

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 57

Introduced by Assembly Member Price

December 5, 2008

An act to add and repeal Section 1276.45 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to health facilities.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 57, as introduced, Price. University of California hospitals: staffing.

Existing law provides for the inspection, licensure, and regulation of health facilities by the State Department of Public Health, including, among other facilities, general acute care hospitals, acute psychiatric hospitals, and special hospitals. A violation of the provisions regulating health facilities is a crime. Pursuant to the above authority, the department has adopted regulations that require hospitals to develop a written staffing plan that implement patient care requirements and staffing levels for registered nurses and other licensed and unlicensed personnel contained in those regulations.

This bill would require the department to establish a procedure for collection and review of the written staffing plans and other related information, as specified, from University of California hospitals, with the exception of documentation relating only to registered nurses. This bill would require University of California hospitals to cooperate with the department in providing the above information.

This bill would make its provisions inoperative on July 1, 2013, and would repeal it as of January 1, 2014.

By creating a new crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

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.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

State-mandated local program: yes.

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

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) Public health interests require that hospitals provide safe
4 staffing levels at health facilities licensed pursuant to subdivision
5 (a), (b), or (f) of Section 1250 of the Health and Safety Code.

6 (b) Section 70217 of Title 22 of the California Code of
7 Regulations requires hospitals to implement a patient classification
8 system for determining the nursing care needs of patients and to
9 develop and implement written staffing plans that specify patient
10 care requirements and staffing levels for registered nurses and
11 other licensed and unlicensed personnel. The staffing plan must
12 include staffing requirements as determined by the patient
13 classification system for each patient care unit, documented on a
14 day-to-day, shift-by-shift basis. The reliability of the patient
15 classification system for validating staffing requirements is required
16 to be reviewed at least annually. If the review reveals that
17 adjustments are necessary in the patient classification system in
18 order to ensure accuracy in measuring patient care needs, the
19 adjustments must be implemented within 30 days of that
20 determination.

21 (c) Section 70217 of Title 22 of the California Code of
22 Regulations also requires hospitals to develop and document a
23 process by which all interested staff may provide input about the
24 patient classification system, the system's required revisions, and
25 the overall staffing plan.

26 (d) Many staff, other than registered nursing personnel, provide
27 direct care, including respiratory therapists, phlebotomists,
28 radiology technicians, emergency room and surgical technicians,
29 lab technicians, vocational nurses, nursing assistants, and pharmacy
30 technicians.

1 (e) Short or inadequate staffing undermines patient care in many
2 ways. Inadequate staffing may cause staff to have to simultaneously
3 cover multiple patients in different parts of the hospital, cause
4 delays in getting patient test results, lead to inaccurate or
5 misleading films and tests, and increase back and other injuries to
6 employees that affect their ability to continue to provide quality
7 care.

8 (f) Inadequate staffing is a matter of statewide concern, so
9 Section 1276.45 is being added to the Health and Safety Code to
10 provide the department and the public with access to the written
11 staffing plans and actual staffing levels of the only general purpose
12 health care system owned and operated by a state entity.

13 (g) The University of California owns and operates five
14 academic medical centers. Collectively, the University of California
15 medical centers comprise one of the state's largest health care
16 systems and the only general purpose health care system owned
17 and operated by a state entity. With their tripartite mission of
18 teaching, public service, and research, the University of California
19 medical centers are a major resource for California. The fact that
20 three of the five University of California medical centers are
21 located in counties that have no county hospital demonstrates their
22 importance.

23 (h) Due to the unique role University of California medical
24 centers play as comprising the only general purpose health care
25 system owned and operated by a state entity, they are in a unique
26 position to provide the Legislature and the department with the
27 information required by Section 1276.45 of the Health and Safety
28 Code.

29 SEC. 2. Section 1276.45 is added to the Health and Safety
30 Code, to read:

31 1276.45. (a) The State Department of Public Health shall
32 establish a procedure for collection and review of the written
33 staffing plans developed pursuant to Section 70217 of Title 22 of
34 the California Code of Regulations by all University of California
35 health facilities licensed pursuant to subdivision (a), (b), or (f) of
36 Section 1250. The procedure developed by the department shall
37 not apply to a review of documentation relating only to registered
38 nurses. The procedure developed by the department shall include
39 provision for collection and review of documentation relating to
40 the following:

1 (1) Review of the reliability of the patient classification system
2 as required by subdivision (e) of Section 70217 of Title 22 of the
3 California Code of Regulations.

4 (2) Adjustments in the patient classification system determined
5 to be necessary in light of the review conducted pursuant to
6 subdivision (e) of Section 70217 of Title 22 of the California Code
7 of Regulations and implementation of these adjustments.

8 (3) Staff input about the patient classification system, the
9 system's required revisions, and the overall staffing plan the
10 University of California health facilities receive pursuant to the
11 process developed and documented pursuant to subdivision (h) of
12 Section 70217 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.

13 (b) If the department deems it necessary to reduce the volume
14 of information collected and reviewed pursuant to subdivision (a),
15 the department may identify specific time periods for which the
16 information is to be collected and review that information as a
17 representative sample.

18 (c) A University of California health facility licensed pursuant
19 to subdivision (a), (b), or (f) of Section 1250 from which the
20 department collects information pursuant to subdivision (a) shall
21 be required to cooperate with the department in providing the
22 information.

23 (d) This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2013, and,
24 as of January 1, 2014, is repealed, unless a later enacted statute,
25 that becomes operative on or before January 1, 2014, deletes or
26 extends the dates on which it becomes inoperative and is repealed.

27 SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to
28 Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because
29 the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school
30 district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or
31 infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty
32 for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of
33 the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within
34 the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California
35 Constitution.