

2024 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 125

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

NURSES. Provides relative to nurses.(8/1/24)

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AN ACT

To enact R.S. 40:2114.1, relative to nurses; to provide for nurse staffing committees at hospitals; to provide for the development of nurse staffing plans; to provide for the implementation of nurse staffing policies; to provide for reports of nurse staffing at hospitals to the Louisiana Department of Health; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 40:2114.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§2114.1. Hospital nurse staffing; committee; plan; policy; reporting

A. Each hospital shall establish a nurse staffing committee as a standing committee of the hospital.

(1) The hospital administrator shall determine the necessary number of nurses to serve on the nurse staffing committee and appoint nurses to the committee who are representative of the types of nursing services provided in the hospital. The chief nursing officer of the hospital shall serve as chairman of the committee.

(2) At least sixty percent of the members of the committee shall be registered nurses who:

1 (a) Provide direct patient care during at least fifty percent of their work
2 time.

3 (b) Are nominated by their peers who provide direct patient care during
4 at least fifty percent of their work time.

5 (3) The committee shall meet at least quarterly.

6 (4) Any nurse participating in an official meeting of the committee shall
7 be considered engaged in the nurse's regular work time and the hospital shall
8 compensate that member for that time accordingly. A hospital shall relieve a
9 committee member of other work duties during official committee meetings.

10 (5) The nurse staffing committee shall:

11 (a) Develop and recommend a nurse staffing plan to the hospital's
12 governing body.

13 (b) Review, assess, and respond to staffing concerns expressed by nurses
14 or other healthcare providers to the committee.

15 (c) Identify the nursing specific outcome measures the committee will use
16 to evaluate the effectiveness of the nurse staffing plan.

17 (d) Evaluate, at least semiannually, the effectiveness of the nurse staffing
18 plan and variations between the plan and actual staffing.

19 (e) Submit to the hospital's governing body, at least semiannually, a
20 report on nurse staffing and patient care outcomes, including the committee's
21 evaluation of the effectiveness of the nurse staffing plan and aggregate
22 variations between the staffing plan and actual staffing.

23 (6) In evaluating the effectiveness of a nurse staffing plan, the committee
24 shall consider patient needs, nursing specific quality indicators, nurse
25 satisfaction measures collected by the hospital, and evidence-based nurse
26 staffing standards.

27 B. The nurse staffing plan developed by the committee shall:

28 (1) Reflect current standards established by private accreditation
29 organizations, governmental entities, national nursing professional associations,

1 and other health professional organizations.

2 (2) Set minimum staffing levels for patient care units that are:

3 (a) Based on multiple nurse and patient considerations.

4 (b) Determined by the nursing assessment and in accordance with
5 evidence-based safe nursing standards.

6 (3) Include a method for adjusting the staffing plan for each patient care
7 unit to provide staffing flexibility to meet patient needs.

8 (4) Include a contingency plan when patient care needs exceed direct
9 patient care staff resources.

10 C. The governing body of any hospital licensed pursuant to this Part
11 shall adopt, implement, and enforce a written nurse staffing policy to ensure
12 that an adequate number of nurses with diverse education, experience, and skill
13 are available to meet the level of patient care needed. The nurse staffing policy
14 shall include a process to do the following:

15 (1) Require the hospital to give significant consideration to the nurse
16 staffing plan recommended by the hospital's nurse staffing committee and to the
17 committee's evaluation of any existing plan.

18 (2) Adopt, implement, and enforce a nurse staffing plan that is based on
19 the needs of each patient care unit and shift and on evidence relating to patient
20 care needs.

21 (3) Use the nurse staffing plan as a component in setting the nurse
22 staffing budget.

23 (4) Encourage nurses to provide input to the committee relating to nurse
24 staffing concerns.

25 (5) Protect nurses who provide input to the committee from retaliation.

26 (6) Ensure compliance with rules promulgated by the Louisiana
27 Department of Health relative to nurse staffing.

28 (7) Use the nurse staffing plan as a component in setting the nurse
29 staffing budget.

Proposed law requires each hospital to submit an annual report to the Louisiana Department of Health regarding the status of the nursing staffing committee and of the nurse staffing plan.

Effective August 1, 2024.

(Adds R.S. 40:2114.1)