

HB 2606 -- NURSE STAFFING RATIOS

SPONSOR: Morgan

This bill requires all health care facilities licensed under Chapter 197 to create and implement a staffing plan for each hospital unit, clinical unit, and patient care area. The plan must be in writing and provide that at all times, during all shifts, there be staff at levels specified by these sections.

The plan is to consider, at a minimum: the number of patients, the type and intensity of care, anticipated changes in census, the specialized experience required of direct care registered nurses and other staff, including temporary personnel, and obstacles in the physical layout of the facility. The facility is not to substitute technology, impose mandatory overtime, or lay off licensed practical nurses in order to meet the minimum requirements of the plan.

The facility shall review and adjust the plan annually, submit it to the Department of Health and Senior Services, and post the plan in a visible place in every unit for public viewing. Included in the post shall be the actual staffing for every shift and the facility shall maintain those records for at least three years and submit them as a mandatory condition of licensure.

The department shall conduct periodic audits to ensure implementation of the staffing plan and establish a toll-free phone line to provide information about these requirements and accept reports of violations. No person whether an employee, patient, or otherwise, who is acting in good faith shall be retaliated against in any way.

The bill provides the department may impose penalties against any facility or person who violates any of these provisions and shall post on its website any facility that have been penalized for violating these provisions.