

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

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

As Engrossed: H4/9/25

A Bill

SENATE BILL 601

By: Senator Hester

By: Representative L. Johnson

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE A PATHWAY FOR A GRADUATE OF A FOREIGN MEDICAL SCHOOL TO BE LICENSED IN THIS STATE IF HE OR SHE IS OFFERED FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT AS A PHYSICIAN FROM A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE A PATHWAY FOR A GRADUATE OF A FOREIGN MEDICAL SCHOOL TO BE LICENSED IN THIS STATE IF HE OR SHE IS OFFERED FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT AS A PHYSICIAN FROM A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 17-95-202, concerning the definitions used in the Arkansas Medical Practices Act, § 17-95-201 et seq., § 17-95-301 et seq., and § 17-95-401 et seq., is amended to add *additional subdivisions* to read as follows:

(4) "Healthcare provider" means a healthcare professional, healthcare facility, or entity licensed or certified to provide healthcare services in this state as recognized by the Arkansas State Medical Board; and

(5) "Medically underserved population" means the same as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 254b, as existing on January 1, 2025.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 17-95-403(b)(3)(A)(iii), concerning the qualifications for a license to practice medicine in this state, is amended



to read as follows:

(iii)(a) A foreign medical school whose entrance requirements and course of instruction have been approved by the ~~Arkansas State Medical Board~~ Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates.

(b) ~~He~~ Except as provided in subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section, he or she ~~must~~ shall also have:

(1) Served three (3) years as an intern, resident, or fellow, or a combination thereof, in an accredited postgraduate medical education program in the United States;

(2) Served three (3) years as an intern or resident in a postgraduate medical education program outside the United States, completed all steps of the United States Medical Licensing Examination, obtained Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates certification, and either completed one (1) year or more of fellowship training accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education in the United States or received American Board of Medical Specialties certification by the American Board of Medical Specialties; or

(3) Completed one (1) year as an intern or resident in an accredited postgraduate medical education program in the United States and be currently enrolled in an accredited postgraduate medical program in Arkansas.

(c) If he or she has been offered full-time employment as a physician from a healthcare provider that operates in a medically underserved population in this state, he or she shall:

(1) Hold an active, unencumbered license to practice medicine in a foreign country;

(2) Have actively practiced medicine during the four-year period preceding the date of an application under this section;

(3) Have the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates evaluate his or her medical credentials;

(4) Hold an active, valid certificate issued by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates; and

(5) Pass the examination used by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 17-95-403, concerning the qualifications for a license to practice medicine in this state, is amended to add an additional subsection to read as follows:

(c)(1) An applicant who is licensed under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section shall:

(A) Maintain his or her employment with the original healthcare provider that operates in this state for at least three (3) consecutive years after licensure;

(B) Notify the Arkansas State Medical Board within five (5) business days after any change of employer;

(C) Appear personally before the Arkansas State Medical Board together with the sponsoring physician who is licensed by the Arkansas State Medical Board; and

(D) Present to the Arkansas State Medical Board information as to what area or department in which he or she will be practicing medicine and who will be his or her sponsoring physician.

(2) The license issued under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section shall be a provisional license that authorizes practicing medicine only within the clinical programs approved by the sponsoring physician who is licensed by the Arkansas State Medical Board.

(3)(A) The Arkansas State Medical Board shall issue each provisional license under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section for a period of one (1) year.

(B) At the end of one (1) year, the provisional license issued under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section shall lapse, and if the physician desires to continue the practice of medicine under the provisional license issued under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section, the physician shall:

(i) Submit completed renewal forms to the Arkansas State Medical Board providing information as requested by the Arkansas State Medical Board;

(ii) Pay a renewal fee as established by the Arkansas State Medical Board; and

(iii) If requested, appear in person before the Arkansas State Medical Board, together with the sponsoring physician.

(4) At the end of the second year of practice with a provisional

license under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section, the physician is eligible for an active, unrestricted license to practice medicine in this state after review and approval of the Arkansas State Medical Board.

(5) A physician who obtains a license to practice medicine in the State of Arkansas shall comply with the Arkansas Medical Practices Act, § 17-95-201 et seq., § 17-95-301 et seq., and § 17-95-401 et seq., and all rules of the Arkansas State Medical Board.

/s/Hester