

Senate Bill No. 188

CHAPTER 900

An act to amend Sections 4056 4074, 4115, and 4116 of the Business and Professions Code, relating to drugs, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor October 9, 1999. Filed
with Secretary of State October 10, 1999.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 188, Leslie. Drugs: hospitals: physicians.

Existing law generally prohibits any person from selling or dispensing any dangerous drug, or dispensing any prescription, unless he or she is a licensed pharmacist. However, existing law permits a licensed hospital that contains 100 beds or fewer and does not employ a full-time pharmacist to purchase drugs at wholesale for administration, under the direction of a physician, to patients registered in the hospital or to emergency cases under treatment in the hospital. Existing law imposes criminal penalties for violations of these provisions.

This bill would revise the above-described exception to also permit hospitals containing 100 beds or fewer to purchase drugs at wholesale for dispensation by physicians to persons registered as inpatients of the hospital, to emergency cases under treatment in the hospital, or to outpatients of a rural hospital, as defined. The bill would impose specified restrictions on the dispensing of those drugs to outpatients. The bill would require rural hospitals, as defined, to obtain information regarding the hours of local pharmacies, as specified, and require specified hospitals that contain 100 beds or fewer to obtain the services of a pharmacist consultant to monitor and review the pharmaceutical services provided by the hospital to inpatients of the hospital and the dispensing of drugs by physicians to outpatients pursuant to the provision described above. It also would make related changes, including expansion of requirements concerning adoption of a specified written policy by health facilities. To the extent that the bill would expand the scope of an existing crime with respect to these requirements, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Existing law authorizes a pharmacy technician to perform nondiscretionary tasks only while assisting, and while under the direct supervision and control of, a pharmacist. Existing law authorizes a pharmacy technician to perform these duties only under the immediate, personal supervision and control of a pharmacist. Existing law requires any pharmacist responsible for a pharmacy technician to be on the premises at all times and requires the

pharmacy technician to be within the pharmacist's view, except when the pharmacy technician is employed to assist in the filling of prescriptions for an inpatient of a hospital or for an inmate of a correctional facility.

This bill would require, notwithstanding the above limitations, that the California State Board of Pharmacy adopt regulations establishing conditions to permit the temporary absence of a pharmacist for breaks and lunch periods pursuant to a specified statute and the orders of the Industrial Welfare Commission without closing the pharmacy, during which time a pharmacy technician may remain in the pharmacy but may only perform nondiscretionary tasks. The bill would require the pharmacist to be responsible for a pharmacy technician and to review any task performed during the pharmacist's temporary absence.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 4056 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4056. (a) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter, a licensed hospital that contains 100 beds or fewer, and that does not employ a full-time pharmacist, may purchase drugs at wholesale for administration, under the direction of a physician, or for dispensation by a physician, to persons registered as inpatients of the hospital, to emergency cases under treatment in the hospital, or, under the conditions described in subdivision (f), to persons registered as outpatients in a rural hospital as defined in Section 124840 of the Health and Safety Code. The hospital shall keep records of the kind and amounts of drugs so purchased and administered or dispensed, and the records shall be available for inspection by all properly authorized personnel of the board.

(b) No hospital shall be entitled to the benefits of subdivision (a) until it has obtained a license from the board. Each license shall be issued to a specific hospital and for a specific location.

(c) Each application for a license under this section shall be made on a form furnished by the board. Upon the filing of the application and payment of the fee prescribed in subdivision (a) of Section 4400, the executive officer of the board shall issue a license authorizing the hospital to which it is issued to purchase drugs at wholesale pursuant



to subdivision (a). The license shall be renewed annually on or before November 1 of each year upon payment of the renewal fee prescribed in subdivision (b) of Section 4400 and shall not be transferable.

(d) The form of application for a license under this section shall contain the name and address of the applicant, the number of beds, whether the applicant is a licensed hospital, whether it does or does not employ a full-time pharmacist, the name of its chief medical officer, and the name of its administrator.

(e) The board may deny, revoke, or suspend a license issued under this section in the manner and for the grounds specified in Article 19 (commencing with Section 4300).

(f) A physician himself or herself may dispense drugs to outpatients directly pursuant to subdivision (a) only if the physician determines that it is in the best interest of the patient that a particular drug regimen be immediately commenced or continued, and the physician reasonably believes that a pharmacy located outside the hospital is not available and accessible at the time of dispensation to the patient within 30 minutes of the hospital pharmaceutical services or within a 30-mile radius from the hospital pharmaceutical services by means of the method of transportation the patient states that he or she intends to use. The quantity of drugs dispensed to any outpatient pursuant to this subdivision shall be limited to that amount necessary to maintain uninterrupted therapy during the period when pharmaceutical services outside the hospital are not readily available or accessible, but shall not exceed a 72-hour supply. The physician shall ensure that the label on the drug contains all the information required by Section 4076.

(g) A rural hospital, as defined in Section 124840 of the Health and Safety Code, shall obtain information regarding the hours of operation of each pharmacy located within the 30 minute or 30-mile radius of the hospital. The hospital shall update this information annually, and shall make this information available to its medical staff.

(h) A licensed hospital that contains 100 beds or fewer, does not employ a full-time pharmacist, and purchases drugs at wholesale for administration or dispensation pursuant to subdivision (a), shall retain the services of a pharmacist consultant to monitor and review the pharmaceutical services provided by the hospital to inpatients of the hospital, and the dispensing of drugs by physicians to outpatients pursuant to subdivision (f).

(i) This section shall not be construed to eliminate the requirements of Section 11164 or 11167 of the Health and Safety Code.

SEC. 2. Section 4074 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:



4074. (a) A pharmacist shall inform a patient orally or in writing of the harmful effects of a drug dispensed by prescription if the drug poses substantial risk to the person consuming the drug when taken in combination with alcohol or if the drug may impair a person's ability to drive a motor vehicle, whichever is applicable, and provided the drug is determined by the board pursuant to subdivision (b) to be a drug or drug type for which this warning shall be given.

(b) The board may by regulation require additional information or labeling.

(c) This section shall not apply to drugs furnished to patients in conjunction with treatment or emergency services provided in health facilities or, except as provided in subdivision (d), to drugs furnished to patients pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 4056.

(d) A health facility shall establish and implement a written policy to ensure that each patient shall receive information regarding each medication given at the time of discharge and each medication given pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 4056. This information shall include the use and storage of each medication, the precautions and relevant warnings, and the importance of compliance with directions. This information shall be given by a pharmacist or registered nurse, unless already provided by a patient's prescriber, and the written policy shall be developed in collaboration with a physician, a pharmacist, and a registered nurse. The written policy shall be approved by the medical staff. Nothing in this subdivision or any other provision of law shall be construed to require that only a pharmacist provide this consultation.

SEC. 3. Section 4115 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4115. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a pharmacy technician may perform packaging, manipulative, repetitive, or other nondiscretionary tasks, only while assisting, and while under the direct supervision and control of, a pharmacist.

(b) This section does not authorize the performance of any tasks specified in subdivision (a) by a pharmacy technician without a pharmacist on duty, nor does this section authorize the use of a pharmacy technician to perform tasks specified in subdivision (a) except under the direct supervision and control of a pharmacist.

(c) This section does not authorize a pharmacy technician to perform any act requiring the exercise of professional judgment by a pharmacist.

(d) The board shall adopt regulations to specify tasks pursuant to subdivision (a) that a pharmacy technician may perform under the direct supervision and control of a pharmacist. Any pharmacy that employs a pharmacy technician to perform tasks specified in subdivision (a) shall do so in conformity with the regulations adopted by the board pursuant to this subdivision.



(e) (1) No person shall act as a pharmacy technician without first being registered with the board as a pharmacy technician as set forth in Section 4202.

(2) The registration requirements in paragraph (1) and Section 4202 shall not apply to a person employed or utilized as a pharmacy technician to assist in the filling of prescriptions for an inpatient of a hospital until July 1, 1997.

(3) The registration requirements in paragraph (1) and Section 4202 shall not apply during the first year of employment for a person employed or utilized as a pharmacy technician to assist in the filling of prescriptions for an inmate of a correctional facility of the Department of the Youth Authority or the Department of Corrections, or for a person receiving treatment in a facility operated by the State Department of Mental Health, the State Department of Developmental Services, or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(f) The performance of duties by a pharmacy technician shall be under the direct supervision and control of a pharmacist. The pharmacist on duty shall be directly responsible for the conduct of a pharmacy technician. A pharmacy technician may perform the duties, as specified in subdivision (a), only under the immediate, personal supervision and control of a pharmacist. Any pharmacist responsible for a pharmacy technician shall be on the premises at all times, and the pharmacy technician shall be within the pharmacist's view. A pharmacist shall indicate verification of the prescription by initialing the prescription label before the medication is provided to the patient.

This subdivision shall not apply to a person employed or utilized as a pharmacy technician to assist in the filling of prescriptions for an inpatient of a hospital or for an inmate of a correctional facility. Notwithstanding the exemption in this subdivision, the requirements of subdivisions (a) and (b) shall apply to a person employed or utilized as a pharmacy technician to assist in the filling of prescriptions for an inpatient of a hospital or for an inmate of a correctional facility.

(g) (1) The ratio of pharmacy technicians performing the tasks specified in subdivision (a) to pharmacists shall not exceed one to one, except that this ratio shall not apply to personnel performing clerical functions pursuant to Section 4116 or 4117. This ratio is applicable to all practice settings, except for an inpatient of a licensed health facility, a patient of a licensed home health agency, as specified in paragraph (2), an inmate of a correctional facility of the Department of the Youth Authority or the Department of Corrections, and for a person receiving treatment in a facility operated by the State Department of Mental Health, the State Department of Developmental Services, or the Department of Veterans Affairs.



(2) The board may adopt regulations establishing the ratio of pharmacy technicians performing the tasks specified in subdivision (a) to pharmacists applicable to the filling of prescriptions of an inpatient of a licensed health facility and for a patient of a licensed home health agency. Any ratio established by the board pursuant to this subdivision shall allow, at a minimum, at least one pharmacy technician for each pharmacist, except that this ratio shall not apply to personnel performing clerical functions pursuant to Section 4116 or 4117.

(h) Notwithstanding subdivisions (b) and (f), the board shall by regulation establish conditions to permit the temporary absence of a pharmacist for breaks and lunch periods pursuant to Section 512 of the Labor Code and the orders of the Industrial Welfare Commission without closing the pharmacy. During these temporary absences, a pharmacy technician may, at the discretion of the pharmacist, remain in the pharmacy but may only perform nondiscretionary tasks. The pharmacist shall be responsible for a pharmacy technician and shall review any task performed by a pharmacy technician during the pharmacist's temporary absence. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to authorize a pharmacist to supervise pharmacy technicians in greater ratios than those described in subdivision (g).

SEC. 4. Section 4116 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4116. (a) No person other than a pharmacist, an intern pharmacist, an authorized officer of the law, or a person authorized to prescribe shall be permitted in that area, place, or premises described in the license issued by the board wherein controlled substances or dangerous drugs or dangerous devices are stored, possessed, prepared, manufactured, derived, compounded, dispensed, or repackaged. However, a pharmacist shall be responsible for any individual who enters the pharmacy for the purposes of receiving consultation from the pharmacist or performing clerical, inventory control, housekeeping, delivery, maintenance, or similar functions relating to the pharmacy if the pharmacist remains present in the pharmacy during all times as the authorized individual is present.

(b) (1) The board may, by regulation, establish reasonable security measures consistent with this section in order to prevent unauthorized persons from gaining access to the area, place, or premises or to the controlled substances or dangerous drugs or dangerous devices therein.

(2) The board shall, by regulation, establish conditions for the temporary absence of a pharmacist for breaks and lunch periods pursuant to Section 512 of the Labor Code and the orders of the Industrial Welfare Commission without closing the pharmacy and removing authorized personnel from the pharmacy. These



conditions shall ensure the security of the pharmacy and its operations during the temporary absence of the pharmacist and shall allow, at the discretion of the pharmacist, nonpharmacist personnel to remain and perform any lawful activities during the pharmacist's temporary absence.

SEC. 5. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

SEC. 6. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order to allow patients to obtain necessary medications and to allow pharmacists to take temporary breaks without closing the pharmacy, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

