

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 311
(Senator Reilly)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health Occupations - Podiatric Physicians

This bill alters references to “podiatrist” to be “podiatric physician” throughout the Maryland Code. The bill further establishes that references to podiatrist are changed to podiatric physician in every law, executive order, rule, regulation, policy, or document created by any official, employee, or unit of the State. The publisher of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, in consultation with and subject to the approval of the Department of Legislative Services, must correct, with no further action required by the General Assembly, cross-references and terminology that are rendered incorrect by the bill. The publisher must adequately describe any correction that is made in an editor’s note following the section affected.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect local finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: An individual must be licensed by the State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners before the individual may practice podiatry in this State. “Practice podiatry” means to diagnose or surgically, medically, or mechanically treat the human foot or ankle, the anatomical structures that attach to the human foot, or the soft tissue below the mid-calf.

To qualify for a license to practice podiatry, among other requirements, an applicant must be a graduate of a school or college of podiatry that is accredited by the Council on Education of the American Podiatric Medical Association and that is approved by the board; an applicant must also pass an examination given by the board.

According to the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine, a podiatrist is a “Doctor of Podiatric Medicine” (DPM) and is also referred to as a podiatric physician or podiatric surgeon. Podiatrists are defined as physicians by the federal government. DPMs are specialists in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of lower extremity disorders, diseases, and injuries; within the profession, DPMs can specialize in areas such as surgery, orthopedics, and public health.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 169 of 2021 received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, HB 182, passed in the House and was referred to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. HB 428 of 2020 and HB 1430 of 2018 received hearings in the House Health and Government Operations Committee, but no further action was taken on either bill.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Amber R. Gundlach

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