

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2011 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 965 (Delegate George)  
Health and Government Operations

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**Physician Assistants - Use of C-Arm Devices**

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This bill expands the scope of practice of physician assistants (PAs) to include use of a mini C-Arm device in accordance with generally accepted safety and training standards used by physicians and nurse practitioners.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill does not directly affect governmental operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** A PA is not authorized to practice independent of a supervising physician. A PA may only be certified to practice medical acts after the Physician Assistant Advisory Committee has approved a delegation agreement formed between a supervisory physician and a PA.

To qualify for a certificate, a PA must have graduated from a PA training program, pass a board-approved national certifying exam, and have a bachelor's degree or its equivalent if he or she graduated from a PA training program after October 1, 2003. The board may issue a temporary certificate to an applicant who has met specified requirements but has not yet passed the national certifying exam. A PA may not practice within the scope of any of the following health occupations: nursing, optometry, physical therapy, or psychology.

Patient services that may be provided by a PA include:

- taking patient histories and reviewing patient records to develop medical status reports;
- performing physical examinations and recording patient data;
- interpreting and evaluating patient data as authorized by the supervising physician to determine management and treatment of patients;
- initiating requests for or performing diagnostic procedures as indicated by pertinent data and authorized by the supervising physician;
- providing instructions and guidance regarding medical care matters to patients;
- assisting the supervising physician in the delivery of services to patients, including recording patient progress notes, issuing diagnostic orders, and transcribing or executing specific orders at the direction of the supervising physician; and
- exercising prescriptive authority under a delegation agreement.

**Background:** Mini C-Arms are medical devices that use fluoroscopy, a highly potent form of radiation. The devices are typically used for fluoroscopic imaging of the extremities in orthopedic surgery and digital diagnostic imaging. According to the State Board of Physicians, a licensed radiographer is currently required to operate a mini C-Arm device.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 14, 2011  
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