

The Senate Health and Human Services Committee offered the following substitute to HB 470:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

To amend Code Section 43-26-7 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to requirements for licensure as a registered professional nurse, so as to revise requirements for preceptorships for certain applicants; to revise requirements relating to nontraditional nursing education programs; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

**SECTION 1.**

Code Section 43-26-7 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to requirements for licensure as a registered professional nurse, is amended by revising subsections (b), (c), and (e) as follows:

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

(1) Submit a completed written application and fee;

(2)(A) Have graduated from an approved nursing education program, as defined in Code Section 43-26-3; or

(B)(i) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, have graduated from a nontraditional nursing education program approved by the board which meets the requirements in subsection (e) of this Code section; and

(ii)(I) If the applicant entered the nontraditional nursing education program as a licensed practical nurse and had an academic education as a licensed practical nurse that included clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical, and mental illness, have with at least three two years of clinical experience in the five years preceding the date of the application in a health care facility an acute care inpatient facility, a long-term acute care facility, or a skilled nursing facility, if such facility has 60 beds or more and provides health care to patients with similar health care needs to those patients in a long-term acute care facility, as approved by the board, as a licensed practical nurse ~~whose academic~~

27 ~~education as a licensed practical nurse included clinical training in pediatrics,~~  
 28 ~~obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical, and mental illness, have completed a~~  
 29 ~~350-hour postgraduate preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the oversight~~  
 30 ~~of a registered professional nurse where such applicant is transitioned from the role~~  
 31 ~~of a licensed practical nurse to a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship~~  
 32 ~~shall have prior approval of the board and successful completion of the~~  
 33 ~~preceptorship shall be verified in writing by the preceptor; or~~

34 (II) If the applicant entered the nontraditional nursing education program as a  
 35 paramedic and is certified by a nationally recognized certifying organization for  
 36 paramedics, as identified by the board, have at least two years of experience in the  
 37 five years preceding the date of the application in an acute care inpatient facility, a  
 38 long-term acute care facility, or a skilled nursing facility, if such facility has 60 beds  
 39 or more and provides health care to patients with similar health care needs to those  
 40 patients in a long-term acute care facility, as approved by the board;

41 (III) If the applicant entered the nontraditional nursing education program as a  
 42 licensed practical nurse, had an academic education as a licensed practical nurse that  
 43 included clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical,  
 44 and mental illness, and has at least two years of experience as a licensed practical  
 45 nurse in any setting but less than two years of experience in the five years preceding  
 46 the date of the application in an acute care inpatient facility or a long-term acute  
 47 care facility, as approved by the board, have completed a 320-hour postgraduate  
 48 preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the close supervision of a registered  
 49 professional nurse where such applicant is transitioned from the role of a licensed  
 50 practical nurse to a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have prior  
 51 approval of the board, and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be  
 52 verified in writing by the preceptor. The preceptorship shall be in an acute care  
 53 inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility; provided, however, that the  
 54 board may authorize a preceptorship pursuant to this subdivision in a skilled nursing  
 55 facility, if such facility has 60 beds or more and such facility can ensure that the  
 56 applicant will be providing health care to patients with similar health care needs as  
 57 those patients in a long-term acute care facility under the close supervision of a  
 58 registered professional nurse;

59 ~~(H)~~(IV) If the applicant entered the nontraditional nursing education program as (1)  
 60 a military medical corpsman or paramedic with at least two years of experience as  
 61 a paramedic or (2) a licensed practical nurse with less than ~~three~~ two years of  
 62 clinical experience in the five years preceding the date of the application in a health  
 63 care facility an acute care inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility as a

64 licensed practical nurse whose academic training as a licensed practical nurse did  
 65 not include clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology,  
 66 medical-surgical, and mental illness, have completed a ~~700-hour~~ 480 hour  
 67 postgraduate preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the oversight of a  
 68 registered professional nurse and approved by the board. Such preceptorship shall  
 69 include clinical practice in ~~a health care facility~~ an acute care inpatient facility or a  
 70 long-term acute care facility; provided, however, that the board may authorize a  
 71 preceptorship pursuant to this subdivision in other facilities to obtain specialized  
 72 experience in certain areas. Such preceptorship shall be in the area or areas as  
 73 determined by the board on a case-by-case basis, which may include in pediatrics,  
 74 obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical, mental illness, and transition into the  
 75 role of a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have prior approval  
 76 of the board, and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be verified in  
 77 writing by the preceptor;

78 (V) If the applicant entered the nontraditional nursing education program as a  
 79 military medical corpsman and has at least two years of experience as a military  
 80 medical corpsman, have completed a postgraduate preceptorship of at least 320  
 81 hours but not more than 640 hours, as determined by the board, arranged by the  
 82 applicant and under the supervision of a registered professional nurse. The  
 83 preceptorship shall have prior approval of the board, and successful completion of  
 84 the preceptorship shall be verified in writing by the preceptor. The preceptorship  
 85 shall be in an acute care inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility;  
 86 provided, however, that the board may authorize a preceptorship pursuant to this  
 87 subdivision in other facilities to obtain specialized experience in certain areas; or

88 (VI) If the applicant does not meet the requirements of subdivision (I) through (V)  
 89 of this division and the applicant ~~Applicants who, before July 1, 2008,~~ entered a  
 90 nontraditional nursing education program before July 1, 2008, which meets the  
 91 requirements of subsection (e) of this Code section and ~~complete~~ completes such  
 92 program, have completed a 640 hour postgraduate preceptorship arranged by the  
 93 applicant under the supervision of a registered professional nurse. The  
 94 preceptorship shall have prior approval of the board, and successful completion of  
 95 the preceptorship shall be verified in writing by the preceptor. The preceptorship  
 96 shall be in an acute care inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility;  
 97 provided, however, that the board may authorize a preceptorship pursuant to this  
 98 subdivision in other facilities to obtain specialized experience in certain areas ~~no~~  
 99 ~~later than June 30, 2011, shall be deemed to meet the criteria of this paragraph;~~  
 100 ~~provided, however, that the board shall have the discretion to require additional~~

101 ~~clinical hours of experience of applicants who (i) did not enter the nontraditional~~  
 102 ~~nursing education program as a licensed practical nurse, or (ii) entered the~~  
 103 ~~nontraditional nursing education program as a licensed practical nurse but does not~~  
 104 ~~have at least one year of clinical experience in a health care facility as a licensed~~  
 105 ~~practical nurse, if such applicant's clinical experience is deemed lacking by the~~  
 106 ~~board.~~

107 The board shall make the determinations required by this division in accordance with  
 108 its established guidelines;

109 (3) Pass a board recognized licensing examination; provided, however, that such  
 110 examination may not be taken prior to graduation from the approved nursing education  
 111 program. In no way shall the passage of such examination by a graduate of a  
 112 nontraditional nursing education program who does not meet the other requirements of  
 113 this subsection be construed to authorize such individual to practice nursing, to require  
 114 the board to license such individual as a registered professional nurse other than to issue  
 115 in its sole discretion a temporary permit pursuant to Code Section 43-26-8, or to be  
 116 endorsed from another state as a registered professional nurse;

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

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

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

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

129 (2)(A) Have passed a board recognized licensing examination following graduation  
 130 from an approved nursing education program, as defined in Code Section 43-26-3; or

131 (B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, have graduated from a  
 132 nontraditional nursing education program approved by the board which meets the  
 133 requirements in subsection (e) of this Code section;

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

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

139 (B) ~~If the applicant graduated from~~ entered a nontraditional nursing education program  
 140 as:

141 (i) ~~A licensed practical nurse whose academic education as a licensed practical nurse~~  
 142 included clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical,  
 143 and mental illness; or

144 (ii) A paramedic,  
 145 have practiced nursing as a registered professional nurse in ~~a health care facility an~~  
 146 acute care inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility for at least one year in the  
 147 three years preceding the date of the application, and such practice is documented by  
 148 the applicant and approved by the board; or

149 (C) If the applicant entered a nontraditional nursing education program as anything  
 150 other than:

151 (i) ~~A a~~ licensed practical nurse whose academic education as a licensed practical  
 152 nurse included clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology,  
 153 medical-surgical, and mental illness; or

154 (ii) A paramedic,  
 155 ~~and have~~ graduated from such program and practiced nursing as a registered  
 156 professional nurse in ~~a health care facility an~~ acute care inpatient facility or a long-term  
 157 acute care facility for ~~less than one year~~ at least three years in the ~~three~~ five years  
 158 preceding the date of the application, ~~have completed a 350 hour postgraduate~~  
 159 ~~preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the oversight of a registered professional~~  
 160 ~~nurse and where such applicant is transitioned from the role of a licensed practical~~  
 161 ~~nurse to a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have prior approval~~  
 162 ~~of the board and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be verified in writing~~  
 163 ~~by the preceptor; or~~

164 (D) ~~If entered a nontraditional nursing education program as a military medical~~  
 165 ~~corpsman or paramedic and graduated from such program and practiced nursing as a~~  
 166 ~~registered professional nurse in a health care facility for less than one year in the three~~  
 167 ~~years preceding the date of the application, have completed a 700 hour postgraduate~~  
 168 ~~preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the oversight of a registered professional~~  
 169 ~~nurse. Such preceptorship shall include clinical practice in a health care facility in~~  
 170 ~~pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical, mental illness, and transition~~  
 171 ~~into the role of a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have prior~~

172 ~~approval of the board, and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be verified~~  
 173 ~~in writing by the preceptor;~~

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

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

184 "(e) A nontraditional nursing education program shall meet the following requirements:

185 (1) Is part of an institution of higher education that is approved by the appropriate  
 186 regulatory authorities of its home state;

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

190 ~~(3) Requires its program applicants to be a licensed practical/vocational nurse, military~~  
 191 ~~medical corpsman, or paramedic;~~

192 ~~(4)~~(3) Requires its students to pass faculty determined program outcomes, including  
 193 competency based assessments of nursing knowledge and a summative performance  
 194 assessment of clinical competency of a minimum of 2 1/2 days developed by faculty  
 195 subject matter experts that follows nationally recognized standards for educational  
 196 testing; and

197 ~~(5)~~(4) Its graduates pass a board recognized licensing examination at a rate equivalent  
 198 to the minimum rate required for board approved traditional nursing education programs."

199

## SECTION 2.

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