
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



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2021 Wisconsin Act 23
[2021 Assembly Bill 125]

Physician Assistants

2021 Wisconsin Act 23 revises the regulatory oversight of physician assistants.

CREDENTIALING BOARD

First, the act moves credentialing of physician assistants from the Medical Examining Board to a Physician Assistant Affiliated Credentialing Board. Board members will consist of eight licensed physician assistants and one public member, each appointed for staggered four-year terms. For the initial term of appointment, four members will be appointed for terms expiring on July 1, 2023, three members and the public member for terms expiring on July 1, 2024, and the final member for a term expiring on July 1, 2025.

LICENSURE

Second, the act largely maintains current licensure standards, with some revisions to the required applications materials, and adds a continuing education requirement for renewals. In the new aspects for initial licensure, the act requires a person to submit a seven-year employment history, and specifies that a licensed physician assistant from another state or territory with substantially equivalent requirements is not required to submit evidence of educational training. Also new, the act requires the Board to establish continuing education requirements for renewals, by rule.

PRACTICE

Third, the act revises the nature of the required affiliation with a physician. In particular, rather than requiring a supervising physician, the act specifies that a physician assistant may either work under the overall management and direction of a physician in an employment relationship, or work in collaborative agreement with a physician.¹ If using a collaborative agreement, the agreement must be in writing, and must specify the arrangements for the physician's reasonable availability for collaboration with the physician assistant and for consultation with a patient.

The act specifies that a physician assistant may serve as a patient's primary care provider or specialty care provider.

In all cases, the scope of practice is limited to the physician assistant's experience, education, and training, and the physician assistant must maintain malpractice liability insurance coverage.

Effective date: April 1, 2022

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¹ A physician assistant may also work under the supervision and direction of a podiatrist, as under prior law.