

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 859 (Delegate Pendergrass)
Health and Government Operations

**State Board of Physicians - Radiographers, Radiation Therapists, and Nuclear
Medicine Technologists - Requirements for Licensing**

This bill establishes specific educational, training, examination, and related requirements for individuals to be licensed as a radiographer, radiation therapist, or nuclear medicine technologist by the State Board of Physicians.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2014.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: To the extent the bill requires administrative changes, the board can handle them with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful for affected applicants for licensure as a radiographer, radiation therapist, or nuclear medicine technologist that have not graduated from an accredited educational program.

Analysis

Bill Summary: An applicant must have graduated from an education program (1) accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) or one of its predecessors or successors; (2) accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Nuclear Medicine Technology (JRCNMT) or one of its predecessors or successors; or (3) in radiography, radiation therapy, or nuclear medicine technology accredited by a national certifying body approved by the board.

If an applicant graduates from a program in radiography, radiation therapy, or nuclear medicine technology accredited by a national certifying body approved by the board, the applicant must also (1) hold a current active and unrestricted license or be otherwise recognized as a radiographer, radiation therapist, or nuclear medicine technologist in another state; (2) submit verification that the applicant has full-time practice experience as a radiographer, radiation therapist, or nuclear medicine technologist in another state or with the federal government for at least three of five years preceding the date of application; and (3) not have been the subject of a public disciplinary action or have a pending disciplinary action against any current, previous, or expired license held.

An applicant must have passed an examination in radiography, radiation therapy, or nuclear medicine technology constructed by a national certifying body approved by the board. An applicant must have been certified and maintain current registration or active certification at the time of application from a national certifying body approved by the board. An applicant must also meet any other education, training, or examination requirements established by the board.

Current Law: To qualify for a license as a radiographer, radiation therapist, or nuclear medicine technologist from the State Board of Physicians, an applicant must be of good moral character; at least age 18; demonstrate oral and written competency in English; and meet any educational, training, or examination requirements established by the board – including graduation from an appropriate educational program, as determined by the board, and certification.

Board regulations (Code of Maryland Regulations 10.32.10.04) further specify the requirements for licensure. A radiographer must successfully complete and graduate from a program of radiography which has been accredited by JRCERT and pass the examination in radiography constructed by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT). A nuclear medicine technologist must successfully complete and graduate from a program of nuclear medicine technology which has been accredited by (JRCNMT) and pass the examination in nuclear medicine technology constructed by ARRT or the Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board (NMTCB). A radiation therapist must successfully complete and graduate from a program of radiation therapy which has been accredited by JRCERT and pass the examination in radiation therapy constructed by ARRT. A radiologist assistant must complete a radiologist assistant educational program that is recognized by ARRT, successfully complete coursework that leads to a baccalaureate degree or post-baccalaureate certificate, pass the examination administered by ARRT for radiologist assistants, and maintain current registration or active certification from ARRT or NMTCB at the time of application.

Background: A radiographer uses ionizing radiation to assist in the diagnosis or localization of disease or injury or to perform tumor localization radiography. Radiation

therapists perform tumor localization radiography and apply therapeutic doses of radiation. Nuclear medicine technologists prepare and administer radiopharmaceuticals to and conduct *in vivo* detection and measurement of radioactivity to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of disease or injury. Radiologist assistants are advanced practitioners of medical radiation technology licensed to perform fluoroscopy and selected radiology procedures, patient assessment, and patient management under the supervision of a radiologist. The State Board of Physicians regulates more than 6,500 radiation therapists, radiographers, and nuclear medicine technologists as well as radiologist assistants.

In October 2011, JRCNMT accredited the nuclear medicine technology program at Frederick Community College. In May 2012, JRCERT accredited the radiography program at Howard Community College. According to the board's fiscal 2013 annual report, the board continues to receive applications for licensure from applicants who have not graduated from an accredited educational program. As a result, the Radiation Therapy, Radiography, Nuclear Medicine Technology, and Radiologist Assistance Advisory Committee developed regulations that would expand the education qualifications for radiation therapists, radiographers, and nuclear medicine technologists to create an alternative pathway to licensure. However, these regulations were recently withdrawn.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

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