

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 1055
Rules

(Senator Muse)

Health Occupations - Restricted Volunteer Dentist's License - Restricted
Volunteer Dental Hygienist's License

This bill creates a restricted volunteer dentist license and a restricted volunteer dental hygienist license to be awarded by the State Board of Dental Examiners. An individual holding a restricted license is not required to complete certain continuing education requirements as a condition of renewal of their license. Furthermore, a restricted volunteer dental hygienist licensee may practice only under the supervision of a licensed dentist in the State.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does materially affect State finances or operations because applicants are not required to pay application fees.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: To qualify for the restricted volunteer licenses, an applicant must (1) practice only in a temporary dental clinic providing medical care to the poor, elderly, or disabled that is operated by a bona fide charitable organization or any other entity authorized under regulations adopted by the board; (2) hold an unrestricted license in another state as a licensee in good standing, or if retired, have held an unrestricted license in another state as a licensee in good standing on the date of retirement; (3) treat only patients who have been screened by the organization or entity providing medical care and

are eligible for treatment; (4) fulfill any requirements of the board related to the knowledge of laws and regulations governing their practice; (5) not have failed a clinical examination in the past five years; (6) have at least five years of clinical practice; (7) sign a written statement agreeing to donate their services without compensation; (8) provide proof of malpractice insurance; and (9) not practice for-profit dentistry in Maryland.

If a dentist applicant has not held an active unrestricted license in another state and has been engaged in active practice in another state within the past five years, a licensed dentist must review the quality of care rendered by the dentist.

Current Law: Chapter 83 of 2000 created a retired volunteer dentist license and a retired volunteer dental hygienist license. To qualify for a retired volunteer dentist license or a retired volunteer dental hygienist license an applicant must (1) have had a general license to practice dentistry in the State within the last two years; (2) have completed the continuing education requirements that the board establishes for a general license; and (3) provide dental services under specified conditions. A retired volunteer licensee may only provide dental or dental hygiene services in a dental office, clinic, ambulatory care facility, or hospital for a charitable or public entity providing medical care to the poor, elderly, or disabled. The applicant must agree to donate at least 100 hours of dental services or dental hygiene services without compensation, provide proof of malpractice insurance, and not practice dentistry or dental hygiene for profit.

In addition, Chapter 237 of 2003 created a volunteer dentist license and a volunteer dental hygienist license. To qualify for a volunteer dentist license or a volunteer dental hygienist license, an applicant must (1) meet the board's requirements for the retired volunteer dentist or retired volunteer dental hygienist licenses; (2) hold an active license to practice dentistry or dental hygiene in another state or the District of Columbia; (3) complete continuing education requirements for a general dentist license or general dental hygienist license; (4) provide dental or dental hygiene services; and (5) surrender the volunteer license immediately upon ceasing to provide services. A volunteer license may only be used for volunteer services and not for compensation and must be covered by malpractice insurance.

There is no fee for volunteer licenses or retired volunteer licenses; however, individuals seeking a volunteer license must adhere to regulations surrounding the application process.

Background: The State Board of Dental Examiners advises that the creation of a restricted volunteer license under the bill is intended to permit out-of-state dentists and dental hygienists to participate in charitable events that are held over the course of a 48-hour period without having to go through the lengthy application process associated with the current volunteer licenses.

Approximately 10 dentists apply for a volunteer license annually; fewer dental hygienists apply for a volunteer license.

At least one neighboring state offers similar licenses. The Virginia Board of Dentistry issues restricted volunteer dentist and restricted volunteer dental hygienist licenses that permit out-of-state practitioners to provide free dental services to underserved populations in Virginia.

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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