

State of Arkansas  
93rd General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2021

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1215

By: Representative Bentley  
By: Senator K. Hammer

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO GRANT FULL PRACTICE AUTHORITY TO CERTIFIED  
NURSE MIDWIVES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

TO GRANT FULL PRACTICE AUTHORITY TO  
CERTIFIED NURSE MIDWIVES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 17-87-302(a)(3), concerning the  
qualifications to be licensed as an advanced practice registered nurse, is  
amended to read as follows:

(3) Certified Nurse Midwife. To qualify as a certified nurse  
midwife, an applicant shall:

(A) Hold current certification by a national certifying  
body recognized by the board in the advanced practice registered nurse role  
and population foci appropriate to educational preparation; and

(B) Have ~~an agreement with a consulting physician if~~  
~~providing intrapartum care~~ full practice authority under § 17-87-314; or

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 87, Subchapter 3, is  
amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

17-87-314. Full practice authority for certified nurse midwives –  
Definition.

(a)(1) The General Assembly finds that:

(A)(i) Certified nurse midwives are advanced practice



1 registered nurses who are national certified after completing post-graduate  
2 specialty education in an accredited program.

3 (ii) The scope of nurse midwifery includes primary  
4 care, gynecological and family planning services, preconception care, care  
5 during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum care, care of a normal newborn  
6 during the first twenty-eight (28) days of life, and treatment of male  
7 partners for sexually transmitted infections;

8 (B) When women and infants do not have access to routine,  
9 quality health care, there is an increased risk of maternal and infant  
10 mortality and morbidity, including infant mortality and morbidity resulting  
11 from low birth weight and preterm birth;

12 (C) Certified nurse midwives are often underutilized in  
13 helping provide maternity, prenatal, postnatal, intrapartum, and reproductive  
14 healthcare services in this state;

15 (D) In 2018, less than one percent (1%) of births in  
16 Arkansas were attended by a certified nurse midwife;

17 (E) Integrating certified nurse midwives into maternity  
18 care could help improve women's access to healthcare providers and quality of  
19 care;

20 (F) Midwifery-led models of care have been proven to  
21 improve maternal and infant outcomes for socially at-risk communities and  
22 achieve good maternal and infant outcomes on a large scale; and

23 (G) To increase healthcare provider choices for women and  
24 access to maternity, prenatal, postnatal, intrapartum, and reproductive  
25 healthcare services, the certified nurse midwives of this state should be  
26 granted full authority to practice to the extent of their education, clinical  
27 training, and certification.

28 (2) It is the intent of the General Assembly to grant certified  
29 nurse midwives full practice authority.

30 (b) As used in this section, "full practice authority" means the  
31 authority of a healthcare professional to:

- 32 (1) Evaluate patients;  
33 (2) Diagnose medical conditions;  
34 (3) Order and interpret diagnostic tests;  
35 (4) Initiate and manage treatment and care plans, including  
36 appropriate comanagement or transfer of high-risk patients to other

1 healthcare professionals as needed; and

2 (5) Prescribe, administer, and dispense drugs listed in  
3 Schedules III – V without a collaborative practice agreement or supervision  
4 of another healthcare professional when performing healthcare services.

5 (c)(1) A certified nurse midwife with full practice authority is not  
6 subject to the collaborative practice agreement requirements in § 17-87-310  
7 if providing prescriptions of medications that are in Schedules III – V.

8 (2) A collaborative practice agreement under § 17-87-310 is  
9 required to provide prescriptions of medications that are in Schedule II.