

**FIRST ENGROSSMENT  
with Senate Amendments**

Sixty-first  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 1073**

Introduced by

Human Services Committee

(At the request of the Commission on Uniform State Laws)

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact chapter 37-17.3 and a new section to chapter 65-06 of  
2 the North Dakota Century Code, relating to adoption of the Uniform Emergency Volunteer  
3 Health Practitioners Act and workers' compensation coverage of volunteers; and to amend and  
4 reenact section 65-06-05 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to workers' compensation  
5 coverage of volunteers.

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

7 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 37-17.3 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and  
8 enacted as follows:

9 **37-17.3-01. Definitions.** In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

- 10 1. "Disaster relief organization" means an entity that provides emergency or disaster  
11 relief services that include health or veterinary services provided by volunteer  
12 health practitioners and which:
- 13 a. Is designated or recognized as a provider of those services pursuant to a  
14 disaster response and recovery plan adopted by an agency of the federal  
15 government, the state department of health, or the state board of animal  
16 health; or
- 17 b. Regularly plans and conducts its activities in coordination with an agency of  
18 the federal government, the state department of health, or the state board of  
19 animal health.
- 20 2. "Emergency" means an event or condition that is a disaster or an emergency as  
21 defined under chapter 37-17.1 and any event, condition, or incident for which the  
22 deployment of volunteer health practitioners is determined to be necessary by the  
23 state health officer, a local board of health, or the state veterinarian.

- 1        3. "Emergency declaration" means a declaration or proclamation of disaster or  
2        emergency issued by the governor.
- 3        4. "Emergency management assistance compact" means the interstate compact  
4        approved by Congress by Public Law No. 104-321 [110 Stat. 3877].
- 5        5. "Entity" means a person other than an individual.
- 6        6. "Health facility" means an entity licensed under the laws of this or another state to  
7        provide health or veterinary services.
- 8        7. "Health practitioner" means an individual licensed under the laws of this or another  
9        state to provide health or veterinary services and any other individual performing  
10       nonmedical support disaster or emergency responsibilities or duties at any place in  
11       this state subject to the order or control of, or pursuant to a request of, the state  
12       department of health or a local public health unit and deployed through the  
13       emergency system for advance registration of volunteer health professionals.
- 14       8. "Health services" means the provision of treatment, care, advice or guidance, or  
15       other services, or supplies related to the health or death of individuals or human  
16       populations, to the extent necessary to respond to an emergency, including:
- 17       a. The following, concerning the physical or mental condition or functional status  
18       of an individual or affecting the structure or function of the body:
- 19           (1) Preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic, rehabilitative, maintenance, or  
20           palliative care; and
- 21           (2) Counseling, assessment, procedures, or other services;
- 22       b. Sale or dispensing of a drug, a device, equipment, or another item to an  
23       individual in accordance with a prescription; and
- 24       c. Funeral, cremation, cemetery, or other mortuary services.
- 25       9. "Host entity" means an entity operating in this state which uses volunteer health  
26       practitioners to respond to an emergency.
- 27       10. "License" means authorization by a state to engage in health or veterinary services  
28       that are unlawful without the authorization. The term includes authorization under  
29       the laws of this state to an individual to provide health or veterinary services based  
30       upon a national certification issued by a public or private entity.

1        11. "Scope of practice" means the extent of the authorization to provide health or  
2        veterinary services granted to a health practitioner by a license issued to the  
3        practitioner in the state in which the principal part of the practitioner's services are  
4        rendered, including any conditions imposed by the licensing authority.

5        12. "Veterinary services" means the provision of treatment, care, advice or guidance,  
6        or other services, or supplies related to the health or death of an animal or animal  
7        populations, to the extent necessary to respond to an emergency, including:

8            a. Diagnosing, treating, or preventing an animal disease, injury, or other physical  
9            or mental condition by prescribing, administering, or dispensing vaccine,  
10          medicine, surgery, or therapy;

11          b. Using a procedure for reproductive management; and

12          c. Monitoring and treating animal populations for diseases that have spread or  
13          demonstrate the potential to spread to humans.

14        13. "Volunteer health practitioner" means a health practitioner who provides health or  
15        veterinary services, whether or not the practitioner receives compensation for  
16        those services. The term does not include a practitioner who receives  
17        compensation pursuant to a preexisting employment relationship with a host entity  
18        or affiliate which requires the practitioner to provide health services in this state,  
19        unless the practitioner is not a resident of this state and is employed by a disaster  
20        relief organization providing services in this state during an emergency.

21        **37-17.3-02. Applicability to volunteer health practitioners.** This chapter applies to  
22        volunteer health practitioners registered with a registration system that complies with section  
23        37-17.3-04 and who provide health or veterinary services in this state for a host entity during an  
24        emergency.

25        **37-17.3-03. Regulation of services during emergencies.**

26        1. During an emergency, the state department of health or the state board of animal  
27        health may limit, restrict, or otherwise regulate:

28            a. The duration of practice by volunteer health practitioners;

29            b. The geographical areas in which volunteer health practitioners may practice;

30            c. The types of volunteer health practitioners who may practice; and

d. Any other matters necessary to coordinate effectively the provision of health or veterinary services during the emergency.

2. An order issued under subsection 1 may take effect immediately, without prior notice or comment, and is not a rule within the meaning of chapter 28-32.

3. A host entity that uses volunteer health practitioners to provide health or veterinary services in this state shall:

a. Consult and coordinate its activities with the state department of health or the state board of animal health to the extent practicable to provide for the efficient and effective use of volunteer health practitioners; and

b. Comply with any laws other than this chapter relating to the management of emergency health or veterinary services, including chapters 23-27 and 43-29.

**37-17.3-04. Volunteer health practitioner registration systems.**

1. In the case of a volunteer health practitioner whose principal practice is located in this state and who is licensed by a North Dakota professional board or agency, the volunteer health practitioner registration system is the emergency system for advance registration of volunteer health professionals and is maintained by the state department of health and is known as the public health emergency volunteer medical reserve corps.

2. In the case of a volunteer health practitioner who is not covered under subsection 1, the volunteer health practitioner registration system is the system established under subsection 1 or a system that qualifies under this subsection.

To qualify as a volunteer health practitioner registration system under this subsection, a system must:

a. Accept applications for the registration of volunteer health practitioners before or during an emergency;

b. Include information about the licensure and good standing of health practitioners which is accessible by authorized persons;

c. Be capable of confirming the accuracy of information concerning whether a health practitioner is licensed and in good standing before health services or veterinary services are provided under this chapter; and

d. Meet one of the following conditions:

- (1) Be an emergency system for advance registration of volunteer health-care practitioners established by a state and funded through the United States department of health and human services under section 319I of the Public Health Services Act [42 U.S.C. 247d-7b];
    - (2) Be a local unit consisting of trained and equipped emergency response, public health, and medical personnel formed pursuant to section 2801 of the Public Health Services Act [42 U.S.C. 300hh]; or
    - (3) Be operated by a:
      - (a) Disaster relief organization;
      - (b) Licensing board;
      - (c) National or regional association of licensing boards or health practitioners;
      - (d) Health facility that provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient health-care services, including a tertiary care and teaching hospital; or
      - (e) Governmental entity.
  3. During an emergency, the state department of health, a person authorized to act on behalf of the state department of health, or a host entity may confirm whether volunteer health practitioners utilized in this state are registered with a registration system that complies with subsection 1 or 2. Confirmation is limited to obtaining identities of the practitioners from the system and determining whether the system indicates that the practitioners are licensed and in good standing.
  4. Upon request of a person in this state authorized under subsection 3, or a similarly authorized person in another state, a registration system located in this state shall notify the person of the identities of volunteer health practitioners and whether the practitioners are licensed and in good standing.
  5. A host entity is not required to use the services of a volunteer health practitioner even if the practitioner is registered with a registration system that indicates that the practitioner is licensed and in good standing.
- 37-17.3-05. Recognition of volunteer health practitioners licensed in other states.**

1       1. During an emergency, a volunteer health practitioner, registered with a registration  
2       system that complies with section 37-17.3-04 and licensed and in good standing in  
3       the state upon which the practitioner's registration is based, may practice in this  
4       state to the extent authorized by this chapter as if the practitioner were licensed in  
5       this state.

6       2. A volunteer health practitioner qualified under subsection 1 is not entitled to the  
7       protections of this chapter if the practitioner is licensed in more than one state and  
8       any license of the practitioner is suspended, revoked, or subject to an agency  
9       order limiting or restricting practice privileges, or has been voluntarily terminated  
10      under threat of sanction.

11      **37-17.3-06. No effect on credentialing and privileging.**

12      1. In this section:

13          a. "Credentialing" means obtaining, verifying, and assessing the qualifications of  
14          a health practitioner to provide treatment, care, or services in or for a health  
15          facility.

16          b. "Privileging" means the authorizing by an appropriate authority, such as a  
17          governing body, of a health practitioner to provide specific treatment, care, or  
18          services at a health facility subject to limits based on factors that include  
19          license, education, training, experience, competence, health status, and  
20          specialized skill.

21      2. This chapter does not affect credentialing or privileging standards of a health  
22      facility and does not preclude a health facility from waiving or modifying those  
23      standards during an emergency.

24      **37-17.3-07. Provision of volunteer health or veterinary services - Administrative**  
25      **sanctions.**

26      1. Subject to subsections 2 and 3, a volunteer health practitioner shall adhere to the  
27      scope of practice for a similarly licensed practitioner established by the licensing  
28      provisions, practice acts, or other laws of this state.

29      2. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 3, this chapter does not authorize a  
30      volunteer health practitioner to provide services that are outside the practitioner's

1 scope of practice, even if a similarly licensed practitioner in this state would be  
2 permitted to provide the services.

3 3. The state department of health or the state board of animal health may modify or  
4 restrict the health or veterinary services that volunteer health practitioners may  
5 provide pursuant to this chapter. An order under this subsection may take effect  
6 immediately, without prior notice or comment, and is not a rule within the meaning  
7 of chapter 28-32.

8 4. A host entity may restrict the health or veterinary services that a volunteer health  
9 practitioner may provide pursuant to this chapter.

10 5. A volunteer health practitioner does not engage in unauthorized practice unless  
11 the practitioner has reason to know of any limitation, modification, or restriction  
12 under this section or that a similarly licensed practitioner in this state would not be  
13 permitted to provide the services. A volunteer health practitioner has reason to  
14 know of a limitation, modification, or restriction or that a similarly licensed  
15 practitioner in this state would not be permitted to provide a service if:

16 a. The practitioner knows the limitation, modification, or restriction exists or that  
17 a similarly licensed practitioner in this state would not be permitted to provide  
18 the service; or

19 b. From all the facts and circumstances known to the practitioner at the relevant  
20 time, a reasonable person would conclude that the limitation, modification, or  
21 restriction exists or that a similarly licensed practitioner in this state would not  
22 be permitted to provide the service.

23 6. In addition to the authority granted by law of this state other than this chapter to  
24 regulate the conduct of health practitioners, a licensing board or other disciplinary  
25 authority in this state:

26 a. May impose administrative sanctions upon a health practitioner licensed in  
27 this state for conduct outside of this state in response to an out-of-state  
28 emergency;

29 b. May impose administrative sanctions upon a practitioner not licensed in this  
30 state for conduct in this state in response to an in-state emergency; and

1           c. Shall report any administrative sanctions imposed upon a practitioner  
2           licensed in another state to the appropriate licensing board or other  
3           disciplinary authority in any other state in which the practitioner is known to be  
4           licensed.

5       7. In determining whether to impose administrative sanctions under subsection 6, a  
6       licensing board or other disciplinary authority shall consider the circumstances in  
7       which the conduct took place, including any exigent circumstances, and the  
8       practitioner's scope of practice, education, training, experience, and specialized  
9       skill.

10       **37-17.3-08. Relation to other laws.**

11       1. This chapter does not limit rights, privileges, or immunities provided to volunteer  
12       health practitioners by laws other than this chapter. Except as otherwise provided  
13       in subsection 2, this chapter does not affect requirements for the use of health  
14       practitioners pursuant to the emergency management assistance compact.

15       2. The department of emergency services, pursuant to the emergency management  
16       assistance compact, may incorporate into the emergency forces of this state  
17       volunteer health practitioners who are not officers or employees of this state, a  
18       political subdivision of this state, or a municipality or other local government within  
19       this state.

20       **37-17.3-09. Regulatory authority.** The health council may adopt rules to implement  
21       this chapter. In doing so, the health council shall consult with and consider rules adopted by  
22       similarly empowered agencies in other states to promote uniformity of application of this  
23       chapter and make the emergency response systems in the various states reasonably  
24       compatible.

25       **37-17.3-10. Limitations on civil liability for volunteer health practitioners.**

26       1. Subject to subsection 3, a volunteer health practitioner who provides health or  
27       veterinary services pursuant to this chapter is not liable for damages for an act or  
28       omission of the practitioner in providing those services.

29       2. A person is not vicariously liable for damages for an act or omission of a volunteer  
30       health practitioner if the practitioner is not liable for the damages under  
31       subsection 1.

- 1           3. This section does not limit the liability of a volunteer health practitioner for:  
2           a. Willful misconduct or wanton, grossly negligent, reckless, or criminal conduct;  
3           b. An intentional tort;  
4           c. Breach of contract;  
5           d. A claim asserted by a host entity or by an entity located in this or another  
6           state which employs or uses the services of the practitioner; or  
7           e. An act or omission relating to the operation of a motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft,  
8           or other vehicle.
- 9           4. A person that, pursuant to this chapter, operates, uses, or relies upon information  
10          provided by a volunteer health practitioner registration system is not liable for  
11          damages for an act or omission relating to that operation, use, or reliance unless  
12          the act or omission is an intentional tort or is willful misconduct or wanton, grossly  
13          negligent, reckless, or criminal conduct.
- 14          5. In addition to the immunity provided in subsection 1, a volunteer health practitioner  
15          who provides health or veterinary services pursuant to this chapter is entitled to all  
16          the rights, privileges, or immunities provided by state laws limiting liability of  
17          volunteers.

18          **37-17.3-11. Workers' compensation coverage.**

- 19          1. A volunteer health practitioner who dies or is injured as the result of providing  
20          health or veterinary services under this chapter is deemed to be an employee of  
21          this state for the purpose of receiving benefits for the death or injury under the  
22          workers' compensation law of this state if:
- 23               a. The practitioner is not otherwise eligible for benefits for the injury or death  
24               under the law of this or another state; and
- 25               b. The practitioner or, in the case of death, the practitioner's personal  
26               representative elects coverage under the workers' compensation law of this  
27               state by making a claim under that law.
- 28          2. In this section, "injury" means a physical or mental injury or disease for which an  
29          employee of this state who is injured or contracts the disease in the course of the  
30          employee's employment would be entitled to benefits under the workers'  
31          compensation law of this state.

1           3.   Workforce safety and insurance shall adopt rules, enter agreements with other  
2           states, or take other measures to facilitate the receipt of benefits for injury or death  
3           under the workers' compensation law of this state by volunteer health practitioners  
4           who reside in other states, and may waive or modify requirements for filing,  
5           processing, and paying claims that unreasonably burden the practitioners. To  
6           promote uniformity of application of this chapter with other states that enact similar  
7           legislation, workforce safety and insurance shall consult with and consider the  
8           practices for filing, processing, and paying claims by agencies with similar authority  
9           in other states.

10           **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 65-06-05 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
11 amended and reenacted as follows:

12           **65-06-05. Reimbursement by state for liability in excess of premiums collected.**

13 Whenever liability on claims against the fund credited to the classification of ~~volunteer~~  
14 emergency or disaster emergency volunteers and trainees or volunteer health practitioners as  
15 defined under chapter 37-17.3 exceeds the amount of premiums paid into ~~such~~ the fund, such  
16 excess liabilities ~~shall be~~ are a general obligation of the state of North Dakota and must be  
17 reimbursed to the organization for credit to the workforce safety and insurance fund by  
18 legislative appropriation.

19           **SECTION 3.** A new section to chapter 65-06 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
20 created and enacted as follows:

21           **Uniform Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioners Act - Health practitioners.** A

22 volunteer health practitioner under subsection 2 of section 37-17.3-11 is eligible for benefits as  
23 provided under this chapter.