

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1166

H.P. 771

House of Representatives, March 20, 2025

**An Act to Change the Professional Title and Identification of
Physician Assistants to Physician Associates**

Reference to the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston.
Cosponsored by Senator STEWART of Aroostook and
Representatives: CRAFTS of Newcastle, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MASTRACCIO
of Sanford, MEYER of Eliot, MORRIS of Turner, Senators: BAILEY of York, President
DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, RENY of Lincoln.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 32 MRSA §2594-E**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 132, §3, is further amended
3 to read:

4 **§2594-E. Licensure of physician ~~assistants~~ associates**

5 **1. License required.** A physician ~~assistant~~ associate may not render medical services
6 until the physician ~~assistant~~ associate has applied for and obtained from either the Board of
7 Osteopathic Licensure or the Board of Licensure in Medicine:

8 A. A license, which must be renewed biennially with the board that issued the initial
9 license.

10 An application for licensure as a physician ~~assistant~~ associate must be submitted to either
11 the Board of Osteopathic Licensure or the Board of Licensure in Medicine. A license
12 granted by either the Board of Osteopathic Licensure or the Board of Licensure in Medicine
13 authorizes the physician ~~assistant~~ associate to render medical services.

14 **2. Qualification for licensure.** The board may issue to an individual a license to
15 practice as a physician ~~assistant~~ associate under the following conditions:

16 A. A license may be issued to an individual who:

17 (1) ~~Graduated from a~~ Has successfully completed an educational program for
18 physician assistant program approved by the board assistants or physician
19 associates accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for
20 the Physician Assistant or its successor organization or, prior to 2001, by the
21 Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation or the Commission on
22 Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs;

23 (2) Passed a physician assistant national certifying examination administered by
24 the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants or its successor
25 organization;

26 (3) Demonstrates current clinical competency;

27 (4) Does not have a license or certificate of registration that is the subject of
28 disciplinary action such as probation, restriction, suspension, revocation or
29 surrender;

30 (5) Completes an application approved by the board;

31 (6) Pays an application fee of up to \$300; and

32 (7) Passes an examination approved by the board; and

33 B. No grounds exist as set forth in section 2591-A to deny the application.

34 **4. Delegation by physician ~~assistant~~ associate.** A physician ~~assistant~~ associate may
35 delegate to the physician ~~assistant's~~ associate's employees or support staff or members of a
36 health care team, including medical assistants, certain activities relating to medical care
37 and treatment carried out by custom and usage when the activities are under the control of
38 the physician ~~assistant~~ associate; the activities being delegated do not, unless otherwise
39 provided by law, require a license, registration or certification to perform; the physician
40 ~~assistant~~ associate ensures that the employees or support staff or members of a health care
41 team have the appropriate training, education and experience to perform these delegated

1 activities; and the physician ~~assistant~~ associate ensures that the employees or support staff
2 perform these delegated activities competently and safely. The physician ~~assistant~~ associate
3 who delegates an activity permitted under this subsection is legally liable for the activity
4 performed by an employee, a medical assistant, support staff or a member of a health care
5 team.

6 **5. Rules.** The Board of Osteopathic Licensure is authorized to adopt rules regarding
7 the licensure and practice of physician ~~assistants~~ associates. These rules, which must be
8 adopted jointly with the Board of Licensure in Medicine, may pertain to, but are not limited
9 to, the following matters:

10 A. Information to be contained in the application for a license;

11 C. Education requirements for the physician ~~assistant~~ associate;

12 E. Requirements for collaborative agreements and practice agreements under section
13 2594-F, including uniform standards and forms;

14 F. Requirements for a physician ~~assistant~~ associate to notify the board regarding
15 certain circumstances, including but not limited to any change in address, the
16 permanent departure of the physician ~~assistant~~ associate from the State, any criminal
17 convictions of the physician ~~assistant~~ associate and any discipline by other jurisdictions
18 of the physician ~~assistant~~ associate;

19 G. Issuance of temporary physician ~~assistant~~ associate licenses;

20 H. Appointment of an advisory committee for continuing review of the physician
21 ~~assistant~~ associate rules. The physician ~~assistant~~ associate members of the board
22 pursuant to section 2561 must be members of the advisory committee;

23 I. Continuing education requirements as a precondition to continued licensure or
24 licensure renewal;

25 J. Fees for the application for an initial physician ~~assistant~~ associate license, which
26 may not exceed \$300; and

27 M. Fees for the biennial renewal of a physician ~~assistant~~ associate license in an amount
28 not to exceed \$250.

29 **6. Title and practice protection.** A person who is not licensed under this section may
30 not hold that person out to be a physician associate or use the title or designation "physician
31 associate" or the abbreviation "P.A." or any other title, designation, words, letters or device
32 tending to indicate that that person is licensed under this section, except that a person who
33 meets the qualifications for licensure under subsection 2 but does not possess a current
34 license may use the title or designation "physician associate" or the abbreviation "P.A." but
35 may not practice as a physician associate.

36 A violation of this subsection is a Class E crime.

37 **Sec. 2. 32 MRSA §3270-E**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 132, §5, is further amended
38 to read:

39 **§3270-E. Licensure of physician ~~assistants~~ associates**

40 **1. License required.** A physician ~~assistant~~ associate may not render medical services
41 until the physician ~~assistant~~ associate has applied for and obtained from either the Board of
42 Licensure in Medicine or the Board of Osteopathic Licensure:

1 A. A license, which must be renewed biennially with the board that issued the initial
2 license.

3 An application for licensure as a physician ~~assistant~~ associate must be submitted to either
4 the Board of Osteopathic Licensure or the Board of Licensure in Medicine. A license
5 granted by either the Board of Osteopathic Licensure or the Board of Licensure in Medicine
6 authorizes the physician ~~assistant~~ associate to render medical services.

7 **2. Qualification for licensure.** The board may issue to an individual a license to
8 practice as a physician ~~assistant~~ associate under the following conditions:

9 A. A license may be issued to an individual who:

10 (1) ~~Graduated from a~~ Has successfully completed an educational program for
11 physician assistant program approved by the board assistants or physician
12 associates accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for
13 the Physician Assistant or its successor organization or, prior to 2001, by the
14 Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation or the Commission on
15 Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs;

16 (2) Passed a physician assistant national certifying examination administered by
17 the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants or its successor
18 organization;

19 (3) Demonstrates current clinical competency;

20 (4) Does not have a license or certificate of registration that is the subject of
21 disciplinary action such as probation, restriction, suspension, revocation or
22 surrender;

23 (5) Completes an application approved by the board;

24 (6) Pays an application fee of up to \$300; and

25 (7) Passes an examination approved by the board; and

26 B. No grounds exist as set forth in section 3282-A to deny the application.

27 **4. Delegation by physician ~~assistant~~ associate.** A physician ~~assistant~~ associate may
28 delegate to the physician ~~assistant's~~ associate's employees or support staff or members of a
29 health care team, including medical assistants, certain activities relating to medical care
30 and treatment carried out by custom and usage when the activities are under the control of
31 the physician ~~assistant~~ associate; the activities being delegated do not, unless otherwise
32 provided by law, require a license, registration or certification to perform; the physician
33 ~~assistant~~ associate ensures that the employees or support staff or members of a health care
34 team have the appropriate training, education and experience to perform these delegated
35 activities; and the physician ~~assistant~~ associate ensures that the employees or support staff
36 perform these delegated activities competently and safely. The physician ~~assistant~~ associate
37 who delegates an activity permitted under this subsection is legally liable for the activity
38 performed by an employee, a medical assistant, support staff or a member of a health care
39 team.

40 **5. Rules.** The Board of Licensure in Medicine is authorized to adopt rules regarding
41 the licensure and practice of physician ~~assistants~~ associates. These rules, which must be

1 adopted jointly with the Board of Osteopathic Licensure, may pertain to, but are not limited
2 to, the following matters:

3 A. Information to be contained in the application for a license;

4 C. Education requirements for the physician ~~assistant~~ associate;

5 E. Requirements for collaborative agreements and practice agreements under section
6 3270-G, including uniform standards and forms;

7 F. Requirements for a physician ~~assistant~~ associate to notify the board regarding
8 certain circumstances, including but not limited to any change in address, the
9 permanent departure of the physician ~~assistant~~ associate from the State, any criminal
10 convictions of the physician ~~assistant~~ associate and any discipline by other jurisdictions
11 of the physician ~~assistant~~ associate;

12 G. Issuance of temporary physician ~~assistant~~ associate licenses;

13 H. Appointment of an advisory committee for continuing review of the physician
14 ~~assistant~~ associate rules. The physician ~~assistant~~ associate members of the board
15 pursuant to section 3263 must be members of the advisory committee;

16 I. Continuing education requirements as a precondition to continued licensure or
17 licensure renewal;

18 J. Fees for the application for an initial physician ~~assistant~~ associate license, which
19 may not exceed \$300; and

20 M. Fees for the biennial renewal of a physician ~~assistant~~ associate license in an amount
21 not to exceed \$250.

22 **6. Title and practice protection.** A person who is not licensed under this section may
23 not hold that person out to be a physician associate or use the title or designation "physician
24 associate" or the abbreviation "P.A." or any other title, designation, words, letters or device
25 tending to indicate that that person is licensed under this section, except that a person who
26 meets the qualifications for licensure under subsection 2 but does not possess a current
27 license may use the title or designation "physician associate" or the abbreviation "P.A." but
28 may not practice as a physician associate.

29 A violation of this subsection is a Class E crime.

30 **Sec. 3. Maine Revised Statutes amended; revision clause.** Wherever in the
31 Maine Revised Statutes the words "physician assistant" appear or reference is made to those
32 words, those words are amended to read "physician associate" and the Revisor of Statutes
33 shall implement this revision when updating, publishing or republishing the statutes, except
34 that the words "physician assistant" are not amended when referring to the Accreditation
35 Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant or the National Commission
36 on Certification of Physician Assistants and where the words "physician assistant" appear
37 in Title 32, section 2594-E, subsection 2, paragraph A and Title 32, section 3270-E,
38 subsection 2, paragraph A as amended by this Act.

39 **Sec. 4. Scope of practice.** This Act may not be interpreted to expand the scope of
40 practice of a physician associate beyond the current scope of practice for a physician
41 assistant in the Maine Revised Statutes and rules of the Board of Licensure in Medicine

1 pursuant to Title 32, chapter 48 and the Board of Osteopathic Licensure pursuant to Title
2 32, chapter 36.

3

SUMMARY

4 This bill changes the professional title and identification of physician assistants to
5 physician associates, with no change to the scope of practice of those professionals.