

HB 1013_AFSCME3_FAV.pdf

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Position: FAV



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Patrick Moran – President

**HB 1013 - State Employees - Paid Sick Leave - Certificate of Illness or Disability
Signed by a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor**

**Finance Committee
March 28, 2024**

FAVORABLE

AFSCME Council 3 supports HB 1013. Under the bill, licensed clinical professional counselors join a list that includes medical doctors and surgeons, chiropractors, clinical psychologists, dentists, licensed certified clinical social workers, nurse midwives, nurse practitioners, oral surgeons, optometrists, physical therapists, and podiatrists as health care providers who are authorized to sign off on a state employee's illness or disability when required.

It is worth mentioning that as written, this bill only applies to the state employees in the state personnel management system (SPMS), and not those state employees who work in independent personnel systems like the Department of Transportation or across our Higher Education institutions. We support all state employees being covered under this bill. If the intent is to cover all state employees, we hope the committee considers an amendment to include them.

HB 1013 is extremely relevant legislation for today. At a time when mental health needs are high, access to mental health care providers can still be very challenging. By broadening the list of mental health providers that state employees can see and use leave for, Maryland is supporting our state employees by promoting their mental health and well-being. It makes sense to add licensed clinical professional counselors to the list of providers that can authorize certificates of illness or disability for state employees, and this will increase mental health care access at this critical time.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to provide a favorable report on HB 1013.

2024 LCPCM HB 1013 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill: House Bill 1013 – State Employees- Paid Sick Leave – Certificate of Illness or Disability Signed by a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor

Hearing Date: March 28, 2024

Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) strongly support *House Bill 1013 – State Employees – Paid Sick Leave – Certificate of Illness or Disability Signed by a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor*. The bill adds licensed clinical professional counselors to the list of health care professionals who can certify illness when a state employee is seeking paid sick leave. We support the legislation for the following reasons:

- **Aligns State Employee’s Policies with Health Occupations Law:** Maryland law specifies that the following health care professionals may certify illnesses for state employees requesting paid leave: physicians, psychologists, social workers, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, physical therapists, podiatrists, dentists, and optometrists. Licensed clinical professional counselors are not included on this list, even though they are permitted to diagnosis and treat mental health illnesses under the Health Occupations Article. This bill will address that oversight;
- **Ensuring State Employees Do Not Face Delays in Obtaining Leave for Mental Illness:** Some state employees are already being treated by licensed clinical professional counselors. If these state employees need time off because of a mental health issue, they will need to find another type of provider to certify their illness. With HB 1013, state employees would not have to face as many obstacles in obtaining needed to needed time-off to address their mental health needs.
- **Recognizing the Important of Addressing Mental Health:** The bill is consistent with Maryland’s efforts to recognize that mental health and somatic health are both important. By recognizing a fuller range of mental health providers, Maryland can support state employees in managing and addressing their mental health needs.

We ask for a favorable report. If any additional information would be helpful, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

1013.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Wolek

Position: FAV

Good afternoon Madame Chair, Madame Vice Chair, and colleagues of the Finance Committee.

For the record, I am Delegate Sarah Wolek here to present HB1013. This bill adds licensed clinical professional counselors to the list of health care professionals who can certify illness when a state employee is seeking paid sick leave for 5 or more consecutive workdays.

There are three main reasons I am bringing the bill forward for your consideration today.

First, HB1013 aligns State employee's policies with the Health Occupations Law. Current Maryland law specifies that physicians, psychologists, social workers, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, physical therapists, podiatrists, dentists, and optometrists may certify illnesses for state employees requesting paid leave. However, licensed clinical professional counselors are not included on this list, even though they are permitted to diagnosis and treat mental health illnesses under the Health Occupations Article.

Secondly, HB1013 will ensure that state employees do not face delays in obtaining leave for mental illness. Currently if a state employee need time off because of a mental health issue, they will need to find another type of provider to certify their illness even though they may be receiving care from a licensed counselor.

Finally, HB1013 aligns with our state's efforts to recognize the importance of emotional and mental health. By recognizing the full range of practitioners who provide care in this space, we will ensure that the wellbeing of state employees is holistically being recognized and addressed.

Thank you for your consideration and I ask for a favorable report.