

By: Representatives Creekmore IV, Felsher

To: Public Health and Human
Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 592

1 AN ACT TO BE KNOWN AS THE "NO PATIENT LEFT ALONE ACT;" TO
2 PROVIDE THAT THIS ACT APPLIES TO LICENSED HOSPITALS, NURSING
3 FACILITIES, INTERMEDIATE CARE FACILITIES FOR THE INTELLECTUALLY
4 DISABLED, PERSONAL CARE HOMES, ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES AND
5 HOSPICE FACILITIES; TO REQUIRE EACH PROVIDER TO ESTABLISH
6 VISITATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND SPECIFY THE MINIMUM TOPICS
7 THAT SUCH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MUST INCLUDE; TO PROVIDE THAT
8 SAFETY-RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MAY NOT BE MORE STRINGENT
9 THAN THOSE ESTABLISHED FOR THE PROVIDER'S STAFF AND MAY NOT
10 REQUIRE VISITORS TO SUBMIT PROOF OF ANY VACCINATION OR
11 IMMUNIZATION; TO PROVIDE THAT THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MUST
12 ALLOW CONSENSUAL PHYSICAL CONTACT BETWEEN A RESIDENT, CLIENT, OR
13 PATIENT AND THE VISITOR; TO PROVIDE THAT AN ADULT RESIDENT,
14 CLIENT, OR PATIENT MAY DESIGNATE A VISITOR(S) WHO IS A FAMILY
15 MEMBER, FRIEND, GUARDIAN, OR OTHER INDIVIDUAL AS AN ESSENTIAL
16 CAREGIVER(S); TO PROVIDE THAT THE PROVIDER MUST ALLOW IN-PERSON
17 VISITATION BY THE ESSENTIAL CAREGIVER(S) FOR AT LEAST TWO HOURS
18 DAILY IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER VISITATION AUTHORIZED BY THE
19 PROVIDER; TO SPECIFY THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE VISITATION
20 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MUST ALLOW IN-PERSON VISITATION; TO
21 AUTHORIZE PROVIDERS TO SUSPEND IN-PERSON VISITATION BY A SPECIFIC
22 VISITOR IF THE VISITOR VIOLATES THE PROVIDER'S POLICIES AND
23 PROCEDURES; TO REQUIRE THE PROVIDERS TO PROVIDE THEIR VISITATION
24 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH WHEN
25 APPLYING FOR INITIAL LICENSURE, LICENSURE RENEWAL, OR CHANGE OF
26 OWNERSHIP; TO REQUIRE PROVIDERS TO MAKE THE VISITATION POLICIES
27 AND PROCEDURES AVAILABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR REVIEW AT ANY TIME,
28 UPON REQUEST; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO DEDICATE A STAND-ALONE
29 PAGE ON ITS WEBSITE TO EXPLAIN THE VISITATION REQUIREMENTS OF THIS
30 ACT AND PROVIDE A LINK TO THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBPAGE TO REPORT
31 COMPLAINTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE RIGHTS SPECIFIED IN THIS ACT MAY
32 NOT BE TERMINATED, SUSPENDED, OR WAIVED BY THE HOSPITAL, THE STATE
33 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, OR ANY GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY, NOTWITHSTANDING



34 DECLARATIONS OF EMERGENCY DECLARED BY THE GOVERNOR; AND FOR
35 RELATED PURPOSES.

36 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

37 **SECTION 1.** (1) This section shall be known and may be cited
38 as the "No Patient Left Alone Act."

39 (2) This section applies to the following providers:

40 (a) Hospitals licensed under Section 41-9-1 et seq.;

41 (b) Nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities
42 for the intellectually disabled, personal care homes and assisted
43 living facilities licensed under Section 43-11-1 et seq.; and

44 (c) Hospice facilities licensed under Section 41-85-1
45 et seq.

46 (3) (a) Not later than thirty (30) days after the effective
47 date of this act, each provider shall establish visitation
48 policies and procedures. The policies and procedures must, at a
49 minimum, include infection control and education policies for
50 visitors; screening, personal protective equipment, and other
51 infection control protocols for visitors; permissible length of
52 visits and numbers of visitors, and designation of a person
53 responsible for ensuring that staff adhere to the policies and
54 procedures. Safety-related policies and procedures may not be
55 more stringent than those established for the provider's staff and
56 may not require visitors to submit proof of any vaccination or
57 immunization. The policies and procedures must allow consensual
58 physical contact between a resident, client, or patient and the
59 visitor.



60 (b) An adult resident, client, or patient may designate
61 a visitor(s) who is a family member, friend, guardian, or other
62 individual as an essential caregiver(s). An essential
63 caregiver(s) may be designated orally by the resident, client, or
64 patient, or designated in a written document signed by the
65 resident, client, or patient, doctor and witnessed by an adult.
66 The provider must allow in-person visitation by the essential
67 caregiver(s) for at least two (2) hours daily in addition to any
68 other visitation authorized by the provider. This section does
69 not require an essential caregiver(s) to provide necessary care to
70 a resident, client, or patient of a provider, and providers may
71 not require an essential caregiver(s) to provide such care.

72 (c) The visitation policies and procedures required by
73 this section must allow in-person visitation in all of the
74 following circumstances, unless the resident, client, or patient
75 objects:

76 (i) End-of-life situations;

77 (ii) A resident, client, or patient who was living
78 with family before being admitted to the provider's care is
79 struggling with the change in environment and lack of in-person
80 family support;

81 (iii) The resident, client, or patient is making
82 one or more major medical decisions;



(iv) A resident, client, or patient is experiencing emotional distress or grieving the loss of a friend or family member who recently died;

(v) A resident, client, or patient needs cueing or encouragement to eat or drink which was previously provided by a family member or caregiver;

(vi) A resident, client, or patient who used to talk and interact with others is seldom speaking;

(vii) For hospitals, childbirth, including labor and delivery;

(viii) Pediatric patients; and

(ix) Any other circumstance that the State Department of Health or the designated essential caregiver(s) of the resident, client, or patient deems appropriate.

(d) The policies and procedures may require a visitor to agree in writing to follow the provider's policies and procedures. A provider may suspend in-person visitation by a specific visitor if the visitor violates the provider's policies and procedures.

(e) The providers shall provide their visitation policies and procedures to the State Department of Health when applying for initial licensure, licensure renewal, or change of ownership. The provider must make the visitation policies and procedures available to the department for review at any time, upon request.



108 (f) Within twenty-four (24) hours after establishing
109 the policies and procedures required under this section, providers
110 must make such policies and procedures easily accessible from the
111 homepage of their websites.

112 (4) The State Department of Health shall dedicate a
113 stand-alone page on its website to explain the visitation
114 requirements of this section and provide a link to the
115 department's webpage to report complaints.

116 (5) The rights specified in this section may not be
117 terminated, suspended, or waived by the hospital, the State
118 Department of Health, or any governmental entity, notwithstanding
119 declarations of emergency declared by the Governor.

120 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
121 and after July 1, 2025.

