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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR <u>Soules</u>	LAST UPDATED <u>2/2/24</u>	ORIGINAL DATE <u>1/27/24</u>
SHORT TITLE <u>Professional Psychologist Act Changes</u>	BILL NUMBER <u>Senate Bill 127/aSHPAC</u>	ANALYST <u>Esquibel</u>

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT*

(dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY24	FY25	FY26	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact			

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.
 *Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From
 Health Care Authority (HCA)
 Medical Board (NMMB)
 Office of Superintendent of Insurance (OSI)
 Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of SHPAC Amendments

The Senate Health and Public Affairs Committee (SHPAC) amendments to Senate Bill 127 (SB127) further clarify the training and supervision required for prescribing psychologists or psychologists with a conditional prescription certificate to prescribe drugs for the management or protection from side effects associated with psychotropic medication.

The amendments also specify training and supervision required for prescribing psychologists or psychologists with a conditional prescription certificate to administer psychotropic medication injections.

The SHPAC amendments to SB127 add that the newly created committee to evaluate licensing complaints against prescribing psychologists can include designees for the members from the Psychologists Examiners and the Medical boards.

Lastly, the SHPAC amendments require the newly created committee to evaluate licensing complaints against prescribing psychologists to conduct quarterly reviews and quarterly reporting.

Synopsis of Senate Bill 127

Senate Bill 127 (SB127) allows licensed psychologists with “conditional prescription certificates” to prescribe and administer injections for psychotropic drugs, expands the scope of practice for prescribing psychologists, expands who can serve as supervisors while learning the practice of psychopharmacology, adds prescribing psychologists as mandatory members to the psychology board, and creates a mechanism for the psychology board and medical board to collaborate in evaluating licensing complaints against prescribing psychologists.

The bill would allow prescribing psychologists to prescribe and administer intramuscular and subcutaneous injections and restructure the Board of Psychologist Examiners and the committee that evaluates complaints against prescribing psychologists.

The effective date of this bill is July 1, 2024.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The Regulation and Licensing Department reports, under the provisions of the bill, initial and renewal applications would require prescribing psychologists to provide a valid conditional prescription certificate to prescribe psychotropic medication. This would require the applicant or licensee to upload an additional document into RLD’s licensing software to obtain an initial license or renewal license. RLD indicates it would not require additional resources to implement these changes.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Health Care Authority reports injections or medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) are treatment options for patients in recovery who may value the benefits of a once-monthly injection compared with other forms of daily MOUD medications. An expansion of the provider types able to administer these medications would likely increase access to important behavioral healthcare services. This would benefit patients in rural areas of the state who cannot always get to a clinic to be able to attain their medications on a daily or weekly basis.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The Board of Psychologist Examiners currently has one member who is a prescribing psychologist. Under the provisions of SB127, the board would need to replace a current board member with a prescribing psychologist or their designee.

The Regulation and Licensing Department reports training for a licensed psychologist to prescribe a controlled substance requires a minimum of 450 hours of didactic instruction, and an additional supervised practicum of at least 400 hours.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Senate Bill 127 relates to Senate Bill 117 from 2023, which was similar to SB127 and proposed to move the licensure and regulation of prescribing psychologists from RLD and the Psychology Board to the Medical Board. The 2023 Legislature’s Senate Bill 117 was pocket vetoed.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The Medical Board recommends amending the bill to move the licensing and regulation of prescribing psychologists to the Medical Board.

RAE/rl/ne/al/hg