

2026 -- S 2116

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONS -- NURSES

Introduced By: Senators Urso, McKenney, Ciccone, Murray, Valverde, Bell, Vargas, Lawson, and de la Cruz

Date Introduced: January 16, 2026

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 5-34 of the General Laws entitled "Nurses" is hereby amended by
2 adding thereto the following section:

3 **5-34-51. Foot care.**

4 (a) The purpose of this section is to recognize and promote the rights of home care patients
5 and clients to receive safe, appropriate, and high quality foot care and services in a timely manner
6 with consideration, dignity, respect, and privacy, consistent with the provisions of § 23-17.16-5.

7 (b) As used in this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings unless
8 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

9 (1) "Client education" includes, but is not limited to, the following:

10 (i) Self-care, hygiene, and health habits;

11 (ii) Appropriate footwear;

12 (iii) Nutrition;

13 (iv) Exercise;

14 (v) Compliance with medical regime; and

15 (vi) Reporting changes and problems to the patient's podiatrist if one is provided or
16 identified by the client.

17 (2) "Home services" means services provided in an individual's private residential space
18 or dwelling. It includes houses, apartments, condominiums, or other buildings where people live
19 independently or with limited personal assistance, such as an assisted living facility. It does not

1 include facilities such as long-term care nursing homes, hospitals or other facilities or in-patient
2 units where twenty-four (24) hour clinical care is available, nor does it include commercial or public
3 spaces or the common/community areas of multi-unit dwellings such as apartment buildings,
4 condominiums, or senior centers.

5 (c) Nurses who provide home services foot care shall have theoretical knowledge of and
6 demonstrate clinical competency in:

- 7 (1) Foot and lower extremity anatomy and physiology;
- 8 (2) Structure and function of the foot and nail;
- 9 (3) Common foot pathology and related nursing interventions;
- 10 (4) Changes in the foot due to age and chronic diseases;
- 11 (5) Nursing assessment of the foot and lower extremities;
- 12 (6) Use of instruments used in nursing foot care; and
- 13 (7) Infection control.

14 (d) Home services foot care is considered a nursing intervention that includes, but is not
15 limited to, the following components:

- 16 (1) Assessing past medical history including diabetes mellitus, peripheral vascular disease
17 or peripheral neuropathy;
- 18 (2) Assessing health habits affecting feet and lower extremities (activity level, exercise,
19 obesity, diet, smoking, etc.);
- 20 (3) Assessing circulation;
- 21 (4) Assessing skin integrity, foot and nail structure;
- 22 (5) Assessing pain and methods of relief; and
- 23 (6) Implementing a plan of foot care that is consistent with recognized standards of practice
24 that includes:

- 25 (i) Hygiene and shortening of toe and finger nails;
- 26 (ii) The use of emery boards or pedicure drill with emery disc attachment, to smooth corns
27 or calluses;
- 28 (iii) Referring the patient to an appropriate practitioner for further assessment and orders
29 when alterations in skin integrity, foot structure and/or other abnormalities require application of
30 prescribed or over-the-counter treatments/devices;
- 31 (iv) Evaluating client response to a plan of care; and
- 32 (v) Appropriate client education.

33 (e) A nurse providing in-home foot care shall ensure that two (2) hours of continuing
34 education out of the ten (10) hours required per certification period shall be focused on foot care.

1 (f) A nurse whose home care services are limited to providing home services foot care
2 pursuant to and as described in this section shall be exempt from the requirements of §§ 23-15-2
3 and 23-17-42.

4 (g) The department of health shall determine fair and reasonable license and renewal fees
5 for nurses who provide services pursuant to this section.

6 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONS -- NURSES

- 1 This act would permit a nurse who has the appropriate knowledge and can demonstrate
- 2 clinical competency, to provide home services foot care, which would include routine foot and nail
- 3 care, as well as implementing a plan of footcare that includes hygiene and the shortening of toe and
- 4 finger nails. A nurse providing in-home foot care would ensure that two (2) hours of continuing
- 5 education out of the ten (10) hours required per certification period would be focused on foot care.
- 6 The department of health would determine fair and reasonable license and renewal fees for nurses
- 7 providing services pursuant to this section.
- 8 This act would take effect upon passage.

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