



**Office of Legislative Affairs
2022 Legislative Update**

Legislative Activity of Note

- Legislative and Congressional redistricting.
- “Truth in Sentencing” Act to make mandatory sentences for certain criminal offenses.
- “Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) Act” to reform the school funding approach.

Highlights and Noteworthy Health-Related Legislation

- The Department had two successful legislative initiatives that became law relating to local county health departments and the Controlled Substance Monitoring Database, respectively.
- Healthcare Facilities will move to the Health Services and Development Agency (HSDA)/Health Facility Commission on July 1, 2022
- Healthcare providers can continue to utilize telehealth and receive reimbursement for telehealth services.
- The Board of Pharmacy and the Board of Nursing will now hire and fire the Executive Director of the Board.
- A registry within the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability was created to combat the operation of unlicensed facilities.

Pertinent Public Chapters

All Public Chapters are Hyperlinked to the Document on the Secretary of State’s Website

[Public Chapter 644—SB1823/HB1867—Johnson/Zachary](#)

Re: Covid-19 Vaccine Exemptions. This public chapter requires that an employer grant certain exemptions to requirements of proof/receipt of vaccinations if the request for exemption is either (1) supported by signed/date statement by a licensed physician that the staff member has a condition recognized under generally accepted medical standards as a basis for the medical exemption or (2) the staff member attests in writing (including electronic means) that the staff member has a sincerely held religious believe that prevents the staff member from complying the requirement in accordance with guidance from Medicare and Medicaid services. This public chapter creates a civil penalty of \$10,000 for violation of this statute.

Effective as of March 11, 2022.

[Public Chapter 695—SB503/HB753—Lundberg/White](#)

Re Medical Services in IEPs. This public chapter authorizes certain licensed physical therapists, licensed occupational therapists, licensed speech-language pathologists, and licensed audiologists, for the purposes of providing services in a school setting pursuant to a child's individualized education program, to refer or order services within their scope of practice as part of a child's IEP. Effective on July 1, 2022.

[Public Chapter 756—SB1789/HB2858—Briggs/Kumar](#)

Re Conditions of Participation. This public chapter removes the requirement that a healthcare provider enrolled in Medicare or Medicaid be subject to conditions of participation to be exempt from the definition of "private business" or "governmental entity" for purposes of the Title 14/Covid-19 state laws.

Effective as of March 31, 2022.

[Public Chapter 766—SB2453/HB2655—Yager/Hawk](#)

Re Telehealth. This public chapter extends the ability for healthcare providers to receive reimbursement for healthcare services provided during a telehealth encounter. This public chapter also clarifies that a healthcare provider acting within the scope of a valid license is not prohibited from delivering services through telehealth. Lastly, this public chapter adds that the requirement of an in-person encounter between the healthcare services provider, the provider's practice group, or the healthcare system and patient within sixteen months prior to the interactive visit is tolled for the duration of a state of emergency declared by the Governor provided that healthcare services provider or patient, or both, are located in the geographical area covered by the state of emergency. Effective as of April 1, 2022 and applies to insurance policies or contracts issued, entered into, renewed, or amended on or after that date.

[Public Chapter 769—SB568/HB702—Johnson/Lamberth](#)

Re Anatomical Gifts. This public chapter prohibits a healthcare provider, a hospital, an ambulatory surgical treatment center, a home care organization or any other entity responsible for matching anatomical gifts or organ donors to potential recipients from, solely on the basis of whether an individual has received or will receive a Covid-19 vaccine, (1) consider an individual ineligible for transplant or receipt of an anatomical gift, (2) deny medical or other services related to transplantation, (3) refuse to refer an individual to a transplant center or specialist, (4) refuse to place an individual on an organ or tissue waiting list, or (5) place an individual at a position on an organ or tissue waiting list lower than the position the person at which the individual would have been placed if not for the individual's vaccine status.

Effective as of April 8, 2022.

[Public Chapter 833—HB1997/SB1936—Cochran/Jackson](#)

Re UAPA. Clarifies that the ALJ shall decide a procedural questions of law. Allows the director of the administrative procedures division of the secretary of state's office to issue subpoenas. Allows electronic participation in hearings, by agreement of the parties. The hearing officer may allow electronic testimony if the absence of the witness would otherwise cause of delay of the

hearing. Requires that a final orders be issued within 90 days. Allows that a petition for reconsideration be filed within 15 days of the entry of the final order or initial order.
Effective as of April 19, 2022.

[Public Chapter 839—HB2561/SB1848—Terry/Watson](#)

Re OT Compact & Audiology/SLP Compact. “Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact” and “Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact”
Effective as of April 19, 2022.

[Public Chapter 856—HB2864/SB2889—Rudd/Gardenhire](#)

Re Public Meetings. Permits boards or agencies of state government to have electronic meetings. If an electronic meeting is being held, requires that members of the public be allowed to view and/or listen to the meeting in real time. There must also be a method of members of the public to participate in the meeting electronically, if they would otherwise be permitted to participate in person. Instructions for participate are to be included in the notice of the meeting. An electronic meeting shall be recorded and that recording must be posted on the website of the organization within 3 days. The governing body shall maintain that electronic record of the meeting for at least 3 years.

Effective on July 1, 2022.

[Public Chapter 883—SB2285/HB1749—Bell/Ragan](#)

Re UAPA and Judicial Review Standards. Requires that a judge over a contested case not defer to an agency’s interpretation of the statute or rule and shall interpret it de novo. Remaining ambiguity shall be resolved against the agency.

Effective as of April 14, 2022.

[Public Chapter 911—HB2309/SB2464—Freeman/Reeves](#)

Re Professional License Requirements. Mandates that a person seeking a professional license have US citizenship or be authorized under federal law to work in the US as verified by the SAVE Program (allows DACA children who are now adults to obtain professional licensure if not otherwise prevented by the license).

Effective July 1, 2022.

[Public Chapter 930—HB1871/SB1982—Hulse/Hensley](#)

Re Covid Vaccinations and Acquired Immunity. Amends Title 14 to mandate that acquired immunity from a previous Covid-19 infection be treated the same as a Covid-19 vaccination by a governmental entity, school, or local education authority. Mandates that private businesses who require vaccinations also include recognition for acquired immunity for Covid-19.

Effective as of April 11, 2022—This was not signed by Governor.

[Public Chapter 1024—SB1748/HB1827—Roberts/Ragan](#)

Re UAPA and Rules. Makes permanent all rules that were filed with the Secretary of State between January 1, 2021 and in effect upon passage of the act, unless they conflict with legislation passed during this session.

Effective as of May 11, 2022.

[Public Chapter 1073—HB2665/SB2449—Sexton, McNally](#)

Re Covid Visitation Policies and Limitations on Covid Treatment Exemptions. Clarifies that a prescriber can be disciplined for prescribing controlled substances and/or narcotics for treatment of Covid, if appropriate. In addition, creates a patient advocate process that hospitals must follow during times of covid concern. Allows that person to enter a facility if they agree to follow procedures but provides certain exceptions to access to locations within the hospital.

Effective as of May 25, 2022.

[Public Chapter 1094—SB1891/HB1905—Hulsey/Doggett](#)

Re Mandatory Reporting of Fatal Drug Overdoses. Requires that a fatal overdose be reported to law enforcement, including by doctors and nurses.

Effective July 1, 2022.

[Public Chapter 1112—SB2295/HB2545—Bell/Alexander](#)

Re Medication Aides. Expands those eligible to receive medication aide certification to include nursing aides and OT assistants, subject to other restrictions. Requires that the Board permit either in-person or distance learning in its clinical and instruction hours. Mandates that rules be promulgated no later than January 1, 2023.

For medication aide certification, effective on January 1, 2023. For all other purposes, effective as of June 1, 2022.

[Public Chapter 1117—SB2448/HB2671—White/Farmer](#)

Re: Extended Liability Protection Against Covid Claims. Extends the liability protection against claims based on Covid exposure until July 1, 2023.

Effective as of June 1, 2022.

[Public Chapter 1123—SB2574/HB2535—Crowe/Alexander](#)

Re: End-of-Life Visitation at Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities. Requires that nursing homes and assisted living facilities allow for visitation during a disaster, emergency, or public health emergency for Covid-19. Provides an exemption if the visitation would violate federal or state law.

Effective July 1, 2022.

** Please note that this are high-level overviews of each public chapter. Speak with the Board Attorney for any specific questions or concerns. **