

House Bill 591

By: Representatives Hogan of the 179th, Williams of the 148th, Meeks of the 178th, Buckner of the 137th, Collins of the 68th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 37 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to mental health, so
2 as to authorize marriage and family therapists to perform certain acts which physicians,
3 psychologists, and others are authorized to perform regarding emergency examinations of
4 persons for involuntary evaluation and treatment for mental illness or alcohol or drug abuse;
5 to define certain terms; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for
6 other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Title 37 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to mental health, is amended by
10 revising subsection (d) of Code Section 37-3-41, relating to emergency admission of a person
11 for involuntary evaluation of mental illness, as follows:

12 "(d) Any psychologist, clinical social worker, licensed professional counselor, marriage
13 and family therapist, or clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health may perform
14 any act specified by this Code section to be performed by a physician. Any reference in
15 any part of this chapter to a physician acting under this Code section shall be deemed to
16 refer equally to a psychologist, a clinical social worker, a licensed professional counselor,

H. B. 591

17 a marriage and family therapist, or a clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health
18 acting under this Code section. For purposes of this Code section, the term 'psychologist'
19 means any person authorized under the laws of this state to practice as a licensed
20 psychologist; the term 'clinical social worker' means any person authorized under the laws
21 of this state to practice as a licensed clinical social worker; the term 'licensed professional
22 counselor' means any person authorized under the laws of this state to practice as a licensed
23 professional counselor; the term 'marriage and family therapist' means any person
24 authorized under the laws of this state to practice as a licensed marriage and family
25 therapist; and the term 'clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health' means any
26 person authorized under the laws of this state to practice as a registered professional nurse
27 and who is recognized by the Georgia Board of Nursing to be engaged in advanced nursing
28 practice as a clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health."

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SECTION 2.

30 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (d) of Code Section 37-7-41, relating to
31 emergency involuntary treatment of an alcoholic, a drug abuser, or a drug dependent
32 individual, as follows:

33 "(d) Any psychologist, clinical social worker, licensed professional counselor, marriage
34 and family therapist, or clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health may perform
35 any act specified by this Code section to be performed by a physician. Any reference in
36 any part of this chapter to a physician acting under this Code section shall be deemed to
37 refer equally to a psychologist, a clinical social worker, a licensed professional counselor,
38 a marriage and family therapist, or a clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health
39 acting under this Code section. For purposes of this Code section, the term 'psychologist'
40 means any person authorized under the laws of this state to practice as a licensed
41 psychologist; the term 'clinical social worker' means any person authorized under the laws
42 of this state to practice as a licensed clinical social worker; the term 'licensed professional

43 counselor' means any person authorized under the laws of this state to practice as a licensed
44 professional counselor; the term 'marriage and family therapist' means any person
45 authorized under the laws of this state to practice as a licensed marriage and family
46 therapist; and the term 'clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health' means any
47 person authorized under the laws of this state to practice as a registered professional nurse
48 and who is recognized by the Georgia Board of Nursing to be engaged in advanced nursing
49 practice as a clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/mental health."

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SECTION 3.

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