
Wisconsin Legislative Council

AMENDMENT MEMO



Memo published: November 6, 2019

Contact: Andrea Brauer, Staff Attorney

2019 Assembly Bill 178

Assembly Amendments 1 and 4

2019 ASSEMBLY BILL 178

Assembly Bill 178 makes physicians, dentists, and certain other specified health care providers who practice in free or charitable clinics eligible for the educational loan assistance programs administered by the University of Wisconsin System. To qualify as a free or charitable clinic, an organization must satisfy all of the following criteria:

1. Uses volunteers and staff to provide a range of medical, dental, pharmacy, vision, or behavioral health services to economically disadvantaged individuals who are uninsured, underinsured, or have limited or no access to primary, specialty, or prescription health care;
2. Is a tax-exempt 501 (c) organization, or operates as a program component or affiliate of such an organization;
3. Provides services without regard to a patient's ability to pay; and
4. Charges patients no fee for services or charges a nominal or sliding fee.

ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT 1

Currently, physicians and dentists who receive educational loan assistance under this program must agree to care for patients who are insured or for whom health benefits are payable under Medicare, Medicaid, or any other government program.

The bill adds a requirement that physicians and dentists also agree to care for patients who are underinsured or uninsured. **Assembly Amendment 1** removes this language and excludes physicians and dentists who agree to practice in a free or charitable clinic from the current program eligibility requirement that a physician or dentist receiving educational loan assistance agree to care for patients who are insured, or for whom health benefits are payable under Medicare, Medicaid, or any other government program.

ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT 4

Assembly Amendment 4 adds a fifth criteria to the definition of a free and charitable clinic. In addition to satisfying the four criteria above, the organization must also not provide abortion services and not be an affiliate of an organization, other than a hospital, that provides abortion services.

BILL HISTORY

Representative Felzkowski offered Assembly Amendment 1 on August 2, 2019, and Assembly Amendment 4 on October 29, 2019. On October 30, 2019, the Assembly Committee on Health recommended adoption of Assembly Amendment 1 on a vote of Ayes, 14; Noes, 0; adoption of Assembly

Amendment 4 on a vote of Ayes, 10; Noes, 4; and passage of the bill, as amended, on a vote of Ayes, 13; Noes, 1.

AB:ksm