

State of Arkansas

As Engrossed: H4/9/25

95th General Assembly

## A Bill

Regular Session, 2025

SENATE BILL 601

By: Senator Hester

By: Representative L. Johnson

### For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE A PATHWAY FOR A GRADUATE OF A  
FOREIGN MEDICAL SCHOOL TO BE LICENSED IN THIS STATE  
IF HE OR SHE IS OFFERED FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT AS A  
PHYSICIAN FROM A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER; AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

TO CREATE A PATHWAY FOR A GRADUATE OF A  
FOREIGN MEDICAL SCHOOL TO BE LICENSED IN  
THIS STATE IF HE OR SHE IS OFFERED FULL-  
TIME EMPLOYMENT AS A PHYSICIAN FROM A  
HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 17-95-202, concerning the definitions used  
in the Arkansas Medical Practices Act, § 17-95-201 et seq., § 17-95-301 et  
seq., and § 17-95-401 et seq., is amended to add *additional subdivisions* to  
read as follows:

(4) "Healthcare provider" means a healthcare professional,  
healthcare facility, or entity licensed or certified to provide healthcare  
services in this state as recognized by the Arkansas State Medical Board; and  
(5) "Medically underserved population" means the same as defined  
in 42 U.S.C. § 254b, as existing on January 1, 2025.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 17-95-403(b)(3)(A)(iii), concerning the  
qualifications for a license to practice medicine in this state, is amended



1 to read as follows:

2 (iii)(a) A foreign medical school whose entrance  
3 requirements and course of instruction have been approved by the ~~Arkansas~~  
4 ~~State Medical Board~~ Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates.

5 (b) ~~He~~ Except as provided in subdivision  
6 (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section, he or she must shall also have:

7 (1) Served three (3) years as an intern,  
8 resident, or fellow, or a combination thereof, in an accredited postgraduate  
9 medical education program in the United States;

10 (2) Served three (3) years as an intern  
11 or resident in a postgraduate medical education program outside the United  
12 States, completed all steps of the United States Medical Licensing  
13 Examination, obtained Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates  
14 certification, and either completed one (1) year or more of fellowship  
15 training accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical  
16 Education in the United States or received American Board of Medical  
17 Specialties certification by the American Board of Medical Specialties; or

18 (3) Completed one (1) year as an intern  
19 or resident in an accredited postgraduate medical education program in the  
20 United States and be currently enrolled in an accredited postgraduate medical  
21 program in Arkansas.

22 (c) If he or she has been offered full-time  
23 employment as a physician from a healthcare provider that operates in a  
24 medically underserved population in this state, he or she shall:

25 (1) Hold an active, unencumbered license  
26 to practice medicine in a foreign country;

27 (2) Have actively practiced medicine  
28 during the four-year period preceding the date of an application under this  
29 section;

30 (3) Have the Educational Commission for  
31 Foreign Medical Graduates evaluate his or her medical credentials;

32 (4) Hold an active, valid certificate  
33 issued by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates; and

34 (5) Pass the examination used by the  
35 Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates.

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1       SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 17-95-403, concerning the qualifications  
2 for a license to practice medicine in this state, is amended to add an  
3 additional subsection to read as follows:

4       (c)(1) An applicant who is licensed under subdivision  
5 (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section shall:

6       (A) Maintain his or her employment with the original healthcare  
7 provider that operates in this state for at least three (3) consecutive years  
8 after licensure;

9       (B) Notify the Arkansas State Medical Board within five (5)  
10 business days after any change of employer;

11       (C) Appear personally before the Arkansas State Medical  
12 Board together with the sponsoring physician who is licensed by the Arkansas  
13 State Medical Board; and

14       (D) Present to the Arkansas State Medical Board  
15 information as to what area or department in which he or she will be  
16 practicing medicine and who will be his or her sponsoring physician.

17       (2) The license issued under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of  
18 this section shall be a provisional license that authorizes practicing  
19 medicine only within the clinical programs approved by the sponsoring  
20 physician who is licensed by the Arkansas State Medical Board.

21       (3)(A) The Arkansas State Medical Board shall issue each  
22 provisional license under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section for a  
23 period of one (1) year.

24       (B) At the end of one (1) year, the provisional license  
25 issued under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section shall lapse, and  
26 if the physician desires to continue the practice of medicine under the  
27 provisional license issued under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this  
28 section, the physician shall:

29       (i) Submit completed renewal forms to the Arkansas  
30 State Medical Board providing information as requested by the Arkansas State  
31 Medical Board;

32       (ii) Pay a renewal fee as established by the  
33 Arkansas State Medical Board; and

34       (iii) If requested, appear in person before the  
35 Arkansas State Medical Board, together with the sponsoring physician.

36       (4) At the end of the second year of practice with a provisional

1 license under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(iii)(c) of this section, the physician is  
2 eligible for an active, unrestricted license to practice medicine in this  
3 state after review and approval of the Arkansas State Medical Board.

4 (5) A physician who obtains a license to practice medicine in  
5 the State of Arkansas shall comply with the Arkansas Medical Practices Act, §  
6 17-95-201 et seq., § 17-95-301 et seq., and § 17-95-401 et seq., and all  
7 rules of the Arkansas State Medical Board.

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9 /s/Hester

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12 APPROVED: 4/21/25  
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