



Wisconsin Society of Radiologic Technologists

Legislative Committee Report
Annual Conference, April 2021
Sandra Helinski, MBA, RTR, QM, MR
Legislative Committee Chairperson

The WSRT legislative committee has been active over the past year monitoring the regulatory activities of the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) and the Wisconsin state legislature. The world pandemic took center stage resulted in cancellations and deferrals of initiatives as state agencies prioritized its response to Covid-19. Virtual methods of working with representative s of all licensed occupations were developed. The Radiography Examining Board (REB) has successfully adapted to meeting via teleconference as has the Wisconsin Society of Radiologic Technologists board and committee members to conduct the business of our profession.

The shift of state agency activities to public health concerns related to the virus highlighted the previously known fact that the state of Wisconsin has not been processing license applications for radiologic technologists and most all professions on a timely basis . Once the November elections were over and the legislature began its 2022 session, a series of draft bills have been circulated for cosponsors to address the delays through various angles. As of 4/6/21 to our knowledge , they have not yet been introduced as official legislation :

LRB-0358 and LRB-1176 – PASSIVE REVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSES 3/9/2021

- Allow individual credentialing boards to delegate the ability to DSPS to make determinations about whether or not an applicant should be licensed
- Sets up a two-pronged approach to license approval
- 1) DSPS could directly inform individuals if their credential is granted (if given the authority by the relevant examining board); or
- 2) DSPS, after conducting the current law required background checks, etc., can forward their recommendation about whether or not the person should be licensed to the relevant examining board. If the Board takes no action on the licensure application within 10 days, the license is automatically approved.

LRB-0357 and LRB-2442– PROVISIONAL LICENSURE 3/9/2021)

*Requires DSPS to draft rules to set up a process for creating a "provisional license" for people who have applied for a license but are waiting for final approval.

* Individual credentialing boards could set up their own rule related to provisional licenses that would supersede DSPS's rules.

*A provisional credential would give someone the same rights, privileges, and authority as a standard credential.

*A credential with provisional status will be granted subject to the ultimate determination on the application for the initial credential or reciprocal credential, and the provisional status will be removed if the application is approved. A credential with provisional status will immediately expire upon the issuance of a notice to deny

LRB 1044/1, Reciprocal credentials for workforce growth 3/18/2021

Shortages of licensed professionals in a number of critical fields have become increasingly acute in recent years. To help fill those gaps, we will be introducing legislation to establish reciprocal licensing in Wisconsin similar to what has already been implemented successfully in Arizona, and what was recently signed into law in Wisconsin for active duty military spouses and veterans and their spouses (2019 Wisconsin Act 143). Under this bill, licensing boards will recognize out-of-state occupational licenses for people who:

- Have been licensed in their profession for at least one year
- Are in good standing in all states where they are licensed
- Do not have any past or pending investigations, complaints, or license revocations
- Establish residency in Wisconsin
- Pay applicable fees (waived for the next 12 months to deal with the current health crisis)
- Meet all testing and background check requirements per law

These three draft bills do not seem, at this time, to pose a direct threat to the licensure law that protects our patients with the provision of the radiologic care by credentialed individuals. However bills can and will change as they are vetted and hearings are held. Years ago, the Radiography Examining Board was slated to be dissolved by a cryptic provision in a state budget initiative, along with other occupational boards. Swift and strong advocacy prevented this from happening, but not without the guidance and work of our Madison policy advisor Mr. Blumenfeld. We are all too aware that forces opposing sensible health regulation will always need to be watched. Surveillance of this kind does not come without cost. The WSRT Board appealed to Mr. Blumenfeld and Associates, to continue to work with the WSRT on the limited basis that the WSRT was able to afford. If there is any reason that WSRT membership is important, it is to support the surveillance that our policy advisors perform. No technologist I know could possibly keep track on a daily basis of government initiatives that could affect us drastically. This vigilance over state developments is necessary to maintain the integrity of the radiologic professions' unique function in health care so that our role is not relegated to nurses and other ancillary staff ready to take on our duties. Your WSRT membership helps to support the important function of advocacy that makes our voices heard in state government.

As chairperson of the legislative committee, I have participated and testified on matters in the activities of the Radiation Safety Advisory Committee, and the meetings of the Radiography Examining Board. It is gratifying to see that licensure, which granted professional status to radiologic technologists gives us a "seat at the table" in the functions and decisions of state agencies and the direction of radiologic health care. I urge all radiologic technologists of Wisconsin to become advocates, whether it be within the walls of our workplaces or in our community, AND by being a WSRT member. Thank you for allowing me to serve our state society over this past, unprecedented year.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Helinski, MBA, RTR, QM, MR