

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-127

State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H3/3/15 H3/6/15 H3/16/15*

90th General Assembly

**A Bill**

Regular Session, 2015

HOUSE BILL 1142

By: Representative C. Douglas

Filed with: Arkansas Legislative Council  
pursuant to A.C.A. §10-3-217.

**For An Act To Be Entitled**

AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS SURGICAL TECHNOLOGISTS  
ACT; TO ESTABLISH THE *REGISTRATION* OF SURGICAL  
TECHNOLOGISTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

**Subtitle**

TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS SURGICAL  
TECHNOLOGISTS ACT.

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

*SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings and intent.*

*(a) The General Assembly finds that:*

*(1) A surgical technologist is an individual who:*

*(A) Prepares the operating room, the sterile field, and  
the sterile supplies, instruments, and equipment for surgical procedures; and*

*(B) Performs various tasks in the sterile field which  
include handling specimens, providing irrigation solutions to the supervising  
physician, and irrigating the operative site;*

*(2) The practice of surgical technology is a separate and  
distinct healthcare profession that does not include the practice of surgical  
assisting as performed by physician assistants, surgical assistants, or first  
assistants;*

*(3) Employment of surgical technologists is expected to grow  
between 2006 and 2016 as the volume of surgeries increases with the aging  
population of the United States;*

(4) Eight (8) surgical technology programs in Arkansas have received accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs, with an average of one hundred twenty (120) individuals graduating from these programs per year;

(5) The State of Arkansas does not have a registration, certification, or licensure procedure for surgical technologists; and

(6) It is the duty of the General Assembly to pursue efforts to improve healthy medical outcomes by ensuring professional competency and professional discipline over a growing healthcare profession.

(b) The intent of this act is to regulate individuals who practice surgical technology.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 95, is amended to add an additional subchapter to read as follows:

Subchapter 9 – Surgical Technologists

17-95-901. Title.

This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Arkansas Surgical Technologists Act".

17-95-902. Definitions.

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Surgical technologist" means an individual who performs the skills and techniques of surgical technology under the direction and supervision of a supervising practitioner other than in the course of practicing as a licensed healthcare professional; and

(2) "Surgical technology" means surgical patient care that includes without limitation:

(A) Preparing an operating room and a sterile field for surgical procedures by ensuring that surgical equipment is assembled and functioning properly and safely;

(B) Preparing sterile supplies, instruments, and equipment using sterile technique; and

(C) Performing tasks in a sterile field, including:

(i) Maintaining asepsis and a sterile operating field;

1 (ii) Passing supplies, equipment, or instruments  
 2 according to the needs of the surgical team;  
 3 (iii) Sponging or suctioning an operative site;  
 4 (iv) Preparing and cutting suture material;  
 5 (v) Providing irrigation solutions to the  
 6 supervising physician and irrigating an operative site;  
 7 (vi) Providing drugs within the sterile field for  
 8 administration by the supervising physician;  
 9 (vii) Handling specimens;  
 10 (viii) Holding retractors and other instruments;  
 11 (ix) Applying electrocautery to clamps on blood  
 12 vessels;  
 13 (x) Connecting drains to a suction apparatus;  
 14 (xi) Applying dressings to closed wounds; and  
 15 (xii) Performing counts of supplies such as sponges,  
 16 needles, and instruments with the registered nurse circulator.

17  
18 17-95-903. Registration.

19 The Arkansas State Medical Board shall register as a surgical  
20 technologist an applicant who:

21 (1) Holds a current credential as a certified surgical  
22 technologist from the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical  
23 Assisting or its successor or a national organization approved by the  
24 Arkansas State Medical Board;

25 (2) Has successfully completed a surgical technologist training  
26 program during the person's service as a member of any branch of the United  
27 States Armed Forces; or

28 (3) Has been employed to practice as a surgical technologist at  
29 any time in the six (6) months before July 1, 2015, if the applicant  
30 registers on or before July 1, 2016.

31  
32 17-95-904. Title protection.

33 A person shall not use or assume the title "registered surgical  
34 technologist" unless the person is registered with the Arkansas State Medical  
35 Board.

17-95-905. Rules.

The Arkansas State Medical Board may adopt and promulgate rules to  
implement this subchapter.

*/s/C. Douglas*

Referral requested by: Representative Charlotte V. Douglas

Prepared by: VJF