
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 786 Session of
2009

INTRODUCED BY M. WHITE, RAFFERTY, WAUGH, VANCE, BOSCOLA, EARLL
AND FERLO, APRIL 17, 2009

REFERRED TO CONSUMER PROTECTION AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE,
APRIL 17, 2009

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of May 22, 1951 (P.L.317, No.69), entitled, as
2 amended, "An act relating to the practice of professional
3 nursing; providing for the licensing of nurses and for the
4 revocation and suspension of such licenses, subject to
5 appeal, and for their reinstatement; providing for the
6 renewal of such licenses; regulating nursing in general;
7 prescribing penalties and repealing certain laws," further
8 providing for definitions; and providing for certified
9 registered nurse anesthetist qualifications.

10 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
11 hereby enacts as follows:

12 Section 1. Section 2(1) of the act of May 22, 1951 (P.L.317,
13 No.69), known as The Professional Nursing Law, amended December
14 9, 2002 (P.L.1567, No.206), is amended and the section is
15 amended by adding a clause to read:

16 Section 2. Definitions.--When used in this act, the
17 following words and phrases shall have the following meanings
18 unless the context provides otherwise:

19 (1) The "Practice of Professional Nursing" means diagnosing
20 and treating human responses to actual or potential health
21 problems through such services as casefinding, health teaching,

1 health counseling, and provision of care supportive to or
2 restorative of life and well-being, and executing medical
3 regimens as prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist. The
4 foregoing shall not be deemed to include acts of medical
5 diagnosis or prescription of medical therapeutic or corrective
6 measures, except as performed by a certified registered nurse
7 practitioner acting in accordance with rules and regulations
8 promulgated by the Board. Other than the administration of
9 conscious sedation, the foregoing shall be deemed to include the
10 administration of anesthesia only if performed by a certified
11 registered nurse anesthetist.

12 * * *

13 (16) "Certified registered nurse anesthetist" means a
14 registered nurse licensed in this Commonwealth and certified by
15 the Board, pursuant to section 3.2, to administer anesthesia.

16 Section 2. The act is amended by adding sections to read:

17 Section 3.2. Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists;
18 Qualifications.--(a) The Board shall certify a licensed
19 registered nurse as a certified registered nurse anesthetist if
20 the nurse satisfies the requirements established by this act and
21 regulations promulgated by the Board.

22 (b) Certification of a nurse under this section shall expire
23 on the same date as the license of that nurse expires.

24 (c) A licensed registered nurse shall not qualify for
25 certification by the Board under this section unless the nurse:

26 (1) has successfully completed the educational program of a
27 school for nurse anesthetists accredited by an accrediting
28 agency recognized by the Board; and

29 (2) holds certification as a certified registered nurse
30 anesthetist by a Board-recognized national certification

1 organization.

2 (d) A licensed registered nurse who is enrolled in an
3 educational program of a school for nurse anesthetists
4 accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Board may,
5 during such enrollment, administer anesthesia under the
6 direction of the chief or director of anesthesia services, a
7 Board-certified anesthesiologist or a certified registered nurse
8 anesthetist.

9 (e) (1) A licensed registered nurse who has obtained the
10 education required by subsection (c), but who has not yet
11 obtained certification as a registered nurse anesthetist, may
12 administer anesthesia under the direction of the chief or
13 director of anesthesia services, a Board-certified
14 anesthesiologist or a certified registered nurse anesthetist
15 until the announcement of results of the first examination taken
16 for certification for which the registered nurse is eligible.

17 (2) If the registered nurse fails to take, or fails to pass,
18 that examination, the nurse shall immediately cease practicing
19 as a nurse anesthetist, Provided, however, That the registered
20 nurse may appeal to the Board for authority to continue
21 practicing as a nurse anesthetist if, due to extenuating
22 circumstances, the nurse is unable to take the examination in a
23 time period specified by the Board following attainment of the
24 required education.

25 Section 3.3. Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists; Scope
26 of Practice.--(a) (1) A certified registered nurse anesthetist
27 shall administer anesthesia in cooperation with a physician,
28 dentist or podiatrist.

29 (2) For purposes of this section, "cooperation" shall mean a
30 process in which the certified registered nurse anesthetist and

1 the physician, dentist or podiatrist work together with each
2 contributing an area of expertise at the individual and
3 respective level of education and training of the certified
4 registered nurse anesthetist and the physician, dentist or
5 podiatrist.

6 (b) A certified registered nurse anesthetist's performance
7 shall be under the overall direction of the chief or director of
8 anesthesia services: Provided, however, That in situations or
9 health care delivery facilities where anesthesia services are
10 not mandatory, the certified registered nurse anesthetist's
11 performance shall be under the overall direction of the
12 physician, dentist or podiatrist responsible for the patient's
13 care.

14 (c) When the operating/anesthesia team consists entirely of
15 nonphysicians, an anesthesiologist or consulting physician of
16 the certified registered nurse anesthetist's choice shall be
17 available to the certified registered nurse anesthetist by
18 physical presence or electronic communication.

19 Section 3. Nothing in this act shall be construed to
20 prohibit the continued practice of certified registered nurse
21 anesthetists who were authorized to practice in this
22 Commonwealth on the effective date of this section.

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