

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
94th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2023

A Bill

SENATE BILL 344

By: Senator K. Hammer
By: Representative L. Johnson

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO REQUIRE POSTING OF A WRITTEN NOTICE THAT ATTACKING A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL IS A FELONY; TO ALLOW A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL TO USE A WORK ADDRESS WHEN REPORTING CERTAIN OFFENSES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REQUIRE POSTING OF A WRITTEN NOTICE THAT ATTACKING A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL IS A FELONY; AND TO ALLOW A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL TO USE A WORK ADDRESS WHEN REPORTING CERTAIN OFFENSES.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 12, Chapter 12, Subchapter 1, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

12-12-112. Healthcare professional reporting battery in the second degree.

A law enforcement agency shall allow a healthcare professional listed under § 5-13-202(a)(4)(E) to list a work address in lieu of his or her home address when filing a police report or complaint related to an incident that meets the requirements of battery in the second degree under § 5-13-202(a)(4)(E).

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 20, Chapter 9, Subchapter 1, is amended



to add an additional section to read as follows:

20-9-105. Legislative findings – Notice of battery in second degree.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) The healthcare needs of the citizens of Arkansas are served by over sixty-six thousand (66,000) licensed nurses in a wide array of clinical settings and levels of criticality;

(2) Both national and state data present an upward trend in violence and incivility against nurses and other healthcare professionals in clinical settings;

(3) On average, two (2) nurses are attacked every hour nationwide, with the Press Ganey National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators showing more than five thousand two hundred (5,200) nurses were attacked in the second quarter of 2022; and

(4) It is in the best interest of patients for healthcare professionals, including nurses, to be able to perform their duties in a safe and caring environment.

(b) A written notice of the felony status under § 5-13-202(a)(4)(E) of attacking a healthcare professional, including a nurse, shall be posted:

(1) At entrances to a healthcare facility, emergency department, clinic, or long-term care facility that are used by patients and visitors; and

(2) In a patient waiting area of a healthcare facility, emergency department, clinic, or long-term care facility.

(c)(1) The Arkansas Nurses Association shall provide the Department of Health a digital poster design that shall be used by a healthcare facility.

(2) The text of the digital poster described under subdivision (c)(1) of this section shall read: "We respect you. Please respect our staff. Attacking a healthcare worker is a FELONY*. *Arkansas Code Annotated § 5-13-202."