

ACCREDITATION OF PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS

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Senate Bill 1315 (Substitute H-1)

Sponsor: Sen. Gilda Z. Jacobs

House Committee: Health Policy

Senate Committee: Economic Development and Regulatory Reform

Complete to 6-15-10

A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 1315 AS REPORTED BY THE HEALTH POLICY COMMITTEE 6-15-10

The bill would codify a departmental rule set to take effect in 2011 that requires, as a condition of licensure as a psychologist, graduation from a doctoral psychology program that is nationally accredited or designated. The bill would also specify that a program in the process of being accredited or designated before the new rule took effect would be considered as meeting the new requirements if the designation or accreditation is obtained by August 31, 2015. Further, the bill would make the postdoctoral experience needed for licensure conform to that prescribed in departmental rules.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Currently under the Public Health Code, except as provided for limited licensure, to be eligible for licensure as a psychologist, an individual must obtain a doctoral degree in psychology or a closely related field that includes education and training appropriate to the practice of psychology from a regionally accredited or other college, university, or institution approved by the Michigan Board of Psychology.

In addition, under departmental rules, beginning August 1, 2011, completion of a doctoral program in psychology that has obtained accreditation or designation by certain national entities will constitute evidence of completion of a program acceptable to the Department of Community Health and approved by the board. Apparently, however, there is at least one institution of higher learning that is in the process of applying for accreditation or designation as specified by R 338.2511 of the Michigan Administrative Code, but is unlikely to complete the process by the rule's effective date. The school is seeking a legislative solution that would enable it to be considered in compliance if it is in the process of becoming accredited by the rule's effective date and becomes accredited within the following four years.

CONTENT:

Senate Bill 1315 would amend the Public Health Code (MCL 333.18223) to specify that, in addition to other requirements, a candidate for licensure as a psychologist would have to possess a doctoral degree in psychology (or doctorate in a closely related field) from a program that had obtained the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards'

National Register designation, or had been accredited by the American Psychological Association or the Canadian Psychological Association, or had obtained a similar designation from or been accredited by an entity approved by the board.

In addition, the bill would provide that a program that was in the process of obtaining the designation or becoming accredited as described above before August 1, 2011, and that obtained the designation or became accredited by August 31, 2015, would meet the bill's requirements.

Further, the code requires an applicant for licensure as a psychologist to have completed not less than two years' postdoctoral experience in the practice of psychology in an organized health care setting or other board-established arrangement. The bill, as amended in committee, would instead require one year of postdoctoral experience in the prescribed setting. (This change reflects the experience level established by the Board of Psychology and contained within departmental rules – R 338.2507 of the Michigan Administrative Code.)

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 1315, as passed by the Senate, may have modest fiscal implications for the Bureau of Health Professions in the Department of Community Health to administer this requirement, set to be effective August 1, 2011, pursuant to rule R 338.2511(3)(a) in the Michigan Administrative Code, as well as in the proposed bill.

POSITIONS:

The Department of Community Health indicated support for the bill. (6-15-10)

A representative of the Michigan School of Professional Psychology testified in support of the bill. (6-15-10)

Legislative Analyst: Susan Stutzky
Fiscal Analyst: Susan Frey

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.