



General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
**Joint State Government Commission**  
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Harrisburg, PA 17120  
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**Short summary in response to 2021 House Resolution 88**  
***Regulatory Waivers and Suspensions Issued by the Pennsylvania Department of State,***  
***Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs***  
***During the COVID-19 Pandemic***  
***Staff Study***

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House Resolution 88 of 2021 directed the Joint State Government Commission to provide the General Assembly with a list and description of the statutory and regulatory waivers issued by the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs since Governor Wolf's March 6, 2020 emergency declaration signed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the Commission was directed to report on the impact of such waivers and suspensions on practice and employment in the Commonwealth and make recommendations on which, if any, waivers and suspensions should permanently remain in place. Further, Commission staff was directed to solicit input from organizations representing the licensed professionals regulated by the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs as well as the Bureau itself.

The consensus among the responding organizations was that the waivers and suspensions of certain rules were helpful for ensuring that regulated professionals were able to obtain or maintain their licensure while remaining compliant with both the requirements of their profession and COVID-19 safety protocols.

The impact on employment, however, is negligible. Aside from precipitating an increase in the number of out-of-state physicians with temporary licenses, the waivers and suspensions have not had an appreciable effect on levels of employment in the Commonwealth. The years 2020 and 2021 have seen a tumult in the labor market and parsing the impact of a specific waiver or even all of the waivers collectively from broader trends in the economy is not feasible.

This report also organizes the regulations and statutes waived or suspended into tables by topic. These topics are regulations governing professional practice, scope of practice, continuing education requirements, delegation of duties, registering, renewing, and reinstating licenses, educational, experiential, and examination requirements for licensure, practice by out-of-state licensed professionals, and miscellaneous regulations. Each table is organized by professional board with a description of the specific regulation or statute being waived or suspended and a citation thereto. Some regulations are described in more detail at the end of each table.

Commission staff also provide recommendations to make several of the waivers permanent or otherwise reform regulations based on what was learned during the period of time the waiver was in effect. These recommendations touch on telemedicine, continuing education, virtual board meetings, prescription amounts, pharmacists' authority to immunize, clarifying dentists' scope of practice, and reducing barriers to practice in the Commonwealth for out-of-state licensees.

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