

State of Arkansas As Engrossed: S2/18/25 S2/25/25

95th General Assembly

A Bill

Regular Session, 2025

SENATE BILL 117

By: Senator C. Penzo

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIAN PRACTICE
ACT; TO PROVIDE FOR LICENSURE OF NATUROPATHIC
PHYSICIANS IN ARKANSAS; TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS STATE
BOARD OF NATUROPATHY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE THE NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIAN
PRACTICE ACT; TO PROVIDE FOR LICENSURE
OF NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIANS IN ARKANSAS;
AND TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD
OF NATUROPATHY.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 17 is amended to add an additional
chapter to read as follows:

CHAPTER 108

NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIAN PRACTICE ACT

Subchapter 1 – General Provisions

17-108-101. Title.

This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Naturopathic
Physician Practice Act".

17-108-102. Legislative findings and intent.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:



1 (1) The practice of naturopathic medicine in this state affects
2 the public health, safety, and welfare and should be subject to regulation
3 and control in the public interest; and

4 (2) Naturopathic physicians comprise a distinct healthcare
5 profession that affects the public health, safety, and welfare and increases
6 freedom of choice in health care in this state.

7 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to ensure that
8 naturopathic physicians and the practice of naturopathic medicine as defined
9 in this subchapter merit the confidence of the public, that only qualified
10 persons be authorized to practice naturopathic medicine in this state, and
11 that a person shall not practice naturopathic medicine without a valid
12 existing license.

13
14 17-108-103. Definitions.

15 As used in this subchapter:

16 (1) "Approved naturopathic medical school" means a medical
17 school approved by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy under this
18 subchapter that prepares a naturopathic physician for the practice of
19 naturopathic medicine;

20 (2) "Clinical laboratory procedure" means the use of
21 venipuncture consistent with naturopathic medical practice, commonly used
22 diagnostic modalities consistent with naturopathic practice, the recording of
23 a patient's health history, physical examination, ordering and interpretation
24 of radiographic diagnostics, and other standard imaging and examination of
25 body orifices, excluding endoscopy and colonoscopy;

26 (3) "Homeopathic medicine" means a system of medicine based on
27 the use of infinitesimal doses of substances capable of producing symptoms
28 similar to those of the disease treated, as listed in the Homeopathic
29 Pharmacopoeia of the United States;

30 (4) "Hygiene" means the use of preventive techniques, including
31 personal hygiene, asepsis, public health, and safety;

32 (5) "Laboratory examination" means:

33 (A) Phlebotomy;

34 (B) A clinical laboratory procedure;

35 (C) An orificial examination;

36 (D) A physiological function test; and

1 (E) A screening or test that is consistent with
2 naturopathic education and training;

3 (6) "Naturopathic medicine" means:

4 (A) A system of health care for the prevention, diagnosis,
5 and treatment of human health conditions, injury, and disease;

6 (B) The promotion or restoration of health; and

7 (C) The support and stimulation of a patient's inherent
8 self-healing processes through patient education and the use of naturopathic
9 therapies and therapeutic substances;

10 (7) "Naturopathic physician" means an individual licensed under
11 this subchapter as a naturopathic physician to practice naturopathic medicine
12 in this state;

13 (8) "Naturopathic therapeutic medicine" means the use of one (1)
14 or more of the following physical agents in a manner consistent with
15 naturopathic medical practice on a part or the whole of the body, by hand or
16 by mechanical means, in the resolution of a human ailment or condition:

17 (A) Air;

18 (B) Water;

19 (C) Heat;

20 (D) Cold;

21 (E) Sound;

22 (F) Light;

23 (G) Electromagnetism;

24 (H) Colon hydrotherapy;

25 (I) Soft tissue therapy;

26 (J) Joint mobilization;

27 (K) Therapeutic exercise; or

28 (L) Naturopathic manipulation;

29 (9) "Naturopathic therapy" means the use of:

30 (A) Naturopathic therapeutic medicine;

31 (B) Suggestion;

32 (C) Hygiene;

33 (D) A therapeutic substance;

34 (E) Nutrition and food science;

35 (F) Homeopathic medicine; or

36 (G) A clinical laboratory procedure;

1 (10) "Nutrition and food science" means the prevention and
2 treatment of disease or other human conditions through the use of food,
3 water, herbs, roots, bark, or natural food elements;

4 (11) "Professional examination" means a competency-based
5 national naturopathic physician licensing examination administered by the
6 North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners or its successor agency, which
7 nationally administers a naturopathic examination that represents federal
8 standards of education and training;

9 (12) "Suggestion" means a technique using:

10 (A) Biofeedback;

11 (B) Hypnosis;

12 (C) Health education; or

13 (D) Health counseling; and

14 (13) "Therapeutic substance" means any of the following
15 exemplified in a standard naturopathic medical text, journal, or
16 pharmacopeia:

17 (A) A vitamin;

18 (B) A mineral;

19 (C) A nutraceutical;

20 (D) A botanical medicine;

21 (E) Oxygen;

22 (F) A homeopathic medicine; or

23 (G) Other physiologic substance.

24
25 17-108-104. Exemptions.

26 This subchapter does not prohibit or restrict:

27 (1) The practice of a healthcare profession by an individual who
28 is licensed, certified, or registered under the laws of this state and who is
29 performing services within the individual's scope of practice;

30 (2) The practice of naturopathic medicine by a student enrolled
31 in an approved naturopathic medical school if the practice of naturopathic
32 medicine by a student is performed under a course of instruction or an
33 assignment from an instructor and under the supervision of an instructor who
34 is a licensee or a duly licensed professional in the instructed field;

35 (3) A person that sells a vitamin or herb from providing
36 information about the vitamin or herb;

1 (4) The practice of naturopathic medicine by a person who is
2 licensed to practice in any other state or district in the United States and
3 who enters this state to consult with a naturopathic physician of this state
4 if the consultation is limited to examination, recommendation, or testimony
5 in litigation; or

6 (5) A person or practitioner who is not licensed as a
7 naturopathic physician from recommending ayurvedic medicine, herbal remedies,
8 nutritional advice, homeopathy, or other therapy that is within the scope of
9 practice of naturopathic medicine if that person or practitioner does not:

10 (A) Use a title protected under this subchapter;

11 (B) Represent or assume the character or appearance of a
12 licensee of this subchapter; or

13 (C) Otherwise use a name, title, or other designation that
14 indicates or implies that the person is a licensee of this subchapter.

15
16 17-108-105. Title protection.

17 (a) A licensee shall use the title "naturopathic physician" or
18 "naturopathic doctor" and the recognized abbreviation "N.D.".

19 (b) A licensee has the exclusive right to use the following terms in
20 reference to the licensee's self:

21 (1) "Naturopathic physician";

22 (2) "Naturopathic doctor";

23 (3) "Doctor of naturopathic medicine";

24 (4) "Doctor of naturopathy";

25 (5) "N.D.";

26 (6) "ND";

27 (7) "NMD"; and

28 (8) "N.M.D.".

29 (c) An individual represents the individual's self to be a
30 naturopathic physician or a naturopathic doctor when the individual uses or
31 adopts any of the terms in subdivisions (b)(1)-(8) of this section in
32 reference to the individual's self.

33 (d)(1) An individual shall not represent the individual's self to the
34 public as a naturopathic physician, naturopathic doctor, a doctor of
35 naturopathic medicine, or a doctor of naturopathy, or as being otherwise
36 authorized to practice naturopathic medicine in the state, unless the

1 individual is licensed under this subchapter.

2 (2) An individual who is not licensed under this subchapter is
3 guilty of a Class A misdemeanor if he or she:

4 (A) Holds himself or herself out as a naturopathic
5 physician or naturopathic doctor;

6 (B) Uses any combination or abbreviation of the term
7 "naturopathic physician" or "naturopathic doctor" indicating or implying that
8 he or she is a naturopathic physician or naturopathic doctor; or

9 (C) Acts as a naturopathic physician without being
10 licensed by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathic.

11
12 17-108-106. Approved naturopathic medical school.

13 (a) The Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy shall establish, by rule,
14 guidelines for an approved naturopathic medical school and specifications for
15 the education of naturopathic physicians in this state.

16 (b) The guidelines established under subsection (a) of this section
17 shall include that the approved naturopathic medical school shall require at
18 a minimum:

19 (1) Graduation from:

20 (A) A naturopathic medical education program in the United
21 States providing the degree of Doctor of Naturopathy or Doctor of
22 Naturopathic Medicine, that:

23 (i) Offers graduate-level, full-time didactic, and
24 supervised clinical training;

25 (ii) Is accredited or has achieved candidacy status
26 for accreditation by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education or an
27 equivalent federally recognized accrediting body for naturopathic medical
28 programs also recognized by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy; and

29 (iii) Is an institution of higher education or part
30 of an institution of higher education that is either accredited or is a
31 candidate for accreditation by a regional or national institutional
32 accrediting agency recognized by the United States Secretary of Education;

33 (B) A degree-granting institution of higher education
34 that, before the existence of the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education,
35 offered a full-time, structured curriculum in basic sciences and supervised
36 patient care comprising a doctoral naturopathic medical education requiring

1 not less than one hundred thirty-two (132) weeks of coursework to be
2 completed within a period of not less than thirty-five (35) months, that was
3 reputable and in good standing in the judgment of the Arkansas State Board of
4 Naturopathy and which, if still in existence, has current programmatic
5 accreditation by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education or a federally
6 recognized equivalent accrediting agency;

7 (C) A diploma-granting, degree-equivalent institution of
8 higher education located in Canada that, before the existence of the Council
9 on Naturopathic Medical Education, had provincial approval for participation
10 in government-funded student aid programs, offered a full-time, structured
11 curriculum in basic sciences and supervised patient care comprising a
12 doctoral naturopathic medical education requiring not less than one hundred
13 thirty-two (132) weeks of coursework to be completed within a period of not
14 less than thirty (30) months, was reputable and in good standing in the
15 judgment of the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy, and, if still in
16 existence, has current programmatic accreditation by the Council on
17 Naturopathic Medical Education or a federally recognized equivalent
18 accrediting agency, and currently has provincial approval for participation
19 in government-funded student aid programs; or

20 (D) A diploma-granting, degree-equivalent institution of
21 higher education located in Canada that has provincial approval for
22 participation in government-funded student aid programs, offers graduate-
23 level, full-time didactic, and supervised clinical training, and is
24 accredited or has achieved candidacy status for accreditation by the Council
25 on Naturopathic Medical Education or an equivalent federally recognized
26 accrediting body for naturopathic medical programs also recognized by the
27 Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy; and

28 (2) Successful completion of a competency-based national
29 naturopathic medicine licensing examination administered by the North
30 American Board of Naturopathic Examiners, or an equivalent agency recognized
31 by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy, or, for graduates of approved
32 naturopathic medical programs in the United States before the existence of
33 the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education, a competency-based state
34 naturopathic medicine licensing examination, or equivalent Canadian
35 provincial licensing examination for the practice of naturopathic medicine
36 approved by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy.

Subchapter 2 – Arkansas State Board of Naturopathic

17-108-201. Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy – Creation.

(a) There is created the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy.

(b)(1)(A) The board shall consist of thirteen (13) members appointed by the Governor for terms of six (6) years.

(B) The Governor shall consider diversity of practice specialties and geographical areas of practice in making appointments to the board.

(2)(A)(i) Ten (10) members shall be qualified, licensed, and active naturopathic physicians appointed by the Governor and shall be subject to confirmation by the Senate.

(ii) At least two (2) members shall be appointed from each of the state's four (4) congressional districts.

(iii) Two (2) members shall be appointed at large.

(B) Congressional district representation required under this subdivision (b)(2) shall be achieved by appointment as vacancies occur.

(3) One (1) member shall be a licensed practicing naturopathic physician in this state and shall be appointed by the Governor and shall be subject to confirmation by the Senate.

(4)(A) Two (2) members of the board shall not be actively engaged in or be retired from the practice of naturopathic medicine.

(B) One (1) member shall represent consumers, and one (1) member shall be sixty (60) years of age or older and shall represent the elderly.

(C) Both shall be appointed from the state at large subject to confirmation by the Senate.

(D) The two (2) positions may not be held by the same person.

(E) Both shall be full voting members but shall not participate in the grading of examinations.

(c)(1) The term of each member shall expire on December 31 of the year designated, and a successor appointee shall be appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate, on or before the expiration date of the term expiring.

1 (2) A member may not serve on the board for more than two (2)
2 full terms or more than thirteen (13) years.

3 (d) Vacancies on the board shall be filled by appointment by the
4 Governor within thirty (30) days of the vacancy.

5 (e) The members of the board shall take the oath prescribed by the
6 Arkansas Constitution for state officers before entering upon the discharge
7 of their duties.

8 (f)(1) Members of the board may be removed from the office by the
9 Governor:

10 (A) For good cause under § 25-16-804;

11 (B) For cause including dishonorable or unprofessional
12 conduct, abuse of authority, malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance; or

13 (C) For any reason that would justify probation,
14 suspension, or revocation of a license to practice naturopathic medicine.

15 (2) A member of the board shall not be involved in the
16 investigation except to cooperate with the investigation as required by the
17 investigator.

18
19 17-108-202. Organization and proceedings.

20 (a)(1) Within thirty (30) days after their appointment, the members of
21 the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy shall meet and organize by electing a
22 chair, vice chair, and treasurer.

23 (2) The Treasurer of the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy
24 shall give bond in such amount as may be designated by the board, which may
25 be increased or decreased from time to time, conditioned for the faithful
26 disbursement and accounting of all moneys coming into his or her hands as the
27 treasurer.

28 (b) The board shall hold its regular meetings as established by rule
29 of the board and shall have the power to call and hold special meetings at
30 such times and places as deemed necessary.

31
32 17-108-203. Powers and duties.

33 The Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy shall:

34 (1) Regulate the licensure of naturopathic physicians and
35 determine the hours of continuing education units required for maintaining
36 licensure as a naturopathic physician;

1 (2) Prescribe the manner in which records of examinations and
2 treatments shall be kept and maintained;

3 (3) Establish:

4 (A) Standards for professional responsibility and conduct;

5 (B) Criteria for advertising or promotional materials;

6 (C) Continuing education hours and content;

7 (D) Standards for the state jurisprudence examination;

8 (E) Schedules for providing licensing examinations and for
9 the issuance of examination results;

10 (F) Procedures and standards for reviewing licensing
11 examination scores;

12 (G) Procedures for reviewing transcripts demonstrating
13 completion of an approved naturopathic medical school;

14 (H) Requirements for issuance and renewal of licenses; and

15 (I) Any other matter necessary to implement this chapter;

16 (4) Identify disciplinary actions and circumstances that require
17 disciplinary action;

18 (5) Develop a means to provide information to all naturopathic
19 physicians in the state;

20 (6) Provide for:

21 (A) The investigation of complaints against naturopathic
22 physicians or persons holding themselves out as naturopathic physicians in
23 the state;

24 (B) The publication of information for the public about
25 naturopathic physicians and the practice of naturopathic medicine in the
26 state; and

27 (C) An orderly process for reinstatement of a license; and

28 (7) Create and maintain a list of approved naturopathic medical
29 schools that meet statutory requirements under this chapter.

30
31 Subchapter 3 – Licensure

32
33 17-108-301. Qualifications for licensure.

34 The Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy shall license an applicant who:

35 (1) Submits, in accordance with rules of the Arkansas State
36 Board of Naturopathy, the following items to the Arkansas State Board of

1 Naturopathy:

2 (A) An application for licensure developed by the Arkansas
3 State Board of Naturopathy and submitted in accordance with rules of the
4 Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy;

5 (B) An application fee submitted in an amount and manner
6 established by rules of the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy;

7 (C) Evidence that the applicant has:

8 (i) Graduated from an approved naturopathic medical
9 school;

10 (ii) Successfully completed a competency-based
11 national naturopathic medicine licensing examination; and

12 (iii) Passed a state jurisprudence examination that
13 meets standards established in rules of the Arkansas State Board of
14 Naturopathy; and

15 (D) Evidence of professional liability insurance with
16 policy limits not less than prescribed by the Arkansas State Board of
17 Naturopathy;

18 (2) Is determined by the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy to
19 be physically and mentally capable of safely practicing naturopathic medicine
20 with or without reasonable accommodation; and

21 (3) Has not had a license to practice naturopathic medicine or
22 other healthcare license, registration, or certificate refused, revoked, or
23 suspended by any other jurisdiction for reasons that relate to the
24 applicant's ability to skillfully and safely practice naturopathic medicine
25 unless that license, registration, or certification has been restored to good
26 standing by that jurisdiction.

27
28 17-108-302. Scope of practice.

29 A licensee may practice naturopathic medicine to provide primary care
30 in alignment with naturopathic medical education to:

31 (1) Perform physical examinations;

32 (2) Order laboratory examinations;

33 (3) Order diagnostic imaging studies;

34 (4) Interpret the results of laboratory examinations for
35 diagnostic purposes;

36 (5) Order and, based on a radiologist's report, take action on

diagnostic imaging studies in a manner consistent with naturopathic training;

(6) Prescribe, administer, dispense, and order food, extracts of food, nutraceuticals, vitamins, amino acids, minerals, enzymes, botanicals and their extracts, botanical medicines, homeopathic medicines, all dietary supplements, and nonprescription drugs as defined by the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. § 301 et seq., as existing on January 1, 2025;

(7) Use routes of administration of medication that include oral, nasal, auricular, ocular, rectal, vaginal, and transdermal consistent with the education and training of a naturopathic physician;

(8) Perform naturopathic therapeutic medicine;

(9) Employ the use of naturopathic therapy; and

(10) Use therapeutic devices, barrier contraception, and durable medical equipment.

17-108-303. License expiration and renewal – Denial and revocation – Continuing education.

(a) A license issued or renewed under this chapter shall expire two (2) years following its issuance or renewal.

(b) The Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy may renew the license of any naturopathic physician who, upon the expiration of his or her license:

(1) Has submitted an application for renewal;

(2) Has paid the renewal fee established by rules of the board;

(3) Meets the qualifications for licensure under this subchapter and rules of the board; and

(4) Meets the continuing education requirements established by the board.

(c) The board shall grant an opportunity for a hearing to applicants and licensees for whom the board intends to refuse to issue or renew a license, or whose license the board proposes to revoke or suspend.

17-108-304. Display of license.

A naturopathic physician shall display his or her license in his or her place of business in a location clearly visible to his or her patients and shall also display evidence of the naturopathic physician having completed an approved naturopathic medical school.

1 17-108-305. Referral requirement.

2 A naturopathic physician shall refer to a physician licensed to
3 practice in the state any patient whose medical condition is determined, at
4 the time of evaluation or treatment, to be beyond the scope of practice of
5 the naturopathic physician.

6
7 SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. Issuance of first
8 licenses.

9 On or before December 1, 2025, the Arkansas State Board of Naturopathy
10 shall issue licenses to those applicants who have met the requirements of
11 this act and board rules promulgated in accordance with this act.

12
13 /s/C. Penzo
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