
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1956 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY SCHLEGEL CULVER, PICKETT, ZIMMERMAN, JAMES, KULIK,
HARKINS, MILLARD, MULLINS, CIRESI, SONNEY, FEE, MENTZER AND
THOMAS, OCTOBER 5, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, OCTOBER 5, 2021

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of December 20, 1985 (P.L.457, No.112),
2 entitled "An act relating to the right to practice medicine
3 and surgery and the right to practice medically related acts;
4 reestablishing the State Board of Medical Education and
5 Licensure as the State Board of Medicine and providing for
6 its composition, powers and duties; providing for the
7 issuance of licenses and certificates and the suspension and
8 revocation of licenses and certificates; provided penalties;
9 and making repeals," further providing for definitions;
10 providing for anesthesiologist assistants and for regulation
11 of anesthesia services; and making editorial changes.

12 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
13 hereby enacts as follows:

14 Section 1. The definitions of "board regulated practitioner"
15 and "hospital" in section 2 of the act of December 20, 1985
16 (P.L.457, No.112), known as the Medical Practice Act of 1985,
17 are amended and the section is amended by adding definitions to
18 read:

19 Section 2. Definitions.

20 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
21 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
22 context clearly indicates otherwise:

1 * * *

2 "Anesthesiologist." A physician who has been granted a
3 license without restriction to practice medicine and surgery by
4 the board or a license without restriction to practice
5 osteopathic medicine and surgery by the State Board of
6 Osteopathic Medicine who either:

7 (1) has successfully completed graduate medical training
8 in anesthesiology;

9 (2) is certified by the American Board of
10 Anesthesiology, the American Osteopathic Board of
11 Anesthesiology or their predecessor or successor
12 organizations; or

13 (3) is credentialed by a licensed health care facility
14 in this Commonwealth to practice the medical specialty of
15 anesthesiology.

16 "Anesthesiologist assistant." An individual who:

17 (1) Graduated from an anesthesiologist assistant
18 education program approved by CAAHEP or its predecessor or a
19 successor agency.

20 (2) Satisfactorily completed an anesthesiologist
21 assistant certification examination administered by NCCAA or
22 another national anesthesiologist assistant certifying agency
23 established for such purposes which has been reviewed and
24 approved by the board and is currently certified.

25 (3) Is approved by the board to practice medicine under
26 the supervision of an anesthesiologist.

27 "Anesthesiologist assistant certification examination." The
28 initial certifying examination for an anesthesiologist assistant
29 established for the purpose of certification and reviewed and
30 approved by the board.

1 "Anesthesiology." The practice of medicine and surgery or
2 the practice of osteopathic medicine and surgery dedicated to
3 the relief of pain and the total care of a patient before,
4 during and after a surgical, obstetrical or other necessary
5 procedure that may induce pain. The term includes:

6 (1) The evaluation and optimization of preexisting
7 medical conditions.

8 (2) The perioperative management of coexisting disease.

9 (3) The delivery of anesthesia and sedation, including
10 regional, and neuraxial anesthesia.

11 (4) The management of postanesthetic recovery.

12 (5) The prevention and management of periprocedural
13 complications.

14 (6) The practice of acute and chronic pain medicine.

15 (7) The practice of critical care medicine, including
16 line placement, and procedures.

17 * * *

18 "Assist." The action of an individual who is an
19 anesthesiologist assistant personally performing duties and
20 responsibilities delegated to the individual by an
21 anesthesiologist under the supervision of an anesthesiologist.

22 * * *

23 "Board regulated practitioner." A medical doctor, midwife,
24 physician assistant, anesthesiologist assistant, respiratory
25 therapist, licensed athletic trainer or drugless therapist or an
26 applicant for a license or certificate the board may issue.

27 * * *

28 "CAAHEP." The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health
29 Education Programs.

30 * * *

1 "Certified registered nurse anesthetist." As defined in the
2 act of May 22, 1951 (P.L.317, No.69), known as The Professional
3 Nursing Law.

4 "Hospital." An institution licensed or regulated as a
5 hospital by the Department of Health or the Department of
6 [Public Welfare] Human Services or a facility owned or operated
7 by the Federal Government and accredited by the Joint Commission
8 on Accreditation of Hospitals as a hospital.

9 * * *

10 "NCCAA." The National Commission on the Certification of
11 Anesthesiologist Assistants.

12 * * *

13 Section 2. Section 13(c.2)(1) of the act is amended to read:
14 Section 13. Physician assistants.

15 * * *

16 (c.2) Nothing in this section shall be construed to:

17 (1) Supersede the authority of the Department of Health
18 and the Department of [Public Welfare] Human Services to
19 regulate the types of health care professionals who are
20 eligible for medical staff membership or clinical privileges.

21 * * *

22 Section 3. The act is amended by adding sections to read:

23 Section 13.7. Anesthesiologist assistants.

24 (a) General rule.--An anesthesiologist assistant may assist
25 an anesthesiologist in the medical practice of anesthesiology.

26 (b) Authorized services.--An anesthesiologist assistant may
27 only perform anesthesia services and procedures delegated by an
28 anesthesiologist, including, but not limited to, the following
29 duties:

30 (1) Developing and implementing an anesthesia care plan

1 for a patient.

2 (2) Obtaining a comprehensive patient history and
3 performing relevant elements of a physical exam.

4 (3) Performing preoperative and post-operative
5 anesthetic evaluations and maintaining patient progress
6 notes.

7 (4) Ordering and performing preoperative patient
8 consultations.

9 (5) Ordering preoperative medications, including
10 controlled substances, that may be administered before the
11 supervising anesthesiologist cosigns.

12 (6) Changing or discontinuing a medical treatment plan
13 after consulting with the supervising anesthesiologist.

14 (7) Obtaining informed consent for anesthesia or related
15 procedures.

16 (8) Ordering the perioperative continuation of current
17 medications that may be administered before the supervising
18 anesthesiologist cosigns.

19 (9) Pretesting and calibrating anesthesia delivery
20 systems and obtaining and interpreting information from the
21 systems and from monitors.

22 (10) Implementing medically accepted monitoring
23 techniques.

24 (11) Performing basic and advanced airway interventions,
25 including, but not limited to, endotracheal intubation,
26 laryngeal mask insertion and other advanced airways
27 techniques.

28 (12) Establishing peripheral intravenous lines,
29 including subcutaneous lidocaine use.

30 (13) Performing invasive procedures, including, but not

1 limited to, arterial lines, central lines, transesophageal
2 echocardiograms and Swan Ganz catheters.

3 (14) Performing general anesthesia, including induction,
4 maintenance, emergence and procedures associated with general
5 anesthesia, such as gastric intubation.

6 (15) Administering anesthetic drugs, adjuvant drugs and
7 accessory drugs.

8 (16) Administering vasoactive drugs and starting and
9 titrating vasoactive infusions to treat patient responses to
10 anesthesia.

11 (17) Performing, maintaining, evaluating and managing
12 epidural, spinal and regional anesthesia, including
13 catheters.

14 (18) Performing monitored anesthesia care.

15 (19) Obtaining venous and arterial blood samples.

16 (20) Administering blood, blood products and supportive
17 fluids.

18 (21) Performing, ordering and interpreting appropriate
19 preoperative, point of care, intra-operative or postoperative
20 diagnostic tests or procedures.

21 (22) Obtaining and administering perioperative
22 anesthesia and related pharmaceutical agents, including
23 intravenous fluids and blood products.

24 (23) Managing the patient while in the preoperative
25 suite, recovery area or labor suites.

26 (24) Ordering postoperative sedation, anxiolysis or
27 analgesia, postoperative respiratory therapy and medicines to
28 treat patient responses to anesthesia and ordering
29 postoperative oxygen therapy, including initial ventilator
30 therapy and ordering, that may be administered before the

1 supervising anesthesiologist cosigns.

2 (25) Initiating and managing cardiopulmonary
3 resuscitation in response to a life-threatening situation.

4 (26) Participating in administrative, research and
5 clinical teaching activities including supervising student
6 anesthesiologist assistants and other students involved in
7 anesthesia education.

8 (27) Performing other tasks not prohibited by law that
9 an anesthesiologist assistant has been trained and is
10 proficient to perform.

11 (c) Regulations.--The board may promulgate regulations
12 consistent with this act that define the circumstances under
13 which an anesthesiologist assistant may perform anesthesia
14 services and procedures.

15 (d) Use of title.--An anesthesiologist assistant may use the
16 title anesthesiologist assistant, certified anesthesiologist
17 assistant, anesthetist or an appropriate abbreviation, such as
18 "C.A.A.". No other person may use that title.

19 (e) Supervision.--

20 (1) An anesthesiologist assistant shall not perform an
21 anesthesia service or procedure without the supervision of an
22 anesthesiologist.

23 (2) For the purposes of this subsection, "supervision"
24 means the management, or direction, or control by an
25 anesthesiologist of a service delegated to an
26 anesthesiologist assistant and which anesthesiologist is
27 immediately available to the anesthesiologist assistant who
28 assists in the delivery of medical care such that the
29 anesthesiologist is able to intervene if needed.

30 (3) An anesthesiologist assistant may be employed by a

1 health care facility licensed under the act of July 19, 1979
2 (P.L.130, No.48), known as the Health Care Facilities Act,
3 under the supervision of an anesthesiologist or group of
4 anesthesiologists.

5 (f) Drugs.--

6 (1) An anesthesiologist assistant may dispense and
7 administer drugs, including legend drugs and Schedule II
8 through Schedule V controlled substances as defined in act of
9 April 14, 1972 (P.L.233, No.64), known as The Controlled
10 Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, that are required
11 to perform anesthesia services or procedures delegated to
12 them by an anesthesiologist.

13 (2) The dispensing and administration of drugs shall be
14 at all times under the supervision of an anesthesiologist.

15 (3) An anesthesiologist assistant shall not
16 independently prescribe or dispense drugs.

17 (4) The board may promulgate regulations consistent with
18 this section defining the circumstances under which
19 anesthesiologist assistants may dispense and administer
20 drugs.

21 (g) Construction.--

22 (1) Nothing in this section or the regulations
23 authorized by this section shall be construed to prohibit an
24 anesthesiologist assistant who is licensed or certified to
25 practice another profession by a Commonwealth agency or board
26 from practicing within the scope of that license or
27 certificate or as otherwise authorized by law.

28 (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed to:

29 (i) Supersede the authority of the Department of
30 Health and the Department of Human Services to regulate

1 the types of health care professionals who are eligible
2 for medical staff membership or clinical privileges.

3 (ii) Restrict the authority of a health care
4 facility to determine the scope of practice and
5 supervision or other oversight requirements for health
6 care professionals practicing within the facility.

7 Section 36.3. Anesthesiologist assistant license.

8 (a) General rule.--An anesthesiologist assistant license
9 empowers the holder to practice medicine and perform anesthesia
10 under the delegation of an anesthesiologist in the provision of
11 medical care and services as provided in this act.

12 (b) Requirements.--No anesthesiologist assistant license may
13 be issued to the applicant unless the requirements specified by
14 this act and such rules and regulations issued by the board are
15 met, including requirements for the anesthesiologist assistant
16 training and educational programs which shall be formulated by
17 the board in accordance with such national criteria as are
18 established by national organizations or societies as the board
19 may accept.

20 (c) Criteria.--The board shall grant anesthesiologist
21 assistant licenses to applicants who have fulfilled the
22 following criteria:

23 (1) Satisfactory completion of a program for the
24 training and education of anesthesiologist assistants
25 certified by CAAHEP or its predecessor or a successor agency.

26 (2) Satisfactory performance on an anesthesiologist
27 assistant certification examination administered by NCCAA or
28 another national anesthesiologist assistant certifying agency
29 established for such purposes and approved by the board.

30 (d) Biennial renewal.--An anesthesiologist assistant license

1 shall be subject to biennial renewal by the board. As part of
2 biennial renewal, an anesthesiologist assistant shall complete
3 continuing medical education as required by the National
4 Commission on Certification of Anesthesiologist Assistants.

5 (e) Penalties.--The board may refuse to renew, and may
6 revoke, suspend or restrict a license or take other disciplinary
7 action.

8 Section 45.1. Provision and supervision of anesthesiology and
9 anesthesia services.

10 (a) General rule.--The practice of anesthesiology,
11 including, but not limited to, anesthesia services provided in
12 hospitals, ambulatory care facilities and other health care
13 facilities, shall be regulated by the board.

14 (b) Anesthesia services.--Anesthesia services in a health
15 care facility shall only be provided by:

16 (1) An anesthesiologist.

17 (2) A physician enrolled in a graduate medical training
18 program in anesthesiology or oral and maxillofacial surgery.

19 (3) A dentist permitted by the State Board of Dentistry
20 or the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L.216, No.76), known as The
21 Dental Law, to administer, supervise or direct anesthesia
22 services.

23 (4) A certified registered nurse anesthetist under the
24 overall direction of the following:

25 (i) an anesthesiologist;

26 (ii) the physician or podiatrist performing the
27 operation or other procedure requiring anesthesia
28 services; or

29 (iii) a dentist permitted by the State Board of
30 Dentistry or The Dental Law to administer, supervise or

1 direct anesthesia services.

2 (5) An anesthesiologist assistant under the supervision
3 of an anesthesiologist as required by this act.

4 (6) A supervised student nurse trainee enrolled in a
5 course approved by the American Association of Nurse
6 Anesthetists.

7 (7) A supervised student anesthesiologist assistant
8 enrolled in a course approved by CAAHEP.

9 (c) Construction.--Nothing in this section shall be
10 construed to:

11 (1) Supersede the authority of the Department of Health
12 and the Department of Human Services to regulate the types of
13 health care professionals who are eligible for medical staff
14 membership or clinical privileges.

15 (2) Restrict the authority of a health care facility to
16 determine the scope of practice and supervision or other
17 oversight requirements for health care professionals
18 practicing within the facility.

19 Section 4. This act shall take effect in 60 days.