

House Bill 475

By: Representatives Cooper of the 41st, Harbin of the 118th, Lindsey of the 54th, Houston of the 170th, Wilkinson of the 52nd, 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 requirements for registered professional nurses in nontraditional
4 nursing education programs; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and
5 for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Article 1 of Chapter 26 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
9 "Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act," is amended by revising Code Section
10 43-26-7, relating to requirements for licensure as a registered professional nurse, as follows:
11 "43-26-7.

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

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

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

16 (2) Have graduated from a nursing education program approved by the board or which
17 meets criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established by the board. For
18 purposes of this paragraph, a nontraditional nursing education program that:

19 (A) Provides concurrent instruction in theory along with clinical teaching and clinical
20 practice for its program participants;

21 (B) Requires that program participants complete a minimum of 800 hours of clinical
22 practice;

23 (C) Arranges the participant's clinical practice in such settings and with such
24 supervision as approved by the board; and

25 (D) Only accepts licensed practical nurses licensed in states with requirements for such
26 licensure equivalent to or greater than Georgia requirements into the program

27 is hereby deemed to meet criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established
28 by the board. The board shall be authorized to approve individual waiver requests for
29 students who, prior to July 1, 2008, entered a nontraditional nursing education program
30 which does not meet the requirements of this paragraph and completes such program no
31 later than July 1, 2010. For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'nontraditional nursing
32 education program' means a program which provides instruction in theory primarily by
33 self-study, including online courses, and the term 'clinical practice' shall mean
34 face-to-face supervised clinical instruction with actual patients in a variety of patient
35 settings, including, but not limited to, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology,
36 medical-surgical, emergency, and mental illness;

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

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

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

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

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

51 (2) Have passed a board recognized licensing examination following graduation from a
52 nursing education program, including a nontraditional program, approved by the board
53 or which meets criteria similar to, and not less stringent than, those established by the
54 board;

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

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

60 (B) If graduated from a nontraditional nursing education program, have practiced
61 nursing as a registered professional nurse in a hospital setting for at least two of the five
62 years immediately preceding the date of the application and such practice is
63 documented by the applicant and approved by the board;

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

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

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

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

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

81 (3) Have satisfactory results from a fingerprint record check report conducted by the
82 Georgia Crime Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as
83 determined by the board. Application for a license under this Code section shall
84 constitute express consent and authorization for the board or its representative to perform
85 a criminal background check. Each applicant who submits an application to the board
86 for licensure by examination agrees to provide the board with any and all information
87 necessary to run a criminal background check, including, but not limited to, classifiable
88 sets of fingerprints. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees associated with the
89 performance of such background check; and

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

91

SECTION 2.

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