

Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians Legislative Analysis

BILL NUMBER:	Assembly Bill 1273
SUBJECT:	Earn and Learn Job Training Opportunities
AMENDED DATE:	March 22, 2021
AUTHOR:	Assembly Member Freddie Rodriguez
SPONSOR:	Author

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

This bill would add the Director of Consumer Affairs and State Public Health Officer as ex-officio members of the Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (IACA), and requires the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) and Department of Public Health (DPH) to use licensing or certification standards that authorize “earn and learn” job training opportunities. This bill also prohibits DCA and DPH from prohibiting “earn and learn” programs

STAFF POSITION/RECOMMENDATION:

SUPPORT

BACKGROUND:

Apprenticeship opportunities can help train a quality workforce, support recruitment and retention and improve the quality of patient care. According to the author, expanded earn and learn opportunities connect workers with employers, especially when health care workers are desperately needed in allied health occupations.

Interagency Council on Apprenticeship (IACA)

AB 235 (O’Donnell), Chapter 704, Statutes of 2018, created the IACA to focus on the approach and oversight of apprenticeship programs in non-building trades and non-firefighting industries. The IACA currently has 14 members, with six members appointed by the Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development and eight ex-officio members.

Earn and Learn Programs

Earn and learn programs combine applied learning in a paid workplace setting or bring together classroom instruction with on-the-job training. AB 2105 (Rodriguez), Chapter 410, Statutes of 2016, directed DCA to engage in a stakeholder process to update policies and remove barriers to facilitate the development of earn and learn training programs in allied health professions. The final report (<https://www.dca.ca.gov/publications/ab2105.pdf>) found a lack of coordinated effort among relevant state agencies and recommended establishing formal communication through IACA.

ANALYSIS:

The BVNPT believes that one key obstacle to licensure is the cost of the private programs. As such, the Board supports strategies and policies that improve access to VN and PT prelicensure programs.

Adding the DCA Director to the IACA greatly enhances the understanding and communication to and from the licensing boards regarding opportunities, and the BVNPT, in turn, will share this information systematically with the programs.

In 2018-19, the BVNPT partnered with DCA and other healing arts boards and discussed apprenticeship issues and respond to AB 2105. The conversations regarding nursing education programs centered around the identification of “best practices” in the field. Five models are used today: internships, cooperative education, apprenticeships, federal work study, and practicum (guided by faculty such as student teaching). In the BVNPT’s case, such programs may enable experienced individuals who are Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) to enroll in VN or PT programs while earning a paycheck.

Related Legislation

A companion bill, AB 565 (Lackey) would add the Director of the State Department of Social Services (DSS) to the IACA and expand IACA’s reporting requirements to include information on foster and homeless youth. AB 565 passed out of the Assembly on May 27, 2021 and awaits hearing in the Senate.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

SUPPORT:

*California State Council of Service Employees International Union
Jewish Vocational Services
Board of Registered Nursing*

SEIU California supports this measure stating that, “Promotion of “earn and learn” job training models can be a critical part of the workforce strategy related to healthcare reform as it is seen as a way to train health care workers and address some of the workforce issues, including recruitment and retention, training a quality workforce, and improving quality of patient care. Additionally, employers want to recruit qualified candidates but are not finding candidates who are adequately prepared. Earn and learn programs provide the flexibility students need to acquire the knowledge and skills and earn a living at the same time. Moreover, the programs teach students the work ethic and communication skills needed to make a successful transition to the workforce.

OPPOSITION:

None listed