

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 47

(Senator Gile)

Finance

Health and Government Operations

State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners - Revisions

This bill (1) alters the definition of “physical therapist assistant” by clarifying that the term applies to an individual *licensed by the State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners* who practices limited physical therapy and has passed a specified exam; (2) adds a second licensed physical therapist assistant member to the board, subject to the same qualification and appointment processes as the existing licensed physical therapist assistant member; (3) requires the board to send a license renewal notice via electronic means and provide such notice by first class mail only when requested by the licensee; and (4) changes the contents of the renewal notice by including the date by which the renewal application must be received by the board for the renewal to be issued (rather than issued *and mailed*) before the license expires. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Beginning in FY 2026, board special fund expenditures increase minimally for compensation for the additional board member and decrease minimally as a result of switching to electronic renewal notice procedures, as discussed below. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: “Physical therapist assistant” means an individual who practices limited physical therapy and has passed the national physical therapy licensing examination administered or accepted by the board.

State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners

The practice of physical therapy in Maryland is regulated by the State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners. As of October 31, 2024, the board oversaw 10,000 active licensees and Physical Therapy Licensure Compact privileges, including 7,571 physical therapists and 2,429 physical therapist assistants.

The board comprises eight members: five licensed physical therapists; one licensed physical therapist assistant; and two consumers. Members serve for a term of four years and may not serve more than two consecutive full year terms. The physical therapist and physical therapist assistant members must be appointed by the Governor, with the advice of the Secretary of Health, from a list of names of qualified individuals submitted to the Secretary and Governor by the American Physical Therapy Association of Maryland. The licensed physical therapist assistant member must have five years of experience in limited physical therapy and be engaged in the profession of limited physical therapy in the State.

Notification Requirements

Generally, physical therapist and physical therapist assistant licenses expire on the date set by the board but may be renewed for a term of up to two years. At least one month before a license expires, the board must send a renewal notice to the licensee’s last known address. The renewal notice must include the date on which the current license expires, the date by which the renewal application must be received by the board for the renewal to be issued and mailed before the license expires, and the renewal fee.

If requested by a licensee, the board must send at least two times within the month before a license expires, a renewal notice by electronic means to the last known email address of the licensee. If a renewal notice by electronic means is returned as undeliverable, the board must send the licensee a notice by first-class mail to the last known address of the licensee.

State Expenditures: Members of the State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners are entitled to compensation determined by the board and in accordance with the budget of the board and expense reimbursements at a rate determined by the board. While expense reimbursements are likely minimal and absorbable with existing resources, additional compensation for the new board member increases board special fund expenditures by \$1,500 annually beginning in fiscal 2026.

Special fund expenditures decrease minimally beginning in fiscal 2026 due to sending notifications electronically instead of via first class mail. The board advises that the cost of sending renewal notices via first class mail in 2025 was approximately \$5,000.

Thus, the net impact on the board under the bill is estimated to result in special fund expenditure savings of up to \$3,500 annually.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 3 (Delegate Bagnall) - Health and Government Operations.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 24, 2025
km/jc
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