

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

As Engrossed: S2/18/25

A Bill

SENATE BILL 117

5 By: Senator C. Penzo
6
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIAN PRACTICE
10 ACT; TO PROVIDE FOR LICENSURE OF NATUROPATHIC
11 *PHYSICIANS IN ARKANSAS; TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS STATE*
12 *BOARD OF NATUROPATHY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.*
13
14

Subtitle

15 *TO CREATE THE NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIAN*
16 *PRACTICE ACT; TO PROVIDE FOR LICENSURE*
17 *OF NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIANS IN ARKANSAS;*
18 *AND TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD*
19 *OF NATUROPATHY.*
20
21

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
23

24 *SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 17 is amended to add an additional*
25 *chapter to read as follows:*

CHAPTER 108

NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIAN PRACTICE ACT

Subchapter 1 – General Provisions

17-108-101. Title.

31 *This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Naturopathic*
32 *Physician Practice Act".*
33
34

17-108-102. Legislative findings and intent.

35 *(a) The General Assembly finds that:*
36



1 (1) The practice of naturopathic medicine in this state affects
2 the public health, safety, and welfare and should be subject to regulation
3 and control in the public interest; and

4 (2) Naturopathic physicians comprise a distinct healthcare
5 profession that affects the public health, safety, and welfare and increases
6 freedom of choice in health care in this state.

7 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to ensure that
8 naturopathic physicians and the practice of naturopathic medicine as defined
9 in this subchapter merit the confidence of the public, that only qualified
10 persons be authorized to practice naturopathic medicine in this state, and
11 that a person shall not practice naturopathic medicine without a valid
12 existing license.

13
14 17-108-103. Definitions.

15 As used in this subchapter:

16 (1) "Approved naturopathic medical school" means a medical
17 school approved by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy under this
18 subchapter that prepares a naturopathic physician for the practice of
19 naturopathic medicine;

20 (2)(A) "Clinical laboratory procedure" means the use of
21 venipuncture consistent with naturopathic medical practice, commonly used
22 diagnostic modalities consistent with naturopathic practice, the recording of
23 a patient's health history, physical examination, ordering and interpretation
24 of radiographic diagnostics, and other standard imaging and examination of
25 body orifices, excluding endoscopy and colonoscopy.

26 (B) "Clinical laboratory procedure" includes the practice
27 of obtaining samples of human tissues, except surgical excision beyond
28 surgical excision that is authorized as a minor office procedure;

29 (3) "Homeopathic medicine" means a system of medicine based on
30 the use of minimal doses of substances capable of producing symptoms similar
31 to those of the disease treated, as listed in the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia
32 of the United States;

33 (4) "Hygiene" means the use of preventive techniques, including
34 personal hygiene, asepsis, public health, and safety;

35 (5) "Laboratory examination" means:

36 (A) Phlebotomy;

- 1 (B) A clinical laboratory procedure;
- 2 (C) An orificial examination;
- 3 (D) A physiological function test; and
- 4 (E) A screening or test that is consistent with
- 5 naturopathic education and training;

6 (6) "Minor office procedure" means minor surgical care and
7 procedures, including:

8 (A) Surgical care incidental to superficial laceration,
9 lesion or abrasion, excluding surgical care to treat a lesion suspected of
10 malignancy;

11 (B) The removal of foreign bodies located in superficial
12 structures, excluding the globe of the eye;

13 (C) Trigger point therapy;

14 (D) Dermal stimulation;

15 (E) Allergy testing and treatment; and

16 (F) The use of antiseptics and topical or local
17 anesthetics;

18 (7) "Naturopathic medicine" means:

19 (A) A system of health care for the prevention, diagnosis,
20 and treatment of human health conditions, injury, and disease;

21 (B) The promotion or restoration of health; and

22 (C) The support and stimulation of a patient's inherent
23 self-healing processes through patient education and the use of naturopathic
24 therapies and therapeutic substances;

25 (8) "Naturopathic therapeutic medicine" means the use of one (1)
26 or more of the following physical agents in a manner consistent with
27 naturopathic medical practice on a part or the whole of the body, by hand or
28 by mechanical means, in the resolution of a human ailment or condition:

29 (A) Air;

30 (B) Water;

31 (C) Heat;

32 (D) Cold;

33 (E) Sound;

34 (F) Light;

35 (G) Electromagnetism;

36 (H) Colon hydrotherapy;

- 1 (I) Soft tissue therapy;
- 2 (J) Joint mobilization;
- 3 (K) Therapeutic exercise; or
- 4 (L) Naturopathic manipulation;
- 5 (9) "Naturopathic physician" means an individual licensed under
- 6 this subchapter as a naturopathic physician to practice naturopathic medicine
- 7 in this state;
- 8 (10) "Naturopathic therapy" means the use of:
- 9 (A) Naturopathic therapeutic medicine;
- 10 (B) Suggestion;
- 11 (C) Hygiene;
- 12 (D) A therapeutic substance;
- 13 (E) Nutrition and food science;
- 14 (F) Homeopathic medicine;
- 15 (G) A clinical laboratory procedure; or
- 16 (H) A minor office procedure;
- 17 (11) "Nutrition and food science" means the prevention and
- 18 treatment of disease or other human conditions through the use of food,
- 19 water, herbs, roots, bark, or natural food elements;
- 20 (12) "Professional examination" means a competency-based
- 21 national naturopathic physician licensing examination administered by the
- 22 North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners or its successor agency, which
- 23 nationally administers a naturopathic examination that represents federal
- 24 standards of education and training;
- 25 (13) "Suggestion" means a technique using:
- 26 (A) Biofeedback;
- 27 (B) Hypnosis;
- 28 (C) Health education; or
- 29 (D) Health counseling; and
- 30 (14) "Therapeutic substance" means any of the following
- 31 exemplified in a standard naturopathic medical text, journal, or
- 32 pharmacopeia:
- 33 (A) A vitamin;
- 34 (B) A mineral;
- 35 (C) A nutraceutical;
- 36 (D) A botanical medicine;

1 (E) Oxygen;

2 (F) A homeopathic medicine;

3 (G) A hormone;

4 (H) A hormonal or pharmaceutical contraceptive device; or

5 (I) Other physiologic substance.

6
7 17-108-104. Exemptions.

8 This subchapter does not prohibit or restrict:

9 (1) The practice of a healthcare profession by an individual who
10 is licensed, certified, or registered under the laws of this state and who is
11 performing services within the individual's scope of practice;

12 (2) The practice of naturopathic medicine by a student enrolled
13 in an approved naturopathic medical school if the practice of naturopathic
14 medicine by a student is performed under a course of instruction or an
15 assignment from an instructor and under the supervision of an instructor who
16 is a licensee or a duly licensed professional in the instructed field;

17 (3) A person that sells a vitamin or herb from providing
18 information about the vitamin or herb;

19 (4) The practice of naturopathic medicine by a person who is
20 licensed to practice in any other state or district in the United States and
21 who enters this state to consult with a naturopathic physician of this state
22 if the consultation is limited to examination, recommendation, or testimony
23 in litigation; or

24 (5) A person or practitioner who is not licensed as a
25 naturopathic physician from recommending ayurvedic medicine, herbal remedies,
26 nutritional advice, homeopathy, or other therapy that is within the scope of
27 practice of naturopathic medicine if that person or practitioner does not:

28 (A) Use a title protected under this subchapter;

29 (B) Represent or assume the character or appearance of a
30 licensee of this subchapter; or

31 (C) Otherwise use a name, title, or other designation that
32 indicates or implies that the person is a licensee of this subchapter.

33
34 17-108-105. Title protection.

35 (a) A licensee shall use the title "naturopathic physician" or
36 "naturopathic doctor" and the recognized abbreviation "N.D."

1 (b) A licensee has the exclusive right to use the following terms in
2 reference to the licensee's self:

3 (1) "Naturopathic physician";

4 (2) "Naturopathic doctor";

5 (3) "Doctor of naturopathic medicine";

6 (4) "Doctor of naturopathy";

7 (5) "N.D.";

8 (6) "ND";

9 (7) "NMD"; and

10 (8) "N.M.D.".

11 (c) An individual represents the individual's self to be a
12 naturopathic physician or a naturopathic doctor when the individual uses or
13 adopts any of the terms in subdivisions (b)(1)-(8) of this section in
14 reference to the individual's self.

15 (d)(1) An individual shall not represent the individual's self to the
16 public as a naturopathic physician, naturopathic doctor, a doctor of
17 naturopathic medicine, or a doctor of naturopathy, or as being otherwise
18 authorized to practice naturopathic medicine in the state, unless the
19 individual is licensed under this subchapter.

20 (2) An individual who is not licensed under this subchapter is
21 guilty of a Class A misdemeanor if he or she:

22 (A) Holds himself or herself out as a naturopathic
23 physician or naturopathic doctor;

24 (B) Uses any combination or abbreviation of the term
25 "naturopathic physician" or "naturopathic doctor" indicating or implying that
26 he or she is a naturopathic physician or naturopathic doctor; or

27 (C) Acts as a naturopathic physician without being
28 licensed by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathic.

29
30 17-108-106. Approved naturopathic medical school.

31 (a) The Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy shall establish, by rule,
32 guidelines for an approved naturopathic medical school and specifications for
33 the education of naturopathic physicians in this state.

34 (b) The guidelines established under subsection (a) of this section
35 shall include that the approved naturopathic medical school shall require at
36 a minimum:

1 (1) Graduation from:

2 (A) A naturopathic medical education program in the United
3 States providing the degree of Doctor of Naturopathy or Doctor of
4 Naturopathic Medicine, that:

5 (i) Offers graduate-level, full-time didactic, and
6 supervised clinical training;

7 (ii) Is accredited or has achieved candidacy status
8 for accreditation by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education or an
9 equivalent federally recognized accrediting body for naturopathic medical
10 programs also recognized by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy; and

11 (iii) Is an institution of higher education or part
12 of an institution of higher education that is either accredited or is a
13 candidate for accreditation by a regional or national institutional
14 accrediting agency recognized by the United States Secretary of Education;

15 (B) A degree-granting institution of higher education
16 that, before the existence of the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education,
17 offered a full-time, structured curriculum in basic sciences and supervised
18 patient care comprising a doctoral naturopathic medical education requiring
19 not less than one hundred thirty-two (132) weeks of coursework to be
20 completed within a period of not less than thirty-five (35) months, that was
21 reputable and in good standing in the judgment of the Arkansas State Board of
22 Naturopathy and which, if still in existence, has current programmatic
23 accreditation by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education or a federally
24 recognized equivalent accrediting agency;

25 (C) A diploma-granting, degree-equivalent institution of
26 higher education located in Canada that, before the existence of the Council
27 on Naturopathic Medical Education, had provincial approval for participation
28 in government-funded student aid programs, offered a full-time, structured
29 curriculum in basic sciences and supervised patient care comprising a
30 doctoral naturopathic medical education requiring not less than one hundred
31 thirty-two (132) weeks of coursework to be completed within a period of not
32 less than thirty (30) months, was reputable and in good standing in the
33 judgment of the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy, and, if still in
34 existence, has current programmatic accreditation by the Council on
35 Naturopathic Medical Education or a federally recognized equivalent
36 accrediting agency, and currently has provincial approval for participation

1 in government-funded student aid programs; or

2 (D) A diploma-granting, degree-equivalent institution of
3 higher education located in Canada that has provincial approval for
4 participation in government-funded student aid programs, offers graduate-
5 level, full-time didactic, and supervised clinical training, and is
6 accredited or has achieved candidacy status for accreditation by the Council
7 on Naturopathic Medical Education or an equivalent federally recognized
8 accrediting body for naturopathic medical programs also recognized by the
9 Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy; and

10 (2) Successful completion of a competency-based national
11 naturopathic medicine licensing examination administered by the North
12 American Board of Naturopathic Examiners, or an equivalent agency recognized
13 by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy, or, for graduates of approved
14 naturopathic medical programs in the United States before the existence of
15 the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education, a competency-based state
16 naturopathic medicine licensing examination, or equivalent Canadian
17 provincial licensing examination for the practice of naturopathic medicine
18 approved by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy.

19
20 Subchapter 2 – Arkansas State Board of Naturopathic

21
22 17-108-201. Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy – Creation.

23 (a) There is created the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy.

24 (b)(1)(A) The board shall consist of thirteen (13) members appointed
25 by the Governor for terms of six (6) years.

26 (B) The Governor shall consider diversity of practice
27 specialties and geographical areas of practice in making appointments to the
28 board.

29 (2)(A)(i) Ten (10) members shall be qualified, licensed, and
30 active naturopathic physicians appointed by the Governor and shall be subject
31 to confirmation by the Senate.

32 (ii) At least two (2) members shall be appointed
33 from each of the state's four (4) congressional districts.

34 (iii) Two (2) members shall be appointed at large.

35 (B) Congressional district representation required under
36 this subdivision (b)(2) shall be achieved by appointment as vacancies occur.

1 (3) One (1) member shall be a licensed practicing naturopathic
2 physician in this state and shall be appointed by the Governor and shall be
3 subject to confirmation by the Senate.

4 (4)(A) Two (2) members of the board shall not be actively
5 engaged in or be retired from the practice of naturopathic medicine.

6 (B) One (1) member shall represent consumers, and one (1)
7 member shall be sixty (60) years of age or older and shall represent the
8 elderly.

9 (C) Both shall be appointed from the state at large
10 subject to confirmation by the Senate.

11 (D) The two (2) positions may not be held by the same
12 person.

13 (E) Both shall be full voting members but shall not
14 participate in the grading of examinations.

15 (c)(1) The term of each member shall expire on December 31 of the year
16 designated, and a successor appointee shall be appointed by the Governor,
17 subject to confirmation by the Senate, on or before the expiration date of
18 the term expiring.

19 (2) A member may not serve on the board for more than two (2)
20 full terms or more than thirteen (13) years.

21 (d) Vacancies on the board shall be filled by appointment by the
22 Governor within thirty (30) days of the vacancy.

23 (e) The members of the board shall take the oath prescribed by the
24 Arkansas Constitution for state officers before entering upon the discharge
25 of their duties.

26 (f)(1) Members of the board may be removed from the office by the
27 Governor:

28 (A) For good cause under § 25-16-804;

29 (B) For cause including dishonorable or unprofessional
30 conduct, abuse of authority, malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance; or

31 (C) For any reason that would justify probation,
32 suspension, or revocation of a license to practice naturopathic medicine.

33 (2) A member of the board shall not be involved in the
34 investigation except to cooperate with the investigation as required by the
35 investigator.

36

1 17-108-202. Organization and proceedings.

2 (a)(1) Within thirty (30) days after their appointment, the members of
3 the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy shall meet and organize by electing a
4 chair, vice chair, and treasurer.

5 (2) The Treasurer of the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy
6 shall give bond in such amount as may be designated by the board, which may
7 be increased or decreased from time to time, conditioned for the faithful
8 disbursement and accounting of all moneys coming into his or her hands as the
9 treasurer.

10 (b) The board shall hold its regular meetings as established by rule
11 of the board and shall have the power to call and hold special meetings at
12 such times and places as deemed necessary.

13
14 17-108-203. Powers and duties.

15 The Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy shall:

16 (1) Regulate the licensure of naturopathic physicians and
17 determine the hours of continuing education units required for maintaining
18 licensure as a naturopathic physician;

19 (2) Prescribe the manner in which records of examinations and
20 treatments shall be kept and maintained;

21 (3) Establish:

22 (A) Standards for professional responsibility and conduct;

23 (B) Criteria for advertising or promotional materials;

24 (C) Continuing education hours and content;

25 (D) Standards for the state jurisprudence examination;

26 (E) Schedules for providing licensing examinations and for
27 the issuance of examination results;

28 (F) Procedures and standards for reviewing licensing
29 examination scores;

30 (G) Procedures for reviewing transcripts demonstrating
31 completion of an approved naturopathic medical school;

32 (H) Requirements for issuance and renewal of licenses; and

33 (I) Any other matter necessary to implement this chapter;

34 (4) Identify disciplinary actions and circumstances that require
35 disciplinary action;

36 (5) Develop a means to provide information to all naturopathic

1 physicians in the state;

2 (6) Provide for:

3 (A) The investigation of complaints against naturopathic
4 physicians or persons holding themselves out as naturopathic physicians in
5 the state;

6 (B) The publication of information for the public about
7 naturopathic physicians and the practice of naturopathic medicine in the
8 state; and

9 (C) An orderly process for reinstatement of a license; and

10 (7) Create and maintain a list of approved naturopathic medical
11 schools that meet statutory requirements under this chapter.

12
13 Subchapter 3 – Licensure

14
15 17-108-301. Qualifications for licensure.

16 The Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy shall license an applicant who:

17 (1) Submits, in accordance with rules of the Arkansas State
18 Board of Naturopathy, the following items to the Arkansas State Board of
19 Naturopathy:

20 (A) An application for licensure developed by the Arkansas
21 State Board of Naturopathy and submitted in accordance with rules of the
22 Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy;

23 (B) An application fee submitted in an amount and manner
24 established by rules of the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy;

25 (C) Evidence that the applicant has:

26 (i) Graduated from an approved naturopathic medical
27 school;

28 (ii) Successful completed of a competency-based
29 national naturopathic medicine licensing examination; and

30 (iii) Passed a state jurisprudence examination that
31 meets standards established in rules of the Arkansas State Board of
32 Naturopathy; and

33 (D) Evidence of professional liability insurance with
34 policy limits not less than prescribed by the Arkansas State Board of
35 Naturopathy;

36 (2) Is determined by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy to

1 be physically and mentally capable of safely practicing naturopathic medicine
2 with or without reasonable accommodation; and

3 (3) Has not had a license to practice naturopathic medicine or
4 other healthcare license, registration, or certificate refused, revoked, or
5 suspended by any other jurisdiction for reasons that relate to the
6 applicant's ability to skillfully and safely practice naturopathic medicine
7 unless that license, registration, or certification has been restored to good
8 standing by that jurisdiction.

9
10 17-108-302. Scope of practice.

11 A licensee may practice naturopathic medicine to provide primary care
12 in alignment with naturopathic medical education to:

13 (1) Perform physical examinations;

14 (2) Order laboratory examinations;

15 (3) Order diagnostic imaging studies;

16 (4) Interpret the results of laboratory examinations for
17 diagnostic purposes;

18 (5) Order and, based on a radiologist's report, take action on
19 diagnostic imaging studies in a manner consistent with naturopathic training;

20 (6) Prescribe, administer, dispense, and order food, extracts of
21 food, nutraceuticals, vitamins, amino acids, minerals, enzymes, botanicals
22 and their extracts, botanical medicines, homeopathic medicines, all dietary
23 supplements, and nonprescription drugs as defined by the Federal Food, Drug,
24 and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. § 301 et seq., as existing on January 1, 2025;

25 (7) Administer intramuscular, intravenous, subcutaneous, intra-
26 articular, and intradermal injections of substances appropriate to
27 naturopathic medicine;

28 (8) Use routes of administration that include oral, nasal,
29 auricular, ocular, rectal, vaginal, transdermal, intradermal, subcutaneous,
30 intravenous, intra-articular, and intramuscular consistent with the education
31 and training of a naturopathic physician;

32 (9) Perform naturopathic therapeutic medicine;

33 (10) Employ the use of naturopathic therapy;

34 (11) Use therapeutic devices, barrier contraception, and durable
35 medical equipment; and

36 (12) Perform minor office procedures.

1
2 17-108-303. Prohibitions.

3 A naturopathic physician shall not:

4 (1) Perform surgery outside of the scope of minor office
5 procedures permitted in the employment of naturopathic therapy;

6 (2) Use general or spinal anesthetics;

7 (3) Administer ionizing radioactive substances for therapeutic
8 purposes;

9 (4) Perform a surgical procedure:

10 (A) Using a laser device; or

11 (B) Involving any of the following areas of the body that
12 extend beyond superficial tissue:

13 (i) Eye;

14 (ii) Ear;

15 (iii) Tendon;

16 (iv) Nerves;

17 (v) Veins; or

18 (vi) Artery;

19 (5) Perform a surgical abortion;

20 (6) Treat any lesion suspected of malignancy or requiring
21 surgical removal; or

22 (7) Perform acupuncture.

23
24 17-108-304. License expiration and renewal – Denial and revocation –
25 Continuing education.

26 (a) A license issued or renewed under this chapter shall expire two
27 (2) years following its issuance or renewal.

28 (b) The Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy may renew the license of
29 any naturopathic physician who, upon the expiration of his or her license:

30 (1) Has submitted an application for renewal;

31 (2) Has paid the renewal fee established by rules of the board;

32 (3) Meets the qualifications for licensure under this subchapter
33 and rules of the board; and

34 (4) Meets the continuing education requirements established by
35 the board.

36 (c) The board shall grant an opportunity for a hearing to applicants

1 and licensees for whom the board intends to refuse to issue or renew a
2 license, or whose license the board proposes to revoke or suspend.

3
4 17-108-305. Display of license.

5 A naturopathic physician shall display his or her license in his or her
6 place of business in a location clearly visible to his or her patients and
7 shall also display evidence of the naturopathic physician having completed an
8 approved naturopathic medical school.

9
10 17-108-306. Referral requirement.

11 A naturopathic physician shall refer to a physician licensed to
12 practice in the state any patient whose medical condition is determined, at
13 the time of evaluation or treatment, to be beyond the scope of practice of
14 the naturopathic physician.

15
16 SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. Issuance of first
17 licenses.

18 On or before December 1, 2025, the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy
19 shall issue licenses to those applicants who have met the requirements of
20 this act and board rules promulgated in accordance with this act.

21
22 /s/C. Penzo
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