

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

State of Arkansas  
95th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2025

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1566

By: Representative McClure

By: Senator A. Clark

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO REQUIRE ADOPTION OF A STATEWIDE PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM CORE CURRICULUM TO INCREASE CONSISTENCY IN PRACTICAL NURSING EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

TO REQUIRE ADOPTION OF A STATEWIDE PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM CORE CURRICULUM TO INCREASE CONSISTENCY IN PRACTICAL NURSING EDUCATION.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 61, Subchapter 1, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-61-144. Statewide practical nursing program core curriculum.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) There are inconsistencies between practical nursing programs in institutions of higher education across the state;

(2) These inconsistencies include varying lengths of clinical hours, class hours, and credit hours;

(3) However, no identified correlations have been found between the length of the practical nursing programs and pass rates of the examinations for licensing as a practical nurse; and

(4) Adopting a statewide practical nursing program core curriculum would result in consistency in practical nursing programs and help improve practical nursing programs by strengthening assessment and evaluation



measures, streamlining collaborative efforts between practical nursing programs, and providing practical nursing program structure for novice directors, new practical nursing programs, and institutions of higher education.

(b) On or before the 2029-2030 academic school year, all practical nursing program in this state shall adopt the practical nursing program core curriculum developed by the Nurse Administrators of Nursing Education Programs as an advisory group to the Arkansas State Board of Nursing, in accordance with the rules of the Arkansas State Board of Nursing.

(c) The practical nursing program core curriculum under subsection (b) of this section shall:

(1) Consist of forty-four (44) credit hours;

(2) Allow each practical nursing program to:

(A) Determine the breakdown of didactic, laboratory, and clinical hours for each course;

(B) Include additional standards to maintain additional accreditation or institutional requirements; and

(C) Have time to meet the course learning outcomes and standards of the rules of the board;

(3) Have two (2) options to allow certified nurse aides and medication assistive persons to receive credit for prior learning without being required to take redundant coursework; and

(4) Be reviewed periodically by the Nurse Administrators of Nursing Education Programs to ensure consistency among the practical nursing programs and to update courses for scientific and technological advancements in nursing.

(d) The Nurse Administrators of Nursing Education Programs and the board shall identify and address areas of concern that may arise in the implementation of the practical nursing program core curriculum.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 17-87-304(a)(2), concerning the qualifications for applicants for a practical nursing license, is amended to read as follows:

(2)(A) Has completed a prescribed curriculum as provided under § 6-61-144 in a state-approved program for the preparation of practical nurses and holds a diploma or certificate therefrom.

(B) However, the board may waive ~~this~~ the requirement under subdivision (a)(2)(A) of this section if the board determines the applicant to be otherwise qualified.

SECTION 3. DO NOT CODIFY. Multi-phase adoption plan.

(a) Beginning with the 2025-2026 academic school year, a small group of the practical nursing programs shall pilot the practical nursing program core curriculum developed by the Nurse Administrators of Nursing Education Programs as an advisory group to the Arkansas State Board of Nursing, in accordance with the rules of the Arkansas State Board of Nursing.

(b)(1) The Nurse Administrators of Nursing Education Programs and the board shall identify and address areas of concern that may arise in the implementation of the practical nursing program core curriculum in the first year and make any necessary changes to the statewide practical nursing program core curriculum.

(2) The Nurse Administrators of Nursing Education Programs and the board shall report to the General Assembly regarding any changes to the statewide practical nursing program core curriculum based on the first academic school year.