

Senate Bill 49

By: Senators Hawkins of the 49th, Thomas of the 54th, Hudgens of the 47th, Cowser of the 46th, Butterworth of the 50th and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 26 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to the "Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act," so as to revise certain  
3 provisions relating to nursing education program requirements for registered professional  
4 nurses; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

7 Article 1 of Chapter 26 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the  
8 "Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act," is amended by revising Code Section  
9 43-26-7, relating to requirements for licensure as a registered professional nurse, as follows:  
10 "43-26-7.

11 (a) Any applicant who meets the requirements of this Code section shall be eligible for  
12 licensure as a registered professional nurse.

13 (b) An applicant for licensure by examination shall:

14 (1) Submit a completed written application and fee;

15 (2) Have graduated from a nursing education program approved by the board or which  
16 meets criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established by the board;

17 (3) Pass a board recognized licensing examination; provided, however, that such  
18 examination may not be taken prior to graduation from the nursing education program;

19 and

20 (4) Have satisfactory results from a fingerprint record check report conducted by the  
21 Georgia Crime Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as  
22 determined by the board. Application for a license under this Code section shall  
23 constitute express consent and authorization for the board or its representative to perform  
24 a criminal background check. Each applicant who submits an application to the board  
25 for licensure by examination agrees to provide the board with any and all information  
26 necessary to run a criminal background check, including, but not limited to, classifiable

27 sets of fingerprints. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees associated with the  
28 performance of such background check;~~and~~

29 ~~(5) Meet such other criteria as established by the board.~~

30 (c) An applicant for licensure by endorsement shall:

31 (1) Submit a completed written application and fee;

32 (2) Have passed a board recognized licensing examination following graduation from a  
33 nursing education program approved by the board or which meets criteria similar to, and  
34 not less stringent than, those established by the board;

35 (3) Submit verification of initial and current licensure in any other licensing jurisdiction  
36 administering a board recognized licensing examination;

37 (4) Have practiced nursing as a registered professional nurse for a period of time as  
38 determined by the board or have graduated from a nursing education program within the  
39 four years immediately preceding the date of the application; and

40 (5) Have satisfactory results from a fingerprint record check report conducted by the  
41 Georgia Crime Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as  
42 determined by the board. Application for a license under this Code section shall  
43 constitute express consent and authorization for the board or its representative to perform  
44 a criminal background check. Each applicant who submits an application to the board  
45 for licensure by examination agrees to provide the board with any and all information  
46 necessary to run a criminal background check, including, but not limited to, classifiable  
47 sets of fingerprints. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees associated with the  
48 performance of such background check;~~and~~

49 ~~(6) Meet such other criteria as established by the board.~~

50 (d) An applicant for reinstatement who has previously held a valid license in Georgia shall:

51 (1) Submit a completed written application and fee;

52 (2) Have practiced nursing as a registered professional nurse for a period of time as  
53 determined by the board or have graduated from a nursing education program approved  
54 by the board or which meets criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those  
55 established by the board within the four years immediately preceding the date of the  
56 application;

57 (3) Have satisfactory results from a fingerprint record check report conducted by the  
58 Georgia Crime Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as  
59 determined by the board. Application for a license under this Code section shall  
60 constitute express consent and authorization for the board or its representative to perform  
61 a criminal background check. Each applicant who submits an application to the board  
62 for licensure by examination agrees to provide the board with any and all information  
63 necessary to run a criminal background check, including, but not limited to, classifiable

64 sets of fingerprints. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees associated with the  
65 performance of such background check; and

66 (4) Meet such other criteria as established by the board.

67 (e) For purposes of subsections (b) and (c) of this Code section, a nursing education  
68 program that:

69 (1) Is part of an institution of higher education located outside of the State of Georgia  
70 that is approved by the appropriate regulatory authorities of its home state;

71 (2) Holds regional and specialty accreditation by an accrediting body or bodies  
72 recognized by the United States Secretary of Education or the Council for Higher  
73 Education Accreditation;

74 (3) Requires program applicants to be a licensed practical/vocational nurse, military  
75 service corpsman, or paramedic or hold a degree in a clinically oriented health care field  
76 with demonstrated experience providing direct patient care to qualify for admission; and

77 (4) Requires its students to pass faculty determined program outcomes including  
78 competency based assessments of nursing knowledge, a rigorous clinical competency  
79 assessment, and a board recognized licensing exam at a rate equivalent to the completion  
80 rate for students of approved programs in Georgia

81 is hereby deemed to meet criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established  
82 by the board."

83 **SECTION 2.**

84 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.