

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
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SENATE BILL 522  
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Short Title: Board of Nursing.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 25, 2003

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO CHANGE THE METHOD BY WHICH CERTAIN MEMBERS ON THE  
NORTH CAROLINA BOARD OF NURSING ARE ELECTED OR APPOINTED,  
TO MAKE TECHNICAL CHANGES TO THE NURSING PRACTICE ACT, AND  
TO REQUIRE THAT HEALTH CARE FACILITIES VERIFY THE LICENSURE  
STATUS OF APPLICANTS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT AS NURSES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 90-171.21 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 90-171.21. Board of Nursing; composition; selection; vacancies; qualifications;  
term of office; compensation.**

(a) The Board shall consist of ~~15~~ 14 members. ~~Nine~~ Eight members shall be registered nurses. ~~Four~~ Three members shall be licensed practical nurses. ~~Two~~ Three members shall be representatives of the public.

(b) Selection. – The North Carolina Board of Nursing shall conduct an election each year to fill vacancies of nurse members of the Board scheduled to occur during the next year. Nominations of candidates for election of registered nurse members shall be made by written petition signed by not less than 10 registered nurses eligible to vote in the election. Nominations of candidates for election of licensed practical nurse members shall be made by written petition signed by not less than 10 licensed practical nurses eligible to vote in the election. Every licensed registered nurse holding an active license shall be eligible to vote in the election of registered nurse board members. Every licensed practical nurse holding an active license shall be eligible to vote in the election of licensed practical nurse board members. The list of nominations shall be filed with the Board after January 1 of the year in which the election is to be held and no later than midnight of the first day of April of such year. Before preparing ballots, the Board shall notify each person who has been duly nominated of ~~his~~ the person's nomination and request permission to enter ~~his~~ the person's name on the ballot. A member of the Board

1 who is nominated to ~~succeed himself~~ for reelection and who does not withdraw ~~his~~ the  
2 member's name from the ballot is disqualified to participate in conducting the election.  
3 Elected members shall begin their term of office on January 1 of the year following  
4 their election.

5 Nominations of persons to serve as public members of the Board may be made to the  
6 Governor ~~or the General Assembly~~ by any citizen or group within the State. The  
7 Governor shall appoint ~~the two public members~~ one public member to the ~~Board~~ Board,  
8 and the General Assembly shall appoint two public members to the Board. Of the public  
9 members appointed by the General Assembly, one shall be appointed by the General  
10 Assembly upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and  
11 one shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the  
12 Speaker of the House of Representatives.

13 Board members shall be commissioned by the Governor upon their election or  
14 appointment.

15 (c) Vacancies. – All unexpired terms of Board members appointed by the  
16 General Assembly shall be filled within 45 days after the term is vacated. The Governor  
17 shall fill all other unexpired terms on the Board within 30 days after the term is vacated.  
18 For vacancies of registered nurse or licensed practical nurse members, the Governor  
19 shall appoint the person who received the next highest number of votes to those elected  
20 members at the most recent election for board members. ~~The Governor shall select the~~  
21 ~~public member to fill any vacancy of a public member.~~ Appointees shall serve the  
22 remainder of the unexpired term and until their successors have been duly elected or  
23 appointed and qualified.

24 (d) Qualifications. – ~~Three of the registered nurse members shall hold positions~~  
25 ~~with primary responsibility in nursing education and shall hold baccalaureate or~~  
26 ~~advanced degrees. Six shall hold positions with primary responsibility in providing~~  
27 ~~nursing care to patients. Of the six registered nurse members with primary responsibility~~  
28 ~~in providing nursing care to patients, two shall be employed by a hospital and at least~~  
29 ~~one shall be a hospital nursing service director; one shall be employed by a physician~~  
30 ~~licensed to practice medicine in North Carolina and engaged in the private practice of~~  
31 ~~medicine; one shall be employed by a skilled or intermediate care facility; one shall be~~  
32 ~~either a nurse practitioner, nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife, or clinical nurse specialist;~~  
33 ~~and one shall be a community health nurse. If no nurse is nominated in one of the~~  
34 ~~categories, the position shall be an at-large registered nursing position. Of the eight~~  
35 ~~registered nurse members on the Board, one shall be a nurse administrator employed by~~  
36 ~~a hospital or a hospital system, who shall be accountable for the administration of~~  
37 ~~nursing services and not directly involved in patient care; one shall be an individual who~~  
38 ~~meets the requirements to practice as a certified registered nurse anesthetist, a certified~~  
39 ~~nurse midwife, a clinical nurse specialist, or a nurse practitioner; two shall be staff~~  
40 ~~nurses, defined as individuals who are primarily involved in direct patient care~~  
41 ~~regardless of practice setting; one shall be an at-large registered nurse who meets the~~  
42 ~~requirements of sub-subdivisions (1)a. and b. of this subsection, but is not currently an~~  
43 ~~educator in a program leading to licensure or any other degree-granting program; and~~  
44 ~~three shall be nurse educators. Of the three nurse educators, one shall be a practical~~

1 nurse educator, one shall be an associate degree or diploma nurse educator, and one  
2 shall be a baccalaureate or higher degree nurse educator. All nurse educators shall meet  
3 the minimum education requirement as established by the Board's education program  
4 standards for nurse faculty. Candidates eligible for election to the Board as nurse  
5 educators are not eligible for election as the at-large member.

6 (1) ~~All~~ Except for the at-large member, every registered nurse  
7 ~~members~~ member shall meet the following criteria:

8 a. Hold a ~~current~~ current, unencumbered license to practice as a  
9 registered nurse in North Carolina.

10 a1. Be a resident of North Carolina.

11 b. ~~Have at least a~~ minimum of five years' ~~years of~~ experience in  
12 ~~nursing practice, nursing administration, and/or nursing~~  
13 ~~education~~ as a registered nurse.

14 c. Have been engaged continuously in ~~nursing practice, nursing~~  
15 ~~administration, or nursing education~~ a position that meets the  
16 criteria for the specified Board position for at least three years  
17 immediately preceding election.

18 d. Show evidence that the employer of the registered nurse is  
19 aware that the nurse intends to serve on the Board.

20 (2) ~~Licensed~~ Every licensed practical nurse ~~members~~ member shall meet  
21 the following criteria:

22 a. Hold a ~~current~~ current, unencumbered license to practice as a  
23 licensed practical nurse in North Carolina.

24 a1. Be a resident of North Carolina.

25 b. ~~Be a graduate of a board approved program for the preparation~~  
26 ~~of practical nurses.~~

27 c. ~~Have at least a~~ minimum of five years' ~~years of~~ experience as a  
28 licensed practical nurse.

29 d. Have been engaged continuously in the position of a licensed  
30 ~~practical nursing nurse~~ for at least three years immediately  
31 preceding election.

32 e. Show evidence that the employer of the licensed practical nurse  
33 is aware that the nurse intends to serve on the Board.

34 (3) A public member shall not be a ~~health care provider nor the spouse of~~  
35 ~~a health care provider. Public members shall reasonably represent the~~  
36 ~~population of the State of health services, employed in the health~~  
37 ~~services field, or hold a vested interest at any level in the provision of~~  
38 health services as defined by the North Carolina Board of Ethics. No  
39 public member or person in the public member's immediate family as  
40 defined by G.S. 90-405(8) shall be currently employed as a licensed  
41 nurse or been previously employed as a licensed nurse.

42 (4) The nurse practitioner, nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife, or clinical  
43 nurse specialist member shall be recognized by the Board as a  
44 registered nurse who meets the following criteria:

- 1 a. Has graduated from or completed a graduate level advanced
- 2 practice nursing education program accredited by a national
- 3 accrediting body.
- 4 b. Maintains current certification or recertification from a national
- 5 credentialing body approved by the Board or meets other
- 6 requirements established by rules adopted by the Board.
- 7 c. Practices in a manner consistent with rules adopted by the
- 8 Board and other applicable law.

9 (e) Term. – ~~The term of office for board members shall be three years.~~ Members  
10 of the Board shall serve four-year staggered terms. No member shall serve more than  
11 two consecutive ~~three-year terms after July 1, 1981.~~ four-year terms or eight consecutive  
12 years after January 1, 2005.

13 (f) Removal. – The Board may remove any of its members for neglect of duty,  
14 incompetence, or unprofessional conduct. A member subject to disciplinary proceedings  
15 shall be disqualified from Board business until the charges are resolved.

16 (g) Reimbursement. – Board members are entitled to receive compensation and  
17 reimbursement as authorized by G.S. 93B-5."

18 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 90-171.22 reads as rewritten:

19 "**§ 90-171.22. Officers.**

20 The officers of the Board shall be a ~~chairman, chair, who shall be a registered nurse,~~  
21 ~~a vice-chairman, vice-chair, and such any~~ other officers as the Board ~~may deem~~  
22 considers necessary. All officers shall be elected annually by the Board for terms of one  
23 year and shall serve until their successors have been elected and qualified."

24 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 90-171.23(b) reads as rewritten:

25 "(b) Duties, powers. The Board is empowered to:

26 ...

27 (8) ~~Prescribe~~ Establish standards to be met by the students, and to pertain  
28 to faculty, curricula, facilities, resources, and administration for any  
29 nursing program as provided in G.S. 90-171.38.

30 (9) ~~Survey~~ Review all nursing programs at least every ~~five~~ eight years or  
31 more often as ~~deemed~~ considered necessary by the Board or program  
32 director.

33 ...."

34 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 90-171.38(a) reads as rewritten:

35 "(a) A nursing program may be operated under the authority of a general hospital,  
36 or an approved post-secondary educational institution. The Board shall establish, revise,  
37 or repeal standards for nursing programs. These standards shall specify program  
38 requirements, curricula, faculty, students, facilities, resources, administration, and  
39 describe the approval process. Any institution desiring to establish a nursing program  
40 shall apply to the Board and submit satisfactory evidence that it will meet the standards  
41 ~~prescribed~~ established by the Board. Those standards shall be designed to ensure that  
42 graduates of those programs have the education necessary to safely and competently  
43 practice nursing. ~~The Board shall encourage the continued operation of all present~~  
44 ~~programs that meet the standards approved by the Board."~~

1           **SECTION 5.** G.S. 90-171.40 reads as rewritten:

2   "**§ 90-171.40. Periodic surveys.Ongoing approval.**

3       The Board shall ~~designate persons to survey~~review all nursing programs in the State  
4   at least every ~~five-eight~~ years or more often as ~~deemed~~ considered necessary. ~~Written~~  
5   ~~reports of such surveys shall be submitted to the Board.~~ If the Board determines that any  
6   approved nursing program does not meet or maintain the standards required by the  
7   Board, the Board shall give written notice thereof in writing specifying the deficiencies  
8   ~~shall be given immediately~~ to the institution responsible for the program. The Board  
9   shall withdraw approval from a program ~~which~~ that fails to correct deficiencies within a  
10  reasonable time. The Board shall publish annually a list of nursing programs in this  
11  State showing their approval status."

12           **SECTION 6.** Article 9A of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes is amended  
13  by adding a new section to read:

14  "**§ 90-171.43A. Mandatory employer verification of licensure status.**

15       (a) Before hiring a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse in North  
16 Carolina, a health care facility shall verify that the applicant has a current, valid license  
17 to practice nursing pursuant to G.S. 90-171.43.

18       (b) For purposes of this section, 'health care facility' means:

19           (1) Facilities described in G.S. 131E-256(b).

20           (2) Public health departments, physicians' offices, ambulatory care  
21 facilities, and rural health clinics."

22           **SECTION 7.** The terms of members serving on the Board of Nursing on  
23  December 31, 2004, expire on that date. To establish staggered terms for the  
24  appointments of public members made pursuant to G.S. 90-171.21(b), as enacted in  
25  Section 1 of this act, the Governor shall appoint one member for a four-year term, the  
26  General Assembly, upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the  
27  Senate, shall appoint one member for a three-year term, and the General Assembly,  
28  upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, shall appoint  
29  one member for a two-year term.

30           To stagger terms for members elected to the Board, the Board shall conduct  
31  an election in 2004 pursuant to G.S. 90-171.21(b) to elect members as follows:

32           (1) An at-large registered nurse and a licensed practical nurse, to serve for  
33           a one-year term.

34           (2) A staff registered nurse, a registered nurse who is an associate degree  
35           or diploma nurse educator, and a licensed practical nurse, each to serve  
36           for a two-year term.

37           (3) A registered nurse who is a baccalaureate or higher degree nurse  
38           educator, a registered nurse administrator employed by a hospital or a  
39           hospital system, and a licensed practical nurse, each to serve for a  
40           three-year term.

41           (4) A staff registered nurse, a registered nurse who is a practical nurse  
42           educator, and either a certified registered nurse anesthetist, a certified  
43           nurse midwife, a clinical nurse specialist, or a nurse practitioner, each  
44           to serve for a four-year term.

1 All members appointed and elected to the Board pursuant to this section shall begin  
2 serving their terms on January 1, 2005. After staggered terms have been established, all  
3 subsequent appointments and elections to the Board shall be for four-year terms. For the  
4 purpose of initial application of the provisions of G.S. 90-171.21(e) that limit members  
5 to eight consecutive years of service, consecutive service as of December 31, 2004,  
6 shall count, and if the member reaches the eight-year maximum during a term of office,  
7 that person is not eligible to continue in office and a vacancy is created to be filled for  
8 the remainder of the unexpired term.

9 **SECTION 8.** This act is effective when it becomes law.