

2020 -- H 7836

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LC002971  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - RIGHTS OF NURSING HOME PATIENTS

Introduced By: Representatives Casey, Bennett, and Slater

Date Introduced: February 26, 2020

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 23-17.5 of the General Laws entitled "Rights of Nursing Home  
2 Patients" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3           **23-17.5-32. Staffing levels.**

4           (a) The director of the department of health shall promulgate regulations establishing  
5 minimum staffing levels for nursing facilities. These regulations shall establish ratios for various  
6 disciplines. The regulations shall establish staff to patient ratios for registered nurses, licensed  
7 practical nurses, and certified nursing assistants as are required to meet residents' needs.

8           (b) The regulations shall be established assuming a standard three (3) shifts per day. The  
9 department shall require "specialty" units such as Alzheimer's units, sub-acute units, and other  
10 specialty units to be determined by the director, to establish and maintain ratios that exceed the  
11 standard established ratios.

12           (c) The purpose of these staffing ratios shall be to ensure levels of care adequate to  
13 provide safety, quality care, and the full provision of all rights afforded resident patients under  
14 Rhode Island law. The ratios for certified nurse assistants (CNAs), registered nurses (RNs), and  
15 licensed practical nurses (LPNs) shall provide that residents receive a minimum of four (4) hours  
16 direct care per day consisting of seventy-five hundredths (0.75) RN hours, fifty-five hundredths  
17 (0.55) LPN hours, and two and eight-tenths (2.8) CNA hours. The ratios shall be established and  
18 implemented no later than October 1, 2020, with compliance achieved by January 1, 2021.

19           (d) The director of the department of health shall establish these ratios by obtaining and

1 [considering input from all interested state departments and agencies and all affected parties and](#)  
2 [disciplines including, but not limited to, providers/operators/administrators, and advocates for](#)  
3 [residents and nursing home employee organizations, including both union and professional](#)  
4 [organizations.](#)

5 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - RIGHTS OF NURSING HOME PATIENTS

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- 1 This act would establish minimum staffing levels for nursing facilities.
- 2 This act would take effect upon passage.

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