associate disease intervention specialist may make application to the board, through a process prescribed by the board, for acceptance as a disease intervention specialist in training.~~

~~17-98-303. Issuance of certificate without examination.~~

~~The State Board of Health shall issue a certificate of registration without examination to any person who makes application on forms prescribed and furnished by the board, pays a registration fee set by the board, and submits satisfactory proof that he or she:~~

~~(1) Has had at least two (2) years' experience in the field of human immunodeficiency virus/sexually transmitted disease intervention; and~~

~~(2) Is registered as a disease intervention specialist in a state in which the qualifications for registration are not lower than the qualifications for registration in this state at the time he or she applies for registration.~~

~~17-98-304. Expiration and renewal.~~

~~(a) Each certificate of registration issued by the State Board of Health shall expire on June 30 following the date of issue.~~

~~(b) A renewal certificate may be issued to the holder of a current~~

~~certificate of registration who makes application before the expiration of his or her certificate and pays a renewal fee set by the board. Satisfactory proof of complying with the board's continuing education requirements must accompany renewal applications.~~

~~17-98-305. Application for reinstatement.~~

~~(a) A former registered disease intervention specialist whose certificate has expired or has been suspended or revoked may make application for reinstatement by paying a renewal fee and submitting satisfactory proof to the State Board of Health that he or she has complied with the continuing education requirements.~~

~~(b) The board shall consider the professional qualifications of the applicant as in the case of an original application.~~

~~17-98-306. Refusal to renew — Suspension or revocation.~~

~~The State Board of Health may refuse to renew or may suspend or revoke a certificate upon proof that the applicant is guilty of fraud, deceit, gross negligence, incompetency, or misconduct relative to his or her duties as a disease intervention specialist.~~

~~17-98-307. Hearing and notice.~~

~~(a)(1) Before the State Board of Health may suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew a certificate of registration, it shall set the matter for a hearing before the board, and, at least twenty (20) calendar days before the date set for hearing, it shall give written notice to the accused of the charges made and the date and place of the hearing.~~

~~(2) Service of the notice may be made by personal service or by sending it by registered mail to the last known business address of the accused.~~

~~(3) The accused shall have the opportunity to be heard in person and by counsel.~~

~~(4) A stenographic record of the hearing shall be kept, and a transcript thereof filed with the board.~~

~~(b) The order of the board shall be issued within thirty (30) days after the termination of the hearing.~~

~~(c) Notice of the order of the board shall be given to the accused,~~

~~either by personal service or by registered mail sent to the last known business address of the accused, within ten (10) calendar days after the order is issued.~~

APPROVED: 3/4/25