

House Bill 470

By: Representative Cooper of the 41st

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

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

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

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

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

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

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

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

18 (ii)(I) If the applicant entered the nontraditional nursing education program as a
19 licensed practical nurse and had an academic education as a licensed practical nurse
20 that included clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology,
21 medical-surgical, and mental illness, have with at least ~~three~~ two years of clinical
22 experience in the five years preceding the date of the application in a health care
23 facility an acute care inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility, as approved
24 by the board, as a licensed practical nurse ~~whose academic education as a licensed~~
25 ~~practical nurse included clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology,~~
26 ~~medical-surgical, and mental illness, have completed a 350-hour postgraduate~~

27 ~~preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the oversight of a registered~~
 28 ~~professional nurse where such applicant is transitioned from the role of a licensed~~
 29 ~~practical nurse to a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have prior~~
 30 ~~approval of the board and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be~~
 31 ~~verified in writing by the preceptor; or~~

32 (II) If the applicant entered the nontraditional nursing education program as a
 33 paramedic and is certified by a nationally recognized certifying organization for
 34 paramedics, as identified by the board, have at least two years of experience in the
 35 five years preceding the date of the application in an acute care inpatient facility or
 36 a long-term acute care facility, as approved by the board;

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

55 ~~(H)(IV)~~ (IV) If the applicant entered the nontraditional nursing education program as (1)
 56 a ~~military medical corpsman~~ or paramedic with at least two years of experience as
 57 a ~~paramedic~~ or (2) a licensed practical nurse with less than ~~three~~ two years of
 58 clinical experience in the five years preceding the date of the application in a ~~health~~
 59 ~~care facility~~ an acute care inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility as a
 60 licensed practical nurse whose academic training as a licensed practical nurse did
 61 not include clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology,
 62 medical-surgical, and mental illness, have completed a ~~700-hour~~ 480 hour
 63 postgraduate preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the oversight of a

64 registered professional nurse and approved by the board. Such preceptorship shall
 65 include clinical practice in ~~a health care facility~~ an acute care inpatient facility or a
 66 long-term acute care facility; provided, however, that the board may authorize a
 67 preceptorship pursuant to this subdivision in other facilities to obtain specialized
 68 experience in certain areas. Such preceptorship shall be in the area or areas as
 69 determined by the board on a case-by-case basis, which may include in pediatrics,
 70 obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical, mental illness, and transition into the
 71 role of a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have prior approval
 72 of the board, and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be verified in
 73 writing by the preceptor;

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

84 (VI) If the applicant ~~Applicants who, before July 1, 2008, entered a nontraditional~~
 85 ~~nursing education program before July 1, 2008, which meets the requirements of~~
 86 ~~subsection (e) of this Code section and complete~~ completes such program, have
 87 completed a 640 hour postgraduate preceptorship arranged by the applicant under
 88 the supervision of a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have
 89 prior approval of the board, and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be
 90 verified in writing by the preceptor. The preceptorship shall be in an acute care
 91 inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility; provided, however, that the
 92 board may authorize a preceptorship pursuant to this subdivision in other facilities
 93 to obtain specialized experience in certain areas ~~no later than June 30, 2011, shall~~
 94 ~~be deemed to meet the criteria of this paragraph; provided, however, that the board~~
 95 ~~shall have the discretion to require additional clinical hours of experience of~~
 96 ~~applicants who (i) did not enter the nontraditional nursing education program as a~~
 97 ~~licensed practical nurse, or (ii) entered the nontraditional nursing education program~~
 98 ~~as a licensed practical nurse but does not have at least one year of clinical~~
 99 ~~experience in a health care facility as a licensed practical nurse, if such applicant's~~
 100 ~~clinical experience is deemed lacking by the board.~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 138 (ii) A paramedic,
 139 have practiced nursing as a registered professional nurse in a ~~health care facility~~ an
 140 acute care inpatient facility or a long-term acute care facility for at least one year in the
 141 three years preceding the date of the application, and such practice is documented by
 142 the applicant and approved by the board; or
- 143 (C) If the applicant entered a nontraditional nursing education program as anything
 144 other than:
- 145 (i) A ~~a~~ licensed practical nurse whose academic education as a licensed practical
 146 nurse included clinical training in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology,
 147 medical-surgical, and mental illness; or
- 148 (ii) A paramedic,
 149 and have graduated from such program and practiced nursing as a registered
 150 professional nurse in a ~~health care facility~~ an acute care inpatient facility or a long-term
 151 acute care facility for ~~less than one year~~ at least three years in the ~~three~~ five years
 152 preceding the date of the application, ~~have completed a 350 hour postgraduate~~
 153 ~~preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the oversight of a registered professional~~
 154 ~~nurse and where such applicant is transitioned from the role of a licensed practical~~
 155 ~~nurse to a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have prior approval~~
 156 ~~of the board and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be verified in writing~~
 157 ~~by the preceptor; or~~
- 158 ~~(D) If entered a nontraditional nursing education program as a military medical~~
 159 ~~corpsman or paramedic and graduated from such program and practiced nursing as a~~
 160 ~~registered professional nurse in a health care facility for less than one year in the three~~
 161 ~~years preceding the date of the application, have completed a 700 hour postgraduate~~
 162 ~~preceptorship arranged by the applicant under the oversight of a registered professional~~
 163 ~~nurse. Such preceptorship shall include clinical practice in a health care facility in~~
 164 ~~pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, medical-surgical, mental illness, and transition~~
 165 ~~into the role of a registered professional nurse. The preceptorship shall have prior~~
 166 ~~approval of the board, and successful completion of the preceptorship shall be verified~~
 167 ~~in writing by the preceptor;~~
- 168 (5) Have satisfactory results from a fingerprint record check report conducted by the
 169 Georgia Crime Information Center and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as
 170 determined by the board. Application for a license under this Code section shall
 171 constitute express consent and authorization for the board or its representative to perform
 172 a criminal background check. Each applicant who submits an application to the board
 173 for licensure by examination agrees to provide the board with any and all information
 174 necessary to run a criminal background check, including, but not limited to, classifiable

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

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

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

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

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

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

186 ~~(4)~~(3) Requires its students to pass faculty determined program outcomes, including
 187 competency based assessments of nursing knowledge and a summative performance
 188 assessment of clinical competency of a minimum of 2 1/2 days developed by faculty
 189 subject matter experts that follows nationally recognized standards for educational
 190 testing; and

191 ~~(5)~~(4) Its graduates pass a board recognized licensing examination at a rate equivalent
 192 to the minimum rate required for board approved traditional nursing education programs."

193

SECTION 2.

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