

By Senator Clary

7-578A-98

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to physician assistant
 3 certification; amending s. 458.347, F.S.;
 4 exempting applicants from a practical
 5 examination requirement; providing guidelines
 6 for the translation of the examination into
 7 other languages; providing for examinations to
 8 be administered at specified intervals,
 9 providing an effective date.
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 11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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 13 Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of section
 14 458.347, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
 15 458.347 Physician assistants.--
 16 (7) PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT CERTIFICATION.--
 17 (b)1. Notwithstanding subparagraph (a)2. and
 18 sub-subparagraph (a)3.a., the agency shall examine each
 19 applicant who the Board of Medicine certifies:
 20 a. Has completed the application form and remitted a
 21 nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$500 and an
 22 examination fee not to exceed \$300, plus the actual cost to
 23 the agency to provide the examination. The examination fee is
 24 refundable if the applicant is found to be ineligible to take
 25 the examination. The agency shall not require the applicant to
 26 pass a practical component of the examination. Competencies
 27 required for practicing physician assistants must be
 28 incorporated into the written examination through a
 29 multiple-choice format.The agency shall translate the
 30 examination into the native language of any applicant who
 31 requests and agrees to pay all costs of such translation, if

CODING:Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

1 the translation request is filed with the board office no
2 later than 9 months before the scheduled examination, the
3 applicant remits translation fees as specified by the
4 department no later than 6 months before the scheduled
5 examination, and ~~provided~~ the applicant demonstrates to the
6 agency the ability to communicate orally in basic English. An
7 applicant who is unable to pay translation costs may take the
8 next available examination in English if the applicant submits
9 a request in writing by the application deadline and is
10 otherwise eligible. To demonstrate the ability to communicate
11 in basic English, a passing score or grade is required, as
12 determined by the department or organization that developed
13 it, on one of the following English examinations:

14 (I) The test for spoken English (TSE) by the
15 Educational Testing Service (ETS);

16 (II) The test of English as a foreign language
17 (TOEFL), by ETS;

18 (III) A high school or college level English Course;
19 or

20 (IV) The English examination for citizenship,
21 Immigration and Naturalization Service.

22
23 A notarized copy of an Educational Commission for Foreign
24 Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certificate may also be used to
25 demonstrate the ability to communicate in basic English.

26 b. Is an unlicensed physician who graduated from a
27 foreign medical school listed with the World Health
28 Organization who has not previously taken and failed the
29 examination of the National Commission on Certification of
30 Physician Assistants and who has been certified by the Board
31 of Medicine as having met the requirements for licensure as a

1 medical doctor by examination as set forth in s. 458.311(1),
2 (3), (4), and (5), with the exception that the applicant is
3 not required to have completed an approved residency of at
4 least 1 year and the applicant is not required to have passed
5 the licensing examination specified under s. 458.311 or hold a
6 valid, active certificate issued by the Educational Commission
7 for Foreign Medical Graduates.

8 c. Was eligible and made initial application for
9 certification as a physician assistant in this state between
10 July 1, 1990, and June 30, 1991.

11 d. Was a resident of this state on July 1, 1990, or
12 was licensed or certified in any state in the United States as
13 a physician assistant on July 1, 1990.

14 2. The agency may grant temporary certification to an
15 applicant who meets the requirements of subparagraph 1.
16 Between meetings of the council, the agency may grant
17 temporary certification to practice based on the completion of
18 all temporary certification requirements. All such
19 administratively issued certifications shall be reviewed and
20 acted on at the next regular meeting of the council. A
21 temporary certificate expires upon receipt and notice of
22 scores to the certificateholder from the first available
23 examination specified in subparagraph 1. following
24 certification by the agency. An applicant who fails the
25 proficiency examination is no longer temporarily certified,
26 but may apply for a one-time extension of temporary
27 certification after reapplying for the next available
28 examination. Extended certification shall expire upon failure
29 of the certificateholder to sit for the next available
30 examination or upon receipt and notice of scores to the
31 certificateholder from such examination.

1 3. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the
2 examination specified pursuant to subparagraph 1. shall be
3 administered by the agency only five times. Applicants
4 certified by the board for examination shall receive at least
5 6 months' notice of eligibility prior to the administration of
6 the initial examination. Subsequent examinations shall be
7 administered at 1-year intervals following ~~determined by the~~
8 ~~agency after~~ the reporting of the scores of the first and
9 subsequent examinations ~~examination~~. For the purposes of this
10 paragraph, the agency may develop, contract for the
11 development of, purchase, or approve an examination, including
12 a practical component, that adequately measures an applicant's
13 ability to practice with reasonable skill and safety. The
14 minimum passing score on the examination shall be established
15 by the agency, with the advice of the board. Those applicants
16 failing to pass that examination or any subsequent examination
17 shall receive notice of the administration of the next
18 examination with the notice of scores following such
19 examination. Any applicant who passes the examination and
20 meets the requirements of this section shall be certified as a
21 physician assistant with all rights defined thereby.

22 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1998.

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25 SENATE SUMMARY

26 Revises provisions relating to physician assistant
27 certification. Exempts applicants from certain exams;
28 establishes guidelines for translation of the examination
29 into other languages; and provides for the examinations
30 to be administered at specified intervals.
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