

**ACUPUNCTURIST LIABILITY AMENDMENTS**

2022 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Luz Escamilla**

House Sponsor: Robert M. Spendlove

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**LONG TITLE**

**Committee Note:**

The Health and Human Services Interim Committee recommended this bill.

Legislative Vote: 14 voting for 0 voting against 4 absent

**General Description:**

This bill amends the Health Care Providers Immunity from Liability Act and the Retired Volunteer Health Care Practitioner Act.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ adds licensed acupuncturists to those health care professionals who have limited immunity under certain circumstances for providing volunteer services; and
- ▶ adds licensed acupuncturist to the definition of a health care practitioner under the Retired Volunteer Health Care Practitioner Act.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**58-13-2**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2013, Chapter 44

**58-13-3**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2016, Chapters 108 and 238



28 **58-81-102**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2016, Chapter 238



30 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

31 Section 1. Section **58-13-2** is amended to read:

32 **58-13-2. Emergency care rendered by licensee.**

33 (1) A person licensed under Title 58, Occupations and Professions, to practice as any  
34 of the following health care professionals, who is under no legal duty to respond, and who in  
35 good faith renders emergency care at the scene of an emergency gratuitously and in good faith,  
36 is not liable for any civil damages as a result of any acts or omissions by the person in  
37 rendering the emergency care:

- 38 (a) osteopathic physician;
- 39 (b) physician and surgeon;
- 40 (c) naturopathic physician;
- 41 (d) dentist or dental hygienist;
- 42 (e) chiropractic physician;
- 43 (f) physician assistant;
- 44 (g) optometrist;
- 45 (h) nurse licensed under Section **58-31b-301** or **58-31d-102**;
- 46 (i) podiatrist;
- 47 (j) certified nurse midwife;
- 48 (k) respiratory care practitioner;
- 49 (l) pharmacist, pharmacy technician, and pharmacy intern;
- 50 (m) direct-entry midwife licensed under Section **58-77-301**; [~~or~~]
- 51 (n) veterinarian[~~;~~]; or
- 52 (o) acupuncturist licensed under Chapter 72, Acupuncture Licensing Act.

53 (2) This Subsection (2) applies to a health care professional:

- 54 (a) (i) described in Subsection (1); and
- 55 (ii) who is under no legal duty to respond to the circumstances described in Subsection
- 56 (3);
- 57 (b) who is:
- 58 (i) (A) activated as a member of a medical reserve corps as described in Section

59 26A-1-126 during the time of an emergency or declaration for public health related activities as  
60 provided in Subsection 26A-1-126(2); or

61 (B) participating in training to prepare the medical reserve corps to respond to a  
62 declaration of an emergency or request for public health related activities pursuant to  
63 Subsection 26A-1-126(2);

64 (ii) acting within the scope of:

65 (A) the health care professional's license; or

66 (B) practice as modified under Subsection 58-1-307(4) or Section 26A-1-126; and

67 (iii) acting in good faith without compensation or remuneration as defined in  
68 Subsection 58-13-3(2); or

69 (c) who is acting as a volunteer health practitioner under Title 26, Chapter 49, Uniform  
70 Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioners Act.

71 (3) A health care professional described in Subsection (2) is not liable for any civil  
72 damages as a result of any acts or omissions by the health care professional in rendering care as  
73 a result of:

74 (a) implementation of measures to control the causes of epidemic and communicable  
75 diseases and other conditions significantly affecting the public health or necessary to protect  
76 the public health as set out in Title 26A, Chapter 1, Local Health Departments;

77 (b) investigating and controlling suspected bioterrorism and disease as set out in Title  
78 26, Chapter 23b, Detection of Public Health Emergencies Act; and

79 (c) responding to a national, state, or local emergency, a public health emergency as  
80 defined in Section 26-23b-102, or a declaration by the President of the United States or other  
81 federal official requesting public health-related activities.

82 (4) The immunity in Subsection (3) is in addition to any immunity or protection in state  
83 or federal law that may apply.

84 (5) For purposes of Subsection (2)(b)(iii) remuneration does not include:

85 (a) food supplied to the volunteer;

86 (b) clothing supplied to the volunteer to help identify the volunteer during the time of  
87 the emergency; or

88 (c) other similar support for the volunteer.

89 Section 2. Section 58-13-3 is amended to read:

90 **58-13-3. Qualified immunity -- Health professionals -- Charity care.**

91 (1) (a) (i) The Legislature finds many residents of this state do not receive medical care  
92 and preventive health care because they lack health insurance or because of financial  
93 difficulties or cost.

94 (ii) The Legislature also finds that many physicians, charity health care facilities, and  
95 other health care professionals in this state would be willing to volunteer medical and allied  
96 services without compensation if they were not subject to the high exposure of liability  
97 connected with providing these services.

98 (b) The Legislature therefore declares that its intention in enacting this section is to  
99 encourage the provision of uncompensated volunteer charity health care in exchange for a  
100 limitation on liability for the health care facilities and health care professionals who provide  
101 those volunteer services.

102 (2) As used in this section:

103 (a) "Continuing education requirement" means the requirement for hours of continuing  
104 education, established by the division, with which a health care professional must comply to  
105 renew the health care professional's license under the applicable chapter described in  
106 Subsection (2)(c).

107 (b) "Health care facility" means any clinic or hospital, church, or organization whose  
108 primary purpose is to sponsor, promote, or organize uncompensated health care services for  
109 people unable to pay for health care services.

110 (c) "Health care professional" means a person licensed under:

111 (i) Chapter 5a, Podiatric Physician Licensing Act;

112 (ii) Chapter 16a, Utah Optometry Practice Act;

113 (iii) Chapter 17b, Pharmacy Practice Act;

114 (iv) Chapter 24b, Physical Therapy Practice Act;

115 (v) Chapter 31b, Nurse Practice Act;

116 (vi) Chapter 40, Recreational Therapy Practice Act;

117 (vii) Chapter 41, Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Licensing Act;

118 (viii) Chapter 42a, Occupational Therapy Practice Act;

119 (ix) Chapter 44a, Nurse Midwife Practice Act;

120 (x) Chapter 49, Dietitian Certification Act;

- 121 (xi) Chapter 60, Mental Health Professional Practice Act;
- 122 (xii) Chapter 67, Utah Medical Practice Act;
- 123 (xiii) Chapter 68, Utah Osteopathic Medical Practice Act;
- 124 (xiv) Chapter 69, Dentist and Dental Hygienist Practice Act;
- 125 (xv) Chapter 70a, Utah Physician Assistant Act;
- 126 (xvi) Chapter 71, Naturopathic Physician Practice Act; [~~and~~]
- 127 (xvii) Chapter 72, Acupuncture Licensing Act; and
- 128 (xviii) Chapter 73, Chiropractic Physician Practice Act.
- 129 (d) "Remuneration or compensation":
- 130 (i) (A) means direct or indirect receipt of any payment by a health care professional or
- 131 health care facility on behalf of the patient, including payment or reimbursement under
- 132 Medicare or Medicaid, or under the state program for the medically indigent on behalf of the
- 133 patient; and
- 134 (B) compensation, salary, or reimbursement to the health care professional from any
- 135 source for the health care professional's services or time in volunteering to provide
- 136 uncompensated health care; and
- 137 (ii) does not mean:
- 138 (A) any grant or donation to the health care facility used to offset direct costs
- 139 associated with providing the uncompensated health care such as:
- 140 (I) medical supplies;
- 141 (II) drugs; or
- 142 (III) a charitable donation that is restricted for charitable services at the health care
- 143 facility; or
- 144 (B) incidental reimbursements to the volunteer such as:
- 145 (I) food supplied to the volunteer;
- 146 (II) clothing supplied to the volunteer to help identify the volunteer during the time of
- 147 volunteer services;
- 148 (III) mileage reimbursement to the volunteer; or
- 149 (IV) other similar support to the volunteer.
- 150 (3) A health care professional who provides health care treatment at or on behalf of a
- 151 health care facility is not liable in a medical malpractice action if:

152 (a) the treatment was within the scope of the health care professional's license under  
153 this title;

154 (b) neither the health care professional nor the health care facility received  
155 compensation or remuneration for the treatment;

156 (c) the acts or omissions of the health care professional were not grossly negligent or  
157 willful and wanton; and

158 (d) prior to rendering services:

159 (i) the health care professional disclosed in writing to the patient, or if a minor, to the  
160 patient's parent or legal guardian, that the health care professional is providing the services  
161 without receiving remuneration or compensation; and

162 (ii) the patient consented in writing to waive any right to sue for professional  
163 negligence except for acts or omissions which are grossly negligent or are willful and wanton.

164 (4) A health care facility which sponsors, promotes, or organizes the uncompensated  
165 care is not liable in a medical malpractice action for acts and omissions if:

166 (a) the health care facility meets the requirements in Subsection (3)(b);

167 (b) the acts and omissions of the health care facility were not grossly negligent or  
168 willful and wanton; and

169 (c) the health care facility has posted, in a conspicuous place, a notice that in  
170 accordance with this section the health care facility is not liable for any civil damages for acts  
171 or omissions except for those acts or omissions that are grossly negligent or are willful and  
172 wanton.

173 (5) A health care professional who provides health care treatment at a federally  
174 qualified health center, as defined in Subsection 1905(1)(2)(b) of the Social Security Act, or an  
175 Indian health clinic or Urban Indian Health Center, as defined in Title V of the Indian Health  
176 Care Improvement Act, is not liable in a medical malpractice action if:

177 (a) the treatment was within the scope of the health care professional's license under  
178 this title;

179 (b) the health care professional:

180 (i) does not receive compensation or remuneration for treatment provided to any  
181 patient that the provider treats at the federally qualified health center, the Indian health clinic,  
182 or the Urban Indian Health Center; and

183 (ii) is not eligible to be included in coverage under the Federal Tort Claims Act for the  
184 treatment provided at the federally qualified health center, the Indian health clinic, or the Urban  
185 Indian Health Center;

186 (c) the acts or omissions of the health care professional were not grossly negligent or  
187 willful and wanton; and

188 (d) prior to rendering services:

189 (i) the health care professional disclosed in writing to the patient, or if a minor, to the  
190 patient's parent or legal guardian, that the health care professional is providing the services  
191 without receiving remuneration or compensation; and

192 (ii) the patient consented in writing to waive any right to sue for professional  
193 negligence except for acts or omissions that are grossly negligent or are willful and wanton.

194 (6) Immunity from liability under this section does not extend to the use of general  
195 anesthesia or care that requires an overnight stay in a general acute or specialty hospital  
196 licensed under Title 26, Chapter 21, Health Care Facility Licensing and Inspection Act.

197 (7) The provisions of Subsection (5) apply to treatment provided by a healthcare  
198 professional on or after May 13, 2014.

199 (8) A health care professional:

200 (a) may, in accordance with Subsection (8)(b), fulfill up to 15% of the health care  
201 professional's continuing education requirement with hours the health care professional spends  
202 providing health care treatment described in Subsection (3) or (5); and

203 (b) subject to Subsection (8)(a), earns one hour of the health care professional's  
204 continuing education requirement for every four documented hours of volunteer health care  
205 treatment.

206 Section 3. Section **58-81-102** is amended to read:

207 **58-81-102. Definitions.**

208 For purposes of this chapter:

209 (1) "Board" means the state licensing board created for each of the health care  
210 practitioners included in Subsection (2).

211 (2) "Health care practitioner" includes:

212 (a) a podiatrist licensed under Chapter 5a, Podiatric Physician Licensing Act;

213 (b) a physical therapist licensed under Chapter 24b, Physical Therapy Practice Act;

- 214 (c) a nurse or advanced practice registered nurse licensed under Chapter 31b, Nurse  
215 Practice Act;
- 216 (d) a recreational therapist licensed under Chapter 40, Recreational Therapy Practice  
217 Act;
- 218 (e) an occupational therapist licensed under Chapter 42a, Occupational Therapy  
219 Practice Act;
- 220 (f) a nurse midwife licensed under Chapter 44a, Nurse Midwife Practice Act;
- 221 (g) a mental health professional licensed under Chapter 60, Mental Health Professional  
222 Practice Act;
- 223 (h) a psychologist licensed under Chapter 61, Psychologist Licensing Act;
- 224 (i) a physician licensed under Chapter 67, Utah Medical Practice Act;
- 225 (j) an osteopath licensed under Chapter 68, Utah Osteopathic Medical Practice Act;
- 226 (k) a dentist or dental hygienist licensed under Chapter 69, Dentist and Dental  
227 Hygienist Practice Act;
- 228 (l) a physician assistant licensed under Chapter 70a, Utah Physician Assistant Act;
- 229 (m) a pharmacist licensed under Chapter 17b, Pharmacy Practice Act; [or]
- 230 (n) an optometrist licensed under Chapter 16a, Utah Optometry Practice Act[.]; or
- 231 (o) an acupuncturist licensed under Chapter 72, Acupuncture Licensing Act.
- 232 (3) "Qualified location" means:  
233 (a) a clinic, hospital, church, or organization whose primary purpose is to sponsor,  
234 promote, or organize uncompensated health care services for people unable to pay for health  
235 care services; and  
236 (b) is a location approved by the division.
- 237 (4) "Remuneration or compensation" means the same as that term is defined in Section  
238 [58-13-3](#).
- 239 (5) "Supervising professional" means a health care practitioner:  
240 (a) who has an active license in the state in good standing;  
241 (b) with a scope of practice that is appropriate for supervising the applicant as  
242 determined by the division and board; and  
243 (c) who is practicing at the qualified location.
- 244 (6) "Supervision" means:



- 245 (a) the level of supervision required for:
- 246 (i) a social service worker in Chapter 60, Mental Health Professional Practice Act;
- 247 (ii) a dental hygienist in Chapter 69, Dentist and Dental Hygienist Practice Act;
- 248 (iii) a recreational therapist technician in Chapter 40, Recreational Therapy Practice
- 249 Act; and
- 250 (iv) an occupational technician assistant in Chapter 42a, Occupational Therapy Practice
- 251 Act; and
- 252 (b) for the health care practitioners listed in Subsections (2)(a) through (m) and not
- 253 included in Subsection (5)(a):
- 254 (i) entering into a delegation of service agreement with a supervising professional in
- 255 accordance with Subsection 58-81-103(2);
- 256 (ii) having the ability to contact the supervising professional during the time the
- 257 volunteer is providing volunteer services; and
- 258 (iii) for every 40 hours of volunteer service hours, meeting with the supervising
- 259 professional.
- 260 (7) "Volunteer" means the individual health care practitioner:
- 261 (a) will devote the health care practitioner's practice exclusively to providing care to
- 262 the needy and indigent in the state:
- 263 (i) within:
- 264 (A) the practitioner's scope of practice; and
- 265 (B) the delegation of service agreement between the volunteer and the supervising
- 266 professional; and
- 267 (ii) at a qualified location;
- 268 (b) will agree to donate professional services in a qualified location; and
- 269 (c) will not receive remuneration or compensation for the health care practitioner's
- 270 services.