

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 120

(Senator Lam)(By Request)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health and Government Operations

Acupuncture Licensure Requirements

This bill alters the education and training requirements to qualify as a licensed acupuncturist for applicants licensed by the State Acupuncture Board beginning on or after June 1, 2026.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The change is procedural in nature and does not directly affect governmental finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Bill Summary: Under current law, an individual must be licensed by the board before practicing acupuncture in the State, with limited exceptions. To qualify for a license, an applicant must be of good moral character, be at least 18 years old, demonstrate the ability to communicate in English, demonstrate competence in performing acupuncture by meeting one of two standards for education or training, and meet any other qualifications that the board establishes in regulations.

There are two pathways to demonstrate education and experience. First, an applicant can graduate from at least a master's level program or its equivalent in acupuncture that is approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM), or found

by the board to be equivalent to a course approved or accredited by MHEC or ACAOM. The second pathway allows an applicant to hold a diplomate in acupuncture from the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) *or* demonstrate a passing score on an examination that is determined by the board to be equivalent to the NCCAOM examination.

Under the bill, applicants may qualify for licensure by meeting either of the two pathways for education and training if they are issued a license on or before May 31, 2026. On or after June 1, 2026, applicants for licensure must graduate from at least a master's level program or its equivalent in acupuncture *and* achieve a passing score on an examination given by NCCAOM (or that is determined by the board to be equivalent). An applicant may not qualify for licensure by holding a diplomate in acupuncture from NCCAOM.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: HB 188 (Delegate Cullison) - Health and Government Operations.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 24, 2022
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