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SB-387 Physicians and surgeons: special faculty permits: academic medical centers. (2025-2026)

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Senate Bill No. 387

CHAPTER 752

An act to amend Sections 2168 and 2168.1 of the Business and Professions Code, relating to healing arts.

[Approved by Governor October 13, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 13, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 387, Rubio. Physicians and surgeons: special faculty permits: academic medical centers.

Existing law, the Medical Practice Act, generally prohibits the practice of medicine without a physician's and surgeon's certificate issued by the Medical Board of California. The Medical Practice Act authorizes a person who meets certain eligibility requirements to apply to the board for a special faculty permit, which authorizes the holder to practice medicine without a physician's and surgeon's certificate only within a medical school itself, in any affiliated institution of the medical school, or in an academic medical center and any affiliated institution in which the permitholder is providing instruction as part of the medical school's or academic medical center's educational program and for which the medical school or academic medical center has assumed direct responsibility. Existing law defines "academic medical center" for these purposes as a facility that meets certain requirements. Among those requirements, existing law requires the facility to train a minimum of 250 resident physicians annually and to be accredited by both the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

This bill would modify the requirements for a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center to qualify as an academic medical center by, instead, requiring the facility to train 25 resident or fellow physicians annually and exempting the facility from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation requirement.

Existing law requires the board to establish a review committee to review and make recommendations to the board regarding applicants applying for special faculty permits and requires the review committee to include one representative to represent academic medical centers in California. Existing law authorizes the board to approve up to 5 applications for special faculty permits submitted by academic medical centers in any calendar year.

This bill would require the individual representing academic medical centers to be from a facility that trains a minimum of 250 resident physicians in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education accredited residencies on an annual basis. The bill would authorize the board to approve up to 5 applications for special faculty permits submitted by each academic medical center in any calendar year.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 2168 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

2168. (a) (1) A special faculty permit authorizes the holder to practice medicine only within the medical school itself, any affiliated institution of the medical school, or an academic medical center and any affiliated institution in which the permitholder is providing instruction as part of the medical school's or academic medical center's educational program and for which the medical school or academic medical center has assumed direct responsibility. The holder of a special faculty permit shall not engage in the practice of medicine except as provided above.

(2) For the purposes of this section, the term "academic medical center" is defined as meeting all of the following requirements:

(A) A facility licensed by the State of California.

(B) The facility conducts both internal and external peer review of the faculty for the purpose of conferral of academic appointments on an ongoing basis.

(C) The facility conducts clinical and basic research for the purpose of advancing patient care.

(D) The facility meets either of the following:

(i) The facility trains a minimum of 250 resident physicians in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education accredited residencies on an annual basis commencing each January 1.

(ii) The facility is a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center that trains a minimum of 25 resident or fellow physicians in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education accredited residencies on an annual basis commencing each January 1.

(E) The facility has more than 100 research students or postdoctoral researchers annually.

(F) The facility has foreign medical graduates in research.

(G) The facility offers clinical observer experiences.

(H) (i) Except as provided in clause (ii), the facility is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

(ii) The facility is a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center that is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

(b) Time spent in a faculty position under a special faculty permit shall not be counted toward the postgraduate training required for licensure and shall not qualify the holder of the permit for waiver of any written examination required for licensure.

(c) The medical school or academic medical center shall not appoint the holder of a special faculty permit to a position as a division chief or head of a department without express written authorization from the board.

SEC. 2. Section 2168.1 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

2168.1. (a) Any person who meets all of the following eligibility requirements may apply for a special faculty permit:

(1) Is academically eminent. For purposes of this article, "academically eminent" means the applicant meets either of the following criteria:

(A) The person holds or has been offered a full-time appointment at the level of full professor in a tenure track position, or its equivalent, at an academic medical center, as defined in Section 2168, or a California medical school approved by the board.

(B) The person is clearly outstanding in a specific field of medicine or surgery and has been offered by the dean of a medical school or the dean or chief medical officer of an academic medical center a full-time academic appointment at the level of full professor or associate professor, and a great need exists to fill that position.

(2) Possesses a current valid license to practice medicine issued by another state, country, or other jurisdiction.

(3) Is not subject to denial under Section 480 or any provision of this chapter.

(4) Pays the fee prescribed for application for, and initial licensure as, a physician and surgeon.

(5) Has not held a position under Section 2113 for a period of two years or more preceding the date of the application. The board may, in its discretion, waive this requirement.

(b) The board shall exercise its discretion in determining whether an applicant satisfies the requirements of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a).

(c) (1) The board shall establish a review committee composed of two members of the division, one of whom shall be a physician and surgeon and one of whom shall be a public member, one representative from each of the medical schools, and one individual selected pursuant to paragraph (3) to represent academic medical centers in California. The committee shall review and make recommendations to the board regarding the applicants applying pursuant to this section, including those applicants that a medical school or academic medical center proposes to appoint as a division chief or head of a department or as nontenure track faculty.

(2) The representative of the medical school or academic medical center offering the applicant an academic appointment shall not participate in any vote on the recommendation to the board for that applicant.

(3) The academic medical centers shall select by consensus, one individual to represent academic medical centers on the review committee. The individual shall be from a facility that meets the criteria in clause (i) of subparagraph (D) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 2168.

(d) The board shall not approve more than five applications submitted pursuant to this section by each academic medical center in any calendar year.

(e) As used in this section, "academic medical center" has the same meaning as defined in subdivision (a) of Section 2168.