

By Representative C. Green

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to physician assistants;
3 amending s. 458.347, F.S.; authorizing certain
4 students of the former Florida College of
5 Physician's Assistants to sit for the
6 examination for licensure as a physician
7 assistant; requiring prior completion of
8 incomplete or additionally required clinical
9 rotations and providing requirements therefor;
10 authorizing temporary licensure; providing for
11 licensure of successful examinees; providing
12 for fees; providing for future repeal;
13 providing an effective date.

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15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of section
18 458.347, Florida Statutes, 1998 Supplement, is amended to
19 read:

20 458.347 Physician assistants.--

21 (7) PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT LICENSURE.--

22 (b)1. Notwithstanding subparagraph (a)2. and
23 sub-subparagraph (a)3.a., the department shall examine each
24 applicant who the Board of Medicine certifies:

25 a. Has completed the application form and remitted a
26 nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$500 and an
27 examination fee not to exceed \$300, plus the actual cost to
28 the department to provide the examination. The examination fee
29 is refundable if the applicant is found to be ineligible to
30 take the examination. The department shall not require the
31 applicant to pass a separate practical component of the

1 examination. For examinations given after July 1, 1998,
2 competencies measured through practical examinations shall be
3 incorporated into the written examination through a
4 multiple-choice format. The department shall translate the
5 examination into the native language of any applicant who
6 requests and agrees to pay all costs of such translation,
7 provided that the translation request is filed with the board
8 office no later than 9 months before the scheduled examination
9 and the applicant remits translation fees as specified by the
10 department no later than 6 months before the scheduled
11 examination, and provided that the applicant demonstrates to
12 the department the ability to communicate orally in basic
13 English. If the applicant is unable to pay translation costs,
14 the applicant may take the next available examination in
15 English if the applicant submits a request in writing by the
16 application deadline and if the applicant is otherwise
17 eligible under this section. To demonstrate the ability to
18 communicate orally in basic English, a passing score or grade
19 is required, as determined by the department or organization
20 that developed it, on ~~one of the following English~~
21 ~~examinations:~~

22 ~~(I)~~ the test for spoken English (TSE) by the
23 Educational Testing Service (ETS), +

24 ~~(II)~~ the test of English as a foreign language
25 (TOEFL), ~~by~~ ETS, +

26 ~~(III)~~ a high school or college level English course, +
27 or ~~+~~

28 ~~(IV)~~ the English examination for citizenship,
29 Immigration and Naturalization Service. A notarized copy of an
30 Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)

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1 certificate may also be used to demonstrate the ability to
2 communicate in basic English; ~~and~~

3 b.(I) Is an unlicensed physician who graduated from a
4 foreign medical school listed with the World Health
5 Organization who has not previously taken and failed the
6 examination of the National Commission on Certification of
7 Physician Assistants and who has been certified by the Board
8 of Medicine as having met the requirements for licensure as a
9 medical doctor by examination as set forth in s. 458.311(1),
10 (3), (4), and (5), with the exception that the applicant is
11 not required to have completed an approved residency of at
12 least 1 year and the applicant is not required to have passed
13 the licensing examination specified under s. 458.311 or hold a
14 valid, active certificate issued by the Educational Commission
15 for Foreign Medical Graduates; ~~and~~

16 ~~c~~ was eligible and made initial application for
17 certification as a physician assistant in this state between
18 July 1, 1990, and June 30, 1991; ~~and~~

19 ~~d~~ was a resident of this state on July 1, 1990, or
20 was licensed or certified in any state in the United States as
21 a physician assistant on July 1, 1990; ~~or~~

22 (II) Completed all coursework requirements of the
23 Master of Medical Science Physician Assistant Program offered
24 through the Florida College of Physician's Assistants prior to
25 its closure in August of 1996. Prior to taking the
26 examination, such applicant must successfully complete any
27 clinical rotations that were not completed under such program
28 prior to its termination and any additional clinical rotations
29 with an appropriate physician assistant preceptor, not to
30 exceed 6 months, that are determined necessary by the council.
31 The boards shall determine, based on recommendations from the

1 council, the facilities under which such incomplete or
2 additional clinical rotations may be completed and shall also
3 determine what constitutes successful completion thereof,
4 provided such requirements are comparable to those established
5 by accredited physician assistant programs. This
6 sub-sub-subparagraph is repealed July 1, 2001.

7 2. The department may grant temporary licensure to an
8 applicant who meets the requirements of subparagraph 1.
9 Between meetings of the council, the department may grant
10 temporary licensure to practice based on the completion of all
11 temporary licensure requirements. All such administratively
12 issued licenses shall be reviewed and acted on at the next
13 regular meeting of the council. A temporary license expires
14 upon receipt and notice of scores to the licenseholder from
15 the first available examination specified in subparagraph 1.
16 following licensure by the department. An applicant who fails
17 the proficiency examination is no longer temporarily licensed,
18 but may apply for a one-time extension of temporary licensure
19 after reapplying for the next available examination. Extended
20 licensure shall expire upon failure of the licenseholder to
21 sit for the next available examination or upon receipt and
22 notice of scores to the licenseholder from such examination.

23 3. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the
24 examination specified pursuant to subparagraph 1. shall be
25 administered by the department only five times. Applicants
26 certified by the board for examination shall receive at least
27 6 months' notice of eligibility prior to the administration of
28 the initial examination. Subsequent examinations shall be
29 administered at 1-year intervals following the reporting of
30 the scores of the first and subsequent examinations. For the
31 purposes of this paragraph, the department may develop,

1 contract for the development of, purchase, or approve an
2 examination, including a practical component, that adequately
3 measures an applicant's ability to practice with reasonable
4 skill and safety. The minimum passing score on the examination
5 shall be established by the department, with the advice of the
6 board. Those applicants failing to pass that examination or
7 any subsequent examination shall receive notice of the
8 administration of the next examination with the notice of
9 scores following such examination. Any applicant who passes
10 the examination and meets the requirements of this section
11 shall be licensed as a physician assistant with all rights
12 defined thereby.

13 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1999.

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HOUSE SUMMARY

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Authorizes students of the former Florida College of
Physician's Assistants who completed all coursework
requirements of the college's Master of Medical Science
Physician Assistant Program prior to its termination to
sit for the examination for licensure as a physician
assistant. Requires prior completion of incomplete or
additionally required clinical rotations in facilities
and under requirements determined by the Board of
Medicine and the Board of Osteopathic Medicine under the
Department of Health, in cooperation with the Council on
Physician Assistants. Provides for licensure of
successful examinees. Provides for future repeal of such
provisions. See bill for details.