

STATE OF NEW YORK

6047

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 27, 2023

Introduced by Sen. GOUNARDES -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to modernizing the chiropractic scope of practice; and to repeal certain provisions of such law relating thereto

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 6551 of the education law, as added by chapter 987
2 of the laws of 1971, paragraphs a and b of subdivision 2 as amended by
3 chapter 450 of the laws of 1983, and subdivision 3 as amended by chapter
4 683 of the laws of 1991, is amended to read as follows:

5 § 6551. Definition of practice of chiropractic. 1. The practice of
6 the profession of chiropractic is defined as [~~detecting and correcting~~
7 ~~by manual or mechanical means structural imbalance, distortion, or~~
8 ~~subluxations in the human body for the purpose of removing nerve inter-~~
9 ~~ference and the effects thereof, where such interference is the result~~
10 ~~of or related to distortion, misalignment or subluxation of or in the~~
11 ~~vertebral column. 2.] the examination, evaluation, detection, diagnosis
12 of the human body and/or treatment or correction of: subluxations in the
13 vertebral column or other articular segments by manual or mechanical
14 means, neuromusculoskeletal conditions, structural imbalance,
15 distortion, and/or dysfunction of the human body and the effects there-
16 of; including restoring nervous system integrity, structural balance
17 and/or function; as it may relate to any human disease, pain, injury,
18 deformity or physical condition.~~

19 2. a. The practice of chiropractic may include, but not be limited to,
20 physical and functional examination of patients, health assessment, work
21 capability assessment, handicap eligibility assessment, school and other
22 sports assessment, school attendance assessment, spinal health assess-
23 ment, analysis, or to give consultation, advice, recommendations and
24 counseling regarding anatomy, physiology, neurology, general health

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 matters, wellness and health optimization by any means of communication,
2 the use of imaging studies using ionizing and non-ionizing imaging meth-
3 ods, adjustment, mobilization, manipulation, traction, and decom-
4 pression, and ancillary procedures consisting of but not limited to,
5 heat, cold, light, air, water, sound, electricity, massage, manual ther-
6 apies, therapeutic exercise with or without assistive devices and clin-
7 ical laboratory testing methods approved by the department as being
8 appropriate to the practice of chiropractic.

9 b. Chiropractic examination, diagnostic and treatment methods may also
10 include electrodiagnostic testing and manipulation under anesthesia when
11 appropriate education standards have been met and as approved by the
12 department as being appropriate to the practice of chiropractic.

13 c. The practice of the profession of chiropractic allows a licensed
14 chiropractor who has successfully completed a registered doctoral, post-
15 doctoral or continuing education certification program of a higher
16 education credential by an accrediting agency, which contains courses of
17 study in wellness care methods, nutrition, and dietary advice satisfac-
18 tory to the department; use of wellness care methods and the ability to
19 engage in nutritional counseling and dietary advice, including the
20 dispensing of food concentrates, food extracts, nutraceuticals, vita-
21 mins, minerals, and other nutritional supplements approved by the
22 department as being appropriate to, and as a part of, the practice of
23 chiropractic.

24 3. a. A license to practice as a chiropractor shall not permit the
25 holder thereof to use [~~radio-therapy, fluoroscopy, or any form of ioniz-~~
26 ~~ing radiation except X-ray which shall be used for the detection of~~
27 ~~structural imbalance, distortion, or subluxations in the human body]~~
28 ionizing radiation sources for the purposes of radiotherapy.

29 b. The requirements and limitations with respect to the use of [~~X-ray]~~
30 diagnostic imaging studies by chiropractors shall be enforced by the
31 state commissioner of health and [~~he~~] the commissioner is authorized to
32 promulgate rules and regulations after conferring with the [~~board]~~
33 department to carry out the purposes of this subdivision.

34 c. Chiropractors shall retain for a period of three years all [~~X-ray~~
35 ~~films]~~ diagnostic images taken in the course of their practice, together
36 with the records pertaining thereto, and shall make such [~~films]~~ images
37 and records available to the state commissioner of health or his or her
38 representative on demand.

39 [~~3-~~] 4. Chiropractors may use diagnostic clinical laboratory methods
40 involving chemical or biological means which particular tests and
41 services shall be approved by the department as appropriate to the prac-
42 tice of chiropractic.

43 5. A license to practice chiropractic shall not permit the holder
44 thereof to treat for any infectious diseases such as pneumonia, any
45 communicable diseases listed in the sanitary code of the state of New
46 York, any of the cardio-vascular-renal or cardio-pulmonary diseases, any
47 surgical condition [~~of the abdomen such as acute appendicitis, or~~
48 ~~diabetes]~~, or any benign or malignant neoplasms; to operate; to reduce
49 fractures [~~or dislocations]~~; to prescribe, administer, dispense or use
50 in [~~his]~~ practice drugs or medicines[~~;~~ or to use diagnostic or therapeutic
51 ~~methods involving chemical or biological means except diagnostic~~
52 ~~services performed by clinical laboratories which services shall be~~
53 ~~approved by the board as appropriate to the practice of chiropractic; or~~
54 ~~to utilize electrical devices except those devices approved by the board~~
55 ~~as being appropriate to the practice of chiropractic. Nothing herein~~
56 ~~shall be construed to prohibit a licensed chiropractor who has success-~~

1 ~~fully completed a registered doctoral program in chiropractic, which~~
 2 ~~contains courses of study in nutrition satisfactory to the department,~~
 3 ~~from using nutritional counseling, including the dispensing of food~~
 4 ~~concentrates, food extracts, vitamins, minerals, and other nutritional~~
 5 ~~supplements approved by the board as being appropriate to, and as a part~~
 6 ~~of, his or her practice of chiropractic. Nothing herein shall be~~
 7 ~~construed to prohibit an individual who is not subject to regulation in~~
 8 ~~this state as a licensed chiropractor from engaging in nutritional coun-~~
 9 ~~seling.] or controlled substances or to administer or use anesthetics.~~
 10 Chiropractors may use topical analgesic substances and anesthetic balms,
 11 salves or emollients or advise on over the counter substances.

12 § 2. Section 6552 of the education law, as added by chapter 987 of the
 13 laws of 1971, is amended to read as follows:

14 § 6552. Practice of chiropractic and use of title "chiropractor",
 15 "doctor of chiropractic" or "chiropractic physician". Only a person
 16 licensed [~~or exempt~~] or otherwise authorized under this article [~~shall~~]
 17 to practice chiropractic [~~or~~] may use the title "chiropractor", "doctor
 18 of chiropractic" or "chiropractic physician".

19 § 3. Section 6553 of the education law, as added by chapter 987 of the
 20 laws of 1971, is amended to read as follows:

21 § 6553. State board for chiropractic. A state board for chiropractic
 22 shall be appointed by the board of regents on recommendation of the
 23 commissioner for the purpose of assisting the board of regents and the
 24 department on matters of professional licensing and professional conduct
 25 in accordance with section sixty-five hundred eight of this title. The
 26 board shall be composed of not less than [~~seven~~] eight members, includ-
 27 ing [~~at least four~~] seven licensed chiropractors[~~, one licensed physi-~~
 28 ~~cian who is a doctor of medicine, one licensed physician who is a doctor~~
 29 ~~of osteopathy, and one educator who holds a doctorate or equivalent~~
 30 ~~degree in either anatomy, physiology, pathology, chemistry or microbiol-~~
 31 ~~ogy] in this state for at least five years and one public member. An
 32 executive secretary to the board shall be appointed by the board of
 33 regents on recommendation of the commissioner.~~

34 § 4. Section 6554 of the education law, as added by chapter 987 of the
 35 laws of 1971, subdivision 3 as amended by chapter 994 of the laws of
 36 1971, subdivision 6 as amended by chapter 669 of the laws of 2022, and
 37 subdivision 8 as amended by chapter 62 of the laws of 1989, is amended
 38 to read as follows:

39 § 6554. Requirements for a professional license. To qualify for a
 40 license as a chiropractor, an applicant shall fulfill the following
 41 requirements:

- 42 (1) Application: file an application with the department;
- 43 (2) Education: have received an education, including [~~two~~] three years
 44 or ninety semester hours of credit or equivalent trimester or quarter
 45 hours of credit of preprofessional college study and completion of a
 46 [~~four-year resident program in chiropractic,~~] program of chiropractic
 47 education of not less than four academic years, or the equivalent there-
 48 of in accordance with the commissioner's regulations;
- 49 (3) Experience: have experience satisfactory to the board and in
 50 accordance with the commissioner's regulations[~~+~~];
- 51 (4) Examination: pass examinations satisfactory to the board and in
 52 accordance with the commissioner's regulations[~~, in clinical chiroprac-~~
 53 ~~tic analysis, the practice of chiropractic, X ray as it relates to~~
 54 ~~chiropractic analysis, and examinations satisfactory to the department~~
 55 ~~in anatomy, physiology, pathology, chemistry, microbiology, diagnosis,~~
 56 ~~and the use and effect of X-ray] for the practice of chiropractic;~~

1 (5) Age: be at least twenty-one years of age;

2 (6) Citizenship or immigration status: be a United States citizen or a
3 noncitizen lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United
4 States;

5 (7) Character: be of good moral character as determined by the depart-
6 ment; and

7 (8) Fees: pay a fee of one hundred seventy-five dollars to the depart-
8 ment for [~~admission to a department conducted examination and for~~] an
9 initial license upon completion and passage of a department approved
10 examination, a fee of eighty-five dollars for each reexamination, a fee
11 of one hundred fifteen dollars for an initial license for persons not
12 requiring admission to a department conducted examination, and a fee of
13 one hundred fifty-five dollars for each triennial registration period.

14 § 5. Section 6555 of the education law, as amended by chapter 537 of
15 the laws of 1983, is amended to read as follows:

16 § 6555. Exempt persons. [~~Nothing in this article shall be construed~~
17 ~~to affect or prevent a student enrolled in a college of chiropractic in~~
18 ~~this state from engaging in all phases of clinical practice under super-~~
19 ~~vision of a licensed chiropractor or physician in a curriculum regis-~~
20 ~~tered by the department.~~] The following persons under the following
21 limitations may practice chiropractic within the state without a
22 license:

23 1. A student enrolled in any accredited college of chiropractic engag-
24 ing in all phases of clinical practice under supervision of a licensed
25 chiropractor or physician in a curriculum registered by the department;
26 or

27 2. A student who is performing a clinical externship or preceptorship
28 in a chiropractic office or clinic setting and who is enrolled in a
29 chiropractic school which meets the standards satisfactory to the
30 department, provided such practice is under the direct supervision of a
31 licensed chiropractor for a maximum period of twelve months; or

32 3. Any chiropractor authorized to practice chiropractic while travel-
33 ling from another state or country in which he or she is licensed, to
34 provide chiropractic services during any emergency services associated
35 with any rescue, recovery or humanitarian relief effort provided such
36 practice is limited to the organized emergency services; or

37 4. A chiropractor who is not a resident of this state who is legally
38 qualified to practice in his or her state and who is travelling from
39 another state for the purpose of providing chiropractic services for a
40 specific purpose or event of limited duration; or

41 5. Any chiropractor who is licensed in another state or country and
42 who is meeting or communicating with a chiropractor licensed in this
43 state, for purposes of consultation, provided such practice is limited
44 to such consultation; or

45 6. Any chiropractor who is licensed in another state or country, who
46 is visiting a chiropractic school or teaching facility in this state to
47 receive chiropractic instruction for a period not to exceed six months
48 or to conduct chiropractic instruction, provided such practice is limit-
49 ed to such instruction and is under the general supervision of a
50 licensed chiropractor; or

51 7. Any chiropractor who is authorized by a foreign government to prac-
52 tice in relation to its diplomatic, consular or maritime staffs,
53 provided such practice is limited to such staffs; or

54 8. Any commissioned chiropractic officer who is serving in the United
55 States armed forces or public health service or any chiropractor who is

1 employed in the United States Veterans Administration, provided such
2 practice is limited to such service or employment.

3 § 6. Section 6556 of the education law is REPEALED and a new section
4 6556 is added to read as follows:

5 § 6556. Limited permits. Permits limited as to eligibility, practice
6 and duration, shall be issued by the department to eligible applicants,
7 as follows:

8 1. Eligibility: The following persons shall be eligible for a limited
9 permit:

10 a. A person who fulfills all requirements for a license as a chiro-
11 practor except those relating to the examination and citizenship or
12 permanent residence in the United States;

13 b. A licensed foreign chiropractor who meets guidelines developed in
14 accordance with the commissioner's regulations;

15 c. A licensed foreign chiropractor or a foreign intern who is in this
16 country on a non-immigration visa for the continuation of chiropractic
17 study who meets guidelines developed in accordance with the commis-
18 ioner's regulations;

19 d. Any graduate of a chiropractic school which meets standards satis-
20 factory to the department, provided such practice is under the general
21 supervision of a licensed chiropractor for a maximum period of twelve
22 months from date of graduation.

23 2. Limit of practice. A permittee shall be authorized to practice
24 chiropractic only under the supervision of a licensed chiropractor and
25 only in a licensed chiropractic office or clinical setting.

26 3. Duration. A limited permit shall be valid for one year. A limited
27 permit may be renewed annually at the discretion of the department.

28 4. Fees. The fee for each limited permit and for each renewal shall be
29 one hundred five dollars.

30 § 7. The education law is amended by adding a new section 6557 to read
31 as follows:

32 § 6557. Special provisions. 1. Non-liability of licensed chiropractors
33 for first aid or emergency treatment. Notwithstanding any inconsistent
34 provision of any general, special or local law, any licensed chiroprac-
35 tor who voluntarily and without the expectation of monetary compensation
36 renders first aid or emergency treatment at the scene of an accident or
37 other emergency, outside a hospital, doctor's office or any other place
38 having proper and necessary chiropractic equipment, to a person who is
39 unconscious, ill or injured, shall not be liable for damages for inju-
40 ries alleged to have been sustained by such person or for damages for
41 the death of such person alleged to have occurred by reason of an act or
42 omission in the rendering of such first aid or emergency treatment
43 unless it is established that such injuries were or such death was
44 caused by gross negligence on the part of such chiropractor. Nothing in
45 this section shall be deemed or construed to relieve a licensed chiro-
46 practor from liability for damages for injuries or death caused by an
47 act or omission on the part of a chiropractor while rendering profes-
48 sional services in the normal and ordinary course of his or her prac-
49 tice.

50 2. This article shall not be construed to affect or prevent the
51 following:

52 a. The furnishing of any assistance in an emergency;

53 b. The chiropractor from being a primary portal of entry healthcare
54 provider.

55 3. There shall be no monetary liability on the part of, and no cause
56 of action for damages shall arise against, any person, partnership,

1 corporation, firm, society, or other entity on account of the communi-
2 cation of information in the possession of such person or entity, or on
3 account of any recommendation or evaluation, regarding the qualifica-
4 tions, fitness, or professional conduct or practices of a chiropractor,
5 to any governmental agency, chiropractic society, a hospital as defined
6 in article twenty-eight of the public health law, a hospital as defined
7 in subdivision ten of section 1.03 of the mental hygiene law, or a
8 health maintenance organization organized under article forty-four of
9 the public health law or article forty-three of the insurance law,
10 including a committee of an individual practice association or medical
11 group acting pursuant to a contract with a health maintenance organiza-
12 tion. The foregoing shall not apply to information which is untrue and
13 communicated with malicious intent.

14 § 8. The education law is amended by adding a new section 6558 to read
15 as follows:

16 § 6558. Definition of chiropractic clinical assistant. 1. A chirop-
17 ractic clinical assistant is defined as a person certified in accordance
18 with this article who works under the supervision of a licensed chirop-
19 ractor performing such patient duties as are assigned by the supervis-
20 ing chiropractor. A chiropractic clinical assistant may only provide
21 patient services on the orders and instructions of a supervising chirop-
22 ractor. Supervision of a chiropractic clinical assistant by a licensed
23 chiropractor shall be on-site supervision, but not necessarily direct
24 personal supervision. The number of chiropractic clinical assistants
25 supervised by one licensed chiropractor shall not exceed the ratio of
26 four chiropractic clinical assistants to one licensed chiropractor as
27 shall be determined by the commissioner's regulations ensuring that
28 there be adequate supervision in the best interest of public health and
29 safety. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a hospital or other
30 public health law article twenty-eight facility from employing chirop-
31 ractic clinical assistants, provided they work under the supervision of
32 a chiropractor, physician, nurse practitioner or other medical provider
33 designated by the hospital or public health law article twenty-eight
34 facility and not beyond the scope of practice of a chiropractic clinical
35 assistant.

36 2. A certified chiropractic clinical assistant may only provide clin-
37 ical services on the orders and instructions of a supervising chiroprac-
38 tor.

39 3. The scope of services for a certified chiropractic clinical assist-
40 ant shall include assisting a chiropractor with providing certain clin-
41 ical procedures common and customary to the chiropractic setting which
42 include, but are not limited to, the following: collecting general
43 health data, such as the taking of an oral history, vital signs or
44 neurological, physiological or anatomical measurements; performing
45 objective data collection tests common and customary to the chiropractic
46 setting including, but not limited to dynamic or static surface EMG,
47 thermography, heart rate variability; applying thermal, light, air,
48 water, sound, electrical and mechanical modalities; and monitoring
49 prescribed rehabilitative activities.

50 4. A certified chiropractic clinical assistant must be adequately
51 trained in the proper operation of any device or equipment and know-
52 ledgeable of anatomy and the appropriate safety procedures and contrain-
53 dications with respect to the clinical services he or she is directed to
54 provide.

55 5. Nothing in this section shall be construed to allow a certified
56 chiropractic clinical assistant to provide a chiropractic adjustment;

1 manipulation; joint mobilization; perform radiological tests (X-rays);
2 nutritional instruction; and counseling or other therapeutic service or
3 procedure which requires individual licensure in New York state.

4 6. Registration as a certified chiropractic clinical assistant is not
5 required for individuals who perform administrative activities of a
6 non-clinical nature.

7 § 9. The education law is amended by adding a new section 6559 to read
8 as follows:

9 § 6559. Duties of chiropractic clinical assistant and the use of title
10 "chiropractic clinical assistant." Only a person certified or otherwise
11 authorized under this article shall participate in the practice of
12 chiropractic as a chiropractic clinical assistant and only a person
13 certified under this section shall use the title "chiropractic clinical
14 assistant."

15 § 10. The education law is amended by adding a new section 6560 to
16 read as follows:

17 § 6560. Requirements for certification as a chiropractic clinical
18 assistant.

19 1. Application: file an application with the department;

20 2. Education: have received an education and training in a chiroprac-
21 tic clinical assistant program in accordance with the commissioner's
22 regulations and department of education; including but not limited to a
23 minimum of twenty-four hours of didactic study;

24 3. Experience: have experience satisfactory to the department for
25 chiropractic in accordance with the commissioner's regulations;

26 4. Examination: pass an examination satisfactory to the department and
27 in accordance with the commissioner's regulations;

28 5. Age: be at least eighteen years of age;

29 6. Character: be of good moral character as determined by the depart-
30 ment;

31 7. Registration: all certified chiropractic clinical assistants shall
32 register triennially with the education department in accordance with
33 the regulations of the commissioner;

34 8. Fees: pay a fee for an initial certificate of fifty dollars, and a
35 fee of fifty dollars for each subsequent triennial registration period.

36 9. A certified chiropractic clinical assistant shall conduct them-
37 selves within the boundaries of proper ethical behavior and shall adhere
38 to acceptable standards of conduct regardless of whether a supervising
39 chiropractor or person in a position of authority may order, impart or
40 condone behavior or conduct which is improper.

41 10. "Improper conduct", under the meaning of this section, shall
42 include conduct delineated under the chiropractic practice act, regu-
43 lations, and such other New York state laws that may apply.

44 11. The department may refuse to issue, refuse to renew, or may
45 suspend, revoke, censure, reprimand, restrict, or limit the registration
46 of, or fine any person pursuant to the laws of New York state or the
47 procedures set forth herein, upon one or more of the grounds for disci-
48 pline set forth in this article.

49 § 11. The education law is amended by adding a new section 6561 to
50 read as follows:

51 § 6561. Exemptions. 1. This article shall not be construed to affect
52 or prevent a chiropractic clinical assistant student from engaging in
53 clinical assisting under the supervision of a licensed chiropractor as
54 part of a program conducted in an approved program for chiropractic
55 clinical assistants or in a clinical facility or health care agency
56 affiliated with the program for chiropractic clinical assistants.

1 2. Supervision of a chiropractic clinical assistant student by a
2 licensed chiropractor shall be on-site supervision and direct super-
3 vision.

4 § 12. The education law is amended by adding a new section 6562 to
5 read as follows:

6 § 6562. Limited permits. 1. The department shall issue a limited
7 permit to an applicant who meets all requirements for admission to the
8 certification examination.

9 2. All practice under a limited permit shall be under the supervision
10 of a licensed chiropractor or other licensed medical provider in a
11 public hospital, an incorporated hospital or clinic, a licensed proprie-
12 tary hospital, a licensed nursing home, a public health agency, a recog-
13 nized public or non-public school setting, the office of a licensed
14 chiropractor, or in the civil service of the state or political subdivi-
15 sion thereof.

16 3. Limited permits shall be for six months and the department may for
17 justifiable cause renew a limited permit provided that no applicant
18 shall practice under any limited permit for more than a total of one
19 year.

20 4. Supervision of a permittee by a licensed chiropractor shall be
21 on-site supervision and not necessarily direct personal supervision.

22 5. The fee for each limited permit and for each renewal shall be fifty
23 dollars.

24 § 13. This act shall take effect on the first of January next succeed-
25 ing the date on which it shall have become a law.