

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised

Senate Bill 304

(Senator Hollinger, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health and Government Operations

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Health Occupations - Podiatrists - Scope of Practice

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This bill expands a licensed podiatrist's scope of practice to include the diagnosis or treatment of the soft tissue below the mid-calf. A licensed podiatrist, who performs an osseous surgical procedure of the ankle, arthrodesis of two or more tarsal bones, or a complete tarsal osteotomy, may perform these procedures in a licensed ambulatory surgical center. A licensed podiatrist who chooses to do so must have current surgical privileges at a licensed hospital for the same procedure and meet the ambulatory surgical center's requirements. An ambulatory surgical center is not prohibited from establishing qualifications or delineating privileges for performing surgical procedures of the human foot or ankle, the anatomical structures that attach to the human foot, or the soft tissue below the mid-calf by a licensed podiatrist in the ambulatory surgical center.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The bill's changes could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Meaningful for licensed podiatrists who are allowed to perform procedures at ambulatory surgical centers.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** The practice of podiatry means to diagnose or treat any ailment of the human foot or ankle, or any ailment of the anatomical structures that attach to the human foot. All surgical procedures of the ankle below the level of the dermis, arthrodeses of

two or more tarsal bones, and complete tarsal osteotomies that are performed by a licensed podiatrist must be performed in a licensed hospital. A licensed hospital is not prohibited from establishing qualifications or delineating privileges for the performance of surgical procedures of the ankle and the anatomical structures that attach to the foot by a licensed podiatrist in the hospital.

**Background:** There are 435 active licensed podiatrists in Maryland. The board advises that during a podiatrist's residency rotation the individual is already trained to diagnose or treat the soft tissue below the mid-calf. As a result, the expansion of the scope of practice under the bill is codifying current practice. The board is not anticipating any increases in complaints as a result of this bill.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 611 (Delegates Bromwell and Donoghue) – Health and Government Operations.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 14, 2005  
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Analysis by: Lisa A. Daigle

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510