



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Maryland Board of Chiropractic Examiners
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2025 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: SB 52
COMMITTEE: Finance
POSITION: Support

TITLE: Health Occupations – State Board of Chiropractic Examiners – Revisions

BILL ANALYSIS: When enacted, the bill will revise provisions of the law governing the licensure of chiropractors, including creating a pathway to licensure for foreign-educated applicants; the discipline of chiropractors and the denial of licenses to applicants; Board membership; authorizing the Board to inspect chiropractor offices under certain circumstances; and authorizing the Board to require a licensee or applicant to submit to an examination by a health care provider under certain circumstances.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: The Maryland Board of Chiropractic Examiners (the “Board”) supports SB 52. To remain competitive and attract qualified chiropractors into the Maryland workforce and to ensure access to care for citizens seeking chiropractic care, it is imperative that the Board eliminate or reduce barriers to entry into the profession. Enacting this bill will place the Board on par with licensure requirements of other states, including Pennsylvania, Virginia, Delaware, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. The bill also provides a pathway for foreign-educated, foreign-trained chiropractors to qualify for licensure in the State of Maryland.

The Board seeks to repeal outdated language requiring the Board to administer a clinical examination to chiropractic applicants. The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) administers and scores the standardized clinical examination recognized and accepted by licensing boards in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Additionally, the bill provides for the removal of outdated references to chiropractic colleges and removes restrictive language related to educational delivery methods, platforms, and standards. It will allow the Board to accept chiropractic educational programs accredited by the Council of Chiropractic Education, an accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education.

One mission of the Board is to clearly define the pathway and guidelines for temporary licensure in Maryland and to specify requirements for participation in the Board’s preceptorship program. Currently, the Chiropractic Act uses duplicative and confusing language to describe the concepts

of temporary licensure and preceptorship training. This bill seeks to remove that duplicative and confusing language to ensure that applicants, licensees, and the public are clear on the requirements of these programs and the limitations.

Another mission is to ensure chiropractors comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines on Standard Precaution. Violation of CDC guidelines is a potential threat to the public health. The bill grants the Board the authority to inspect a chiropractic office when a complaint is received alleging violations of said guidelines. This authority already rests with several other boards whose licensees maintain offices outside of a hospital where they see patients, such as the Maryland State Board of Physicians, the Maryland Board of Nursing, the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners, the Maryland State Board of Massage Therapy Examiners, and the Maryland Board of Podiatry.

Currently, the Board has no specific disciplinary provision to address the circumstance when a practitioner fails to meet the generally accepted professional standards in the practice of chiropractic, fails to cooperate with a lawful Board investigation, or fails to comply with CDC guidelines. This bill seeks to address that by adding those provisions to the Chiropractic Act.

With regard to the appointment of candidates for board membership, the Board believes that the proposed provision will expand the potential pool of eligible nominees and achieve geographic diversity. It removes the misconception that a chiropractor cannot be nominated unless he or she is a member of or nominated by an association.

Under Health Occupations Article, § 3-314, the General Assembly has authorized the Board to impose a fine not exceeding \$5,000 for each violation of the Chiropractic Act only when a license or registration is suspended or revoked. The Board seeks the authority to allow the Board to impose said fine when a license or registration is reprimanded or placed on probation. This would allow the Board more discretion and options when determining the appropriate disciplinary sanction for a licensee who has run afoul of the Maryland Chiropractic Act.

Finally, from time to time the Board may have reason to believe that an applicant or licensee may cause harm or pose a threat to individuals who seek chiropractic services. In those instances, the Board deems it prudent to obtain an independent evaluation by the appropriate healthcare provider to determine fitness to practice. The primary focus of the Board is the protection of the public. The Board will pay the cost of the evaluation, with no economic impact on the applicant or licensee.

For all of these reasons, the Board of Chiropractic Examiners respectfully requests a favorable vote on SB 52.

For more information, please contact Sharon J. Oliver, Executive Director at 410-764-5985 or Sharon.oliver@maryland.gov, or Lillian Reese, the Legislative Liaison for the boards at 443-794-4757 or at lillian.reese@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.