

§ 131E-176. Definitions.

The following definitions apply in this Article:

- (1) Adult care home. – A facility with seven or more beds licensed under Part 1 of Article 1 of Chapter 131D of the General Statutes or under this Chapter that provides residential care for aged individuals or individuals with disabilities whose principal need is a home which provides the supervision and personal care appropriate to their age and disability and for whom medical care is only occasional or incidental.
- (1a) Air ambulance. – Aircraft used to provide air transport of sick or injured persons between destinations within the State.
- (1b) Ambulatory surgical facility. – A facility designed for the provision of a specialty ambulatory surgical program or a multispecialty ambulatory surgical program. An ambulatory surgical facility serves patients who require local, regional, or general anesthesia and a period of post-operative observation. An ambulatory surgical facility may only admit patients for a period of less than 24 hours and must provide at least one designated operating room or gastrointestinal endoscopy room and at least one designated recovery room, have available the necessary equipment and trained personnel to handle emergencies, provide adequate quality assurance and assessment by an evaluation and review committee, and maintain adequate medical records for each patient. An ambulatory surgical facility may be operated as a part of a physician or dentist's office, provided the facility is licensed under Part 4 of Article 6 of this Chapter, but the performance of incidental, limited ambulatory surgical procedures which do not constitute an ambulatory surgical program and which are performed in a physician's or dentist's office does not make that office an ambulatory surgical facility.
- (1c) Ambulatory surgical program. – A formal program for providing on a same-day basis those surgical procedures which require local, regional, or general anesthesia and a period of post-operative observation to patients whose admission for more than 24 hours is determined, prior to surgery or gastrointestinal endoscopy, to be medically unnecessary.
- (2) Bed capacity. – Space used exclusively for inpatient care, including space designed or remodeled for licensed inpatient beds even though temporarily not used for such purposes. The number of beds to be counted in any patient room shall be the maximum number for which adequate square footage is provided as established by rules of the Department except that single beds in single rooms are counted even if the room contains inadequate square footage. The term "bed capacity" also refers to the number of dialysis stations in kidney disease treatment centers, including freestanding dialysis units.
- (2a) Bone marrow transplantation services. – The process of infusing bone marrow into persons with diseases to stimulate the production of blood cells.
- (2b) Burn intensive care services. – Services provided in a unit designed to care for patients who have been severely burned.
- (2c) Campus. – The adjacent grounds and buildings, or grounds and buildings not separated by more than a public right-of-way, of a health service facility and related health care entities.
- (2d) Capital expenditure. – An expenditure for a project, including but not limited to the cost of construction, engineering, and equipment which under generally accepted accounting principles is not properly chargeable as an expense of operation and maintenance. Capital expenditure includes, in addition, the fair

market value of an acquisition made by donation, lease, or comparable arrangement by which a person obtains equipment, the expenditure for which would have been considered a capital expenditure under this Article if the person had acquired it by purchase.

- (2e) Repealed by Session Laws 2005-325, s. 1, effective for hospices and hospice offices December 31, 2005.
- (2f) Cardiac catheterization equipment. – The equipment used to provide cardiac catheterization services.
- (2g) Cardiac catheterization services. – Those procedures, excluding pulmonary angiography procedures, in which a catheter is introduced into a vein or artery and threaded through the circulatory system into the heart specifically to diagnose abnormalities in the motion, contraction, and blood flow of the moving heart or to perform surgical therapeutic interventions to restore, repair, or reconstruct the coronary blood vessels of the heart.
- (3) Certificate of need. – A written order which affords the person so designated as the legal proponent of the proposed project the opportunity to proceed with the development of the project.
- (4) Repealed by Session Laws 1993, c. 7, s. 2.
- (5) Change in bed capacity. – Any of the following:
 - a. Any relocation of health service facility beds, or dialysis stations from one licensed facility or campus to another.
 - b. Any redistribution of health service facility bed capacity among the categories of health service facility bed.
 - c. Any increase in the number of health service facility beds, or dialysis stations in kidney disease treatment centers, including freestanding dialysis units.
- (5a) Chemical dependency treatment facility. – A public or private facility, or unit in a facility, which is engaged in providing 24-hour a day treatment for chemical dependency or a substance use disorder. This treatment may include detoxification, administration of a therapeutic regimen for the treatment of individuals with chemical dependence or substance use disorders, and related services. The facility or unit may be any of the following:
 - a. A unit within a general hospital or an attached or freestanding unit of a general hospital licensed under Article 5 of this Chapter.
 - b. A unit within a psychiatric hospital or an attached or freestanding unit of a psychiatric hospital licensed under Article 1A of former Chapter 122 of the General Statutes or Article 2 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes.
 - c. A freestanding facility specializing in treatment of individuals with chemical dependence or substance use disorders that is licensed under Article 1A of former Chapter 122 of the General Statutes or Article 2 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes. The facility may be identified as "chemical dependency, substance abuse, alcoholism, or drug abuse treatment units," "residential chemical dependency, substance use disorder, alcoholism or drug abuse facilities," or by other names if the purpose is to provide treatment of individuals with chemical dependence or substance use disorders. The term, however, does not include social setting detoxification facilities, medical detoxification facilities, halfway houses, or recovery farms.

- (5b) Chemical dependency treatment beds. – Beds that are licensed for the inpatient treatment of chemical dependency. Residential treatment beds for the treatment of chemical dependency or substance use disorder are chemical dependency treatment beds. Chemical dependency treatment beds do not include beds licensed for detoxification.
- (6) Department. – The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.
- (7) Develop. – When used in connection with health services, means to undertake those activities which will result in the offering of institutional health service or the incurring of a financial obligation in relation to the offering of such a service.
- (7a) **(Effective until November 21, 2026 – see note)** Diagnostic center. – A freestanding facility, program, or provider, including but not limited to, physicians' offices, clinical laboratories, radiology centers, and mobile diagnostic programs, in which the total cost of all the medical diagnostic equipment utilized by the facility which cost ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more exceeds three million dollars (\$3,000,000). In determining whether the medical diagnostic equipment in a diagnostic center costs more than three million dollars (\$3,000,000), the costs of the equipment, studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, construction, installation, and other activities essential to acquiring and making operational the equipment shall be included. The capital expenditure for the equipment shall be deemed to be the fair market value of the equipment or the cost of the equipment, whichever is greater. Beginning September 30, 2022, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the cost threshold amount in this subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.
- (7a) **(Effective November 21, 2026 – see note)** Diagnostic center. – A freestanding facility, program, or provider, including but not limited to, physicians' offices, clinical laboratories, radiology centers, and mobile diagnostic programs, in which the total cost of all the medical diagnostic equipment utilized by the facility which cost ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more exceeds three million dollars (\$3,000,000). No facility, program, or provider, including, but not limited to, physicians' offices, clinical laboratories, radiology centers, or mobile diagnostic programs, shall be deemed a diagnostic center solely by virtue of having a magnetic resonance imaging scanner in a county with a population of greater than 125,000 according to the 2020 federal decennial census or any subsequent federal decennial census. In determining whether the medical diagnostic equipment in a diagnostic center costs more than three million dollars (\$3,000,000), the costs of the equipment, studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, construction, installation, and other activities essential to acquiring and making operational the equipment shall be included. The capital expenditure for the equipment shall be deemed to be the fair market value of the equipment or the cost of the equipment, whichever is greater. Beginning September 30, 2022, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the cost threshold amount in this subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S.

- Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.
- (7b) Expedited review. – The status given to an application's review process when the applicant petitions for the review and the Department approves the request based on findings that all of the following are met:
 - a. The review is not competitive.
 - b. The proposed capital expenditure is less than five million dollars (\$5,000,000).
 - c. A request for a public hearing is not received within the time frame defined in G.S. 131E-185.
 - d. The agency has not determined that a public hearing is in the public interest.
 - (7c) Gamma knife. – Equipment which emits photon beams from a stationary radioactive cobalt source to treat lesions deep within the brain and is one type of stereotactic radiosurgery.
 - (7d) Gastrointestinal endoscopy room. – A room used for the performance of procedures that require the insertion of a flexible endoscope into a gastrointestinal orifice to visualize the gastrointestinal lining and adjacent organs for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes.
 - (8), (9) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 511, s. 1.
 - (9a) Health service. – An organized, interrelated activity that is medical, diagnostic, therapeutic, rehabilitative, or a combination thereof and that is integral to the prevention of disease or the clinical management of an individual who is sick or injured or who has a disability. "Health service" does not include administrative and other activities that are not integral to clinical management.
 - (9b) **(Effective until November 21, 2025 – see note)** Health service facility. – A hospital; long-term care hospital; rehabilitation facility; nursing home facility; adult care home; kidney disease treatment center, including freestanding hemodialysis units; intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities; home health agency office; diagnostic center; hospice office, hospice inpatient facility, hospice residential care facility; and ambulatory surgical facility.
 - (9b) **(Effective November 21, 2025 – see note)** Health service facility. – A hospital; long-term care hospital; rehabilitation facility; nursing home facility; adult care home; kidney disease treatment center, including freestanding hemodialysis units; intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities; home health agency office; diagnostic center; hospice office, hospice inpatient facility, hospice residential care facility; and ambulatory surgical facility. The term "health service facility" does not include a qualified urban ambulatory surgical facility.
 - (9c) Health service facility bed. – A bed licensed for use in a health service facility in the categories of (i) acute care beds; (iii) rehabilitation beds; (iv) nursing home beds; (v) intermediate care beds for individuals with intellectual disabilities; (vii) hospice inpatient facility beds; (viii) hospice residential care facility beds; (ix) adult care home beds; and (x) long-term care hospital beds.
 - (10) Health maintenance organization (HMO). – A public or private organization which has received its certificate of authority under Article 67 of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes and which either is a qualified health maintenance

organization under Section 1310(d) of the Public Health Service Act or satisfies all of the following:

- a. Provides or otherwise makes available to enrolled participants health care services, including at least the following basic health care services: usual physician services, hospitalization, laboratory, X ray, emergency and preventive services, and out-of-area coverage.
 - b. Is compensated, except for copayments, for the provision of the basic health care services listed in sub-subdivision a. of this subdivision to enrolled participants by a payment which is paid on a periodic basis without regard to the date the health care services are provided and which is fixed without regard to the frequency, extent, or kind of health service actually provided.
 - c. Provides physicians' services primarily (i) directly through physicians who are either employees or partners of such organizations, or (ii) through arrangements with individual physicians or one or more groups of physicians organized on a group practice or individual practice basis.
- (10a) Heart-lung bypass machine. – The equipment used to perform extra-corporeal circulation and oxygenation during surgical procedures.
- (11) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 692, s. 1.
- (12) Home health agency. – A private organization or public agency, whether owned or operated by one or more persons or legal entities, which furnishes or offers to furnish home health services.
- (12a) Home health services. – Items and services furnished to an individual by a home health agency, or by others under arrangements with such others made by the agency, on a visiting basis, and except for sub-subdivision e. of this subdivision, in a place of temporary or permanent residence used as the individual's home as follows:
- a. Part-time or intermittent nursing care provided by or under the supervision of a registered nurse.
 - b. Physical, occupational, or speech therapy.
 - c. Medical social services, home health aid services, and other therapeutic services.
 - d. Medical supplies, other than drugs and biologicals and the use of medical appliances.
 - e. Any of the items and services listed in this subdivision which are provided on an outpatient basis under arrangements made by the home health agency at a hospital or nursing home facility or rehabilitation center and the furnishing of which involves the use of equipment of such a nature that the items and services cannot readily be made available to the individual at home, or which are furnished at the facility while the individual is there to receive any such item or service, but not including transportation of the individual in connection with any such item or service.
- (13) Hospital. – A public or private institution which is primarily engaged in providing to inpatients, by or under supervision of physicians, diagnostic services and therapeutic services for medical diagnosis, treatment, and care of injured, disabled, or sick persons, or rehabilitation services for the rehabilitation of injured, disabled, or sick persons. The term includes all facilities licensed pursuant to G.S. 131E-77, except long-term care hospitals.

- (13a) Hospice. – Any coordinated program of home care with provision for inpatient care for terminally ill patients and their families. This care is provided by a medically directed interdisciplinary team, directly or through an agreement under the direction of an identifiable hospice administration. A hospice program of care provides palliative and supportive medical and other health services to meet the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and special needs of patients and their families, which are experienced during the final stages of terminal illness and during dying and bereavement.
- (13b) Hospice inpatient facility. – A freestanding licensed hospice facility or a designated inpatient unit in an existing health service facility which provides palliative and supportive medical and other health services to meet the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and special needs of terminally ill patients and their families in an inpatient setting. For purposes of this Article only, a hospital which has a contractual agreement with a licensed hospice to provide inpatient services to a hospice patient as defined in G.S. 131E-201(4) and provides those services in a licensed acute care bed is not a hospice inpatient facility and is not subject to the requirements in sub-subdivision (5)b. of this section for hospice inpatient beds.
- (13c) Hospice residential care facility. – A freestanding licensed hospice facility which provides palliative and supportive medical and other health services to meet the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and special needs of terminally ill patients and their families in a group residential setting.
- (14) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 511, s. 1.
- (14a) Intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities. – Facilities licensed pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes for the purpose of providing health and habilitative services based on the developmental model and principles of normalization for individuals with intellectual disabilities, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy or related conditions.
- (14b) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 692, s. 1.
- (14c) Reserved for future codification.
- (14d) Repealed by Session Laws 2001-234, s. 2, effective January 1, 2002.
- (14e) Kidney disease treatment center. – A facility that is certified as an end-stage renal disease facility by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 405.
- (14f) "Legacy Medical Care Facility" means a facility that meets all of the following requirements:
 - a. Is not presently operating.
 - b. Has not continuously operated for at least the past six months.
 - c. Within the last 24 months:
 - 1. Was operated by a person holding a license under G.S. 131E-77; and
 - 2. Was primarily engaged in providing to inpatients or outpatients, by or under supervision of physicians, (i) diagnostic services and therapeutic services for medical diagnosis, treatment, and care of injured, disabled, or sick persons or (ii) rehabilitation services for the rehabilitation of injured, disabled, or sick persons.
- (14g) Linear accelerator. – A machine used to produce ionizing radiation in excess of 1,000,000 electron volts in the form of a beam of electrons or photons to treat cancer patients.

- (14h) Reserved for future codification.
- (14i) Lithotripter. – Extra-corporeal shock wave technology used to treat persons with kidney stones and gallstones.
- (14j) Reserved for future codification.
- (14k) Long-term care hospital. – A hospital that has been classified and designated as a long-term care hospital by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 412.
- (14l) Reserved for future codification.
- (14m) Magnetic resonance imaging scanner. – Medical imaging equipment that uses nuclear magnetic resonance.
- (14n) Main campus. – All of the following for the purposes of G.S. 131E-184(f) and (g) only:
 - a. The site of the main building from which a licensed health service facility provides clinical patient services and exercises financial and administrative control over the entire facility, including the buildings and grounds adjacent to that main building.
 - b. Other areas and structures that are not strictly contiguous to the main building but are located within 250 yards of the main building.
- (14o) **(Effective until November 21, 2026 – see note)** Major medical equipment. – A single unit or single system of components with related functions which is used to provide medical and other health services and which costs more than two million dollars (\$2,000,000). In determining whether the major medical equipment costs more than two million dollars (\$2,000,000), the costs of the equipment, studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, construction, installation, and other activities essential to acquiring and making operational the major medical equipment shall be included. The capital expenditure for the equipment shall be deemed to be the fair market value of the equipment or the cost of the equipment, whichever is greater. Major medical equipment does not include replacement equipment as defined in this section. Beginning September 30, 2022, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the cost threshold amount in this subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.
- (14o) **(Effective November 21, 2026 – see note)** Major medical equipment. – A single unit or single system of components with related functions which is used to provide medical and other health services and which costs more than two million dollars (\$2,000,000). In determining whether the major medical equipment costs more than two million dollars (\$2,000,000), the costs of the equipment, studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, construction, installation, and other activities essential to acquiring and making operational the major medical equipment shall be included. The capital expenditure for the equipment shall be deemed to be the fair market value of the equipment or the cost of the equipment, whichever is greater. Major medical equipment does not include replacement equipment as defined in this section or magnetic resonance imaging scanners in counties with a population greater than 125,000 according to the 2020 federal decennial census or any subsequent federal decennial census. Beginning September 30, 2022, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the cost threshold amount in

this subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.

- (15) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 511, s. 1.
- (15a) Multispecialty ambulatory surgical program. – A formal program for providing on a same-day basis surgical procedures for at least three of the following specialty areas: gynecology, otolaryngology, plastic surgery, general surgery, ophthalmology, orthopedic, or oral surgery.
- (15b) Neonatal intensive care services. – Those services provided by a health service facility to high-risk newborn infants who require constant nursing care, including but not limited to continuous cardiopulmonary and other supportive care.
- (16) New institutional health services. – Any of the following:
 - a. The construction, development, or other establishment of a new health service facility.
 - b. **(Effective until November 21, 2025 – see note)** Except as otherwise provided in G.S. 131E-184(e), the obligation by any person of a capital expenditure exceeding four million dollars (\$4,000,000) to develop or expand a health service or a health service facility, or which relates to the provision of a health service. The cost of any studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, and other activities, including staff effort and consulting and other services, essential to the acquisition, improvement, expansion, or replacement of any plant or equipment with respect to which an expenditure is made shall be included in determining if the expenditure exceeds four million dollars (\$4,000,000). Beginning September 30, 2022, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the amount in this sub-subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.
 - b. **(Effective November 21, 2025 – see note)** Except with respect to qualified urban ambulatory surgical facilities and except as otherwise provided in G.S. 131E-184(e), the obligation by any person of a capital expenditure exceeding four million dollars (\$4,000,000) to develop or expand a health service or a health service facility, or which relates to the provision of a health service. The cost of any studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, and other activities, including staff effort and consulting and other services, essential to the acquisition, improvement, expansion, or replacement of any plant or equipment with respect to which an expenditure is made shall be included in determining if the expenditure exceeds four million dollars (\$4,000,000). Beginning September 30, 2022, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the amount in this sub-subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.
 - c. Any change in bed capacity.
 - d. The offering of dialysis services or home health services by or on behalf of a health service facility if those services were not offered within the previous 12 months by or on behalf of the facility.

- e. A change in a project that was subject to certificate of need review and for which a certificate of need was issued, if the change is proposed during the development of the project or within one year after the project was completed. For purposes of this subdivision, a change in a project is a change of more than fifteen percent (15%) of the approved capital expenditure amount or the addition of a health service that is to be located in the facility, or portion thereof, that was constructed or developed in the project.
- f. The development or offering of a health service as listed in this subdivision by or on behalf of any person:
 - 1. Bone marrow transplantation services.
 - 2. Burn intensive care services.
 - 2a. Cardiac catheterization services, except cardiac catheterization services provided on equipment furnished by a person authorized to operate the equipment in North Carolina pursuant to either a certificate of need issued for mobile cardiac catheterization equipment or a settlement agreement executed by the Department for provision of cardiac catheterization services.
 - 3. Neonatal intensive care services.
 - 4. Open-heart surgery services.
 - 5. Solid organ transplantation services.
- fl. The acquisition by purchase, donation, lease, transfer, or comparable arrangement of any of the following equipment by or on behalf of any person:
 - 1. Air ambulance.
 - 2. Repealed by Session Laws 2005-325, s. 1, effective for hospices and hospice offices December 31, 2005.
 - 3. Cardiac catheterization equipment.
 - 4. Gamma knife.
 - 5. Heart-lung bypass machine.
 - 5a. Linear accelerator.
 - 6. Lithotripter.
 - 7. **(Effective until November 21, 2026 – see note)** Magnetic resonance imaging scanner.
 - 7. **(Effective November 21, 2026 – see note)** Magnetic resonance imaging scanner. This sub-sub-subdivision applies only to counties with a population of 125,000 or less according to the 2020 federal decennial census or any subsequent federal decennial census.
 - 8. Positron emission tomography scanner.
 - 9. Simulator.
- g. to k. Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 511, s. 1.
- l. The purchase, lease, or acquisition of any health service facility, or portion thereof, or a controlling interest in the health service facility or portion thereof, if the health service facility was developed under a certificate of need issued pursuant to G.S. 131E-180.
- m. Any conversion of nonhealth service facility beds to health service facility beds.

- n. The construction, development or other establishment of a hospice, hospice inpatient facility, or hospice residential care facility;
 - o. The opening of an additional office by an existing home health agency or hospice within its service area as defined by rules adopted by the Department; or the opening of any office by an existing home health agency or hospice outside its service area as defined by rules adopted by the Department.
 - p. The acquisition by purchase, donation, lease, transfer, or comparable arrangement by any person of major medical equipment.
 - q. The relocation of a health service facility from one service area to another.
 - r. The conversion of a specialty ambulatory surgical program to a multispecialty ambulatory surgical program or the addition of a specialty to a specialty ambulatory surgical program.
 - s. The furnishing of mobile medical equipment to any person to provide health services in North Carolina, which was not in use in North Carolina prior to the adoption of this provision, if the equipment would otherwise be subject to review in accordance with sub-subdivision f1. of this subdivision or sub-subdivision p. of this subdivision if it had been acquired in North Carolina.
 - t. Repealed by Session Laws 2001-242, s. 4, effective June 23, 2001.
 - u. The construction, development, establishment, increase in the number, or relocation of an operating room or gastrointestinal endoscopy room in a licensed health service facility, other than the relocation of an operating room or gastrointestinal endoscopy room within the same building or on the same grounds or to grounds not separated by more than a public right-of-way adjacent to the grounds where the operating room or gastrointestinal endoscopy room is currently located.
 - v. The change in designation, in a licensed health service facility, of an operating room to a gastrointestinal endoscopy room or change in designation of a gastrointestinal endoscopy room to an operating room that results in a different number of each type of room than is reflected on the health service facility's license in effect as of January 1, 2005.
- (17) North Carolina State Health Coordinating Council. – The Council that prepares, with the Department of Health and Human Services, the State Medical Facilities Plan.
- (17a) Nursing care. – Any of the following:
- a. Skilled nursing care and related services for residents who require medical or nursing care.
 - b. Rehabilitation services for the rehabilitation of individuals who are injured or sick or who have disabilities.
 - c. Health-related care and services provided on a regular basis to individuals who because of their mental or physical condition require care and services above the level of room and board, which can be made available to them only through institutional facilities.
- These are services which are not primarily for the care and treatment of mental diseases.
- (17b) Nursing home facility. – A health service facility whose bed complement of health service facility beds is composed principally of nursing home facility beds.

- (18) Offer. – In connection with health services, the act by a person of holding out as capable of providing, or as having the means to provide, specified health services.
- (18a) Repealed by Session Laws 2005-325, s. 1, effective for hospices and hospice offices December 31, 2005.
- (18b) Open-heart surgery services. – The provision of surgical procedures that utilize a heart-lung bypass machine during surgery to correct cardiac and coronary artery disease or defects.
- (18c) Operating room. – A room used for the performance of surgical procedures requiring one or more incisions and that is required to comply with all applicable licensure codes and standards for an operating room.
- (19) Person. – An individual; a trust or estate; a partnership; a corporation, including associations, joint stock companies, and insurance companies; the State; or a political subdivision or agency or instrumentality of the State.
- (19a) Positron emission tomography scanner. – Equipment that utilizes a computerized radiographic technique that employs radioactive substances to examine the metabolic activity of various body structures.
- (20) Project or capital expenditure project. – A proposal to undertake a capital expenditure that results in the offering of a new institutional health service. A project, or capital expenditure project, or proposed project may refer to the project from its earliest planning stages up through the point at which the specified new institutional health service may be offered. In the case of facility construction, the point at which the new institutional health service may be offered must take place after the facility is capable of being fully licensed and operated for its intended use, and at that time it shall be considered a health service facility.
- (21) Psychiatric facility. – A public or private facility licensed pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes and which is primarily engaged in providing to inpatients, by or under the supervision of a physician, psychiatric services for the diagnosis and treatment of individuals with mental illnesses.
- (21a) **(Effective beginning November 21, 2025 – see note)** Qualified urban ambulatory surgical facility. – An ambulatory surgical facility that meets all of the following criteria:
 - a. Is licensed by the Department to operate as an ambulatory surgical facility.
 - b. Has a single specialty or multispecialty ambulatory surgical program.
 - c. Is located in a county with a population greater than 125,000 according to the 2020 federal decennial census or any subsequent federal decennial census.
- (22) Rehabilitation facility. – A public or private inpatient facility which is operated for the primary purpose of assisting in the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities through an integrated program of medical and other services which are provided under competent, professional supervision.
- (22a) Replacement equipment. – Equipment that costs less than three million dollars (\$3,000,000) and is purchased for the sole purpose of replacing comparable medical equipment currently in use which will be sold or otherwise disposed of when replaced. In determining whether the replacement equipment costs less than three million dollars (\$3,000,000) the costs of equipment, studies, surveys, designs, plans, working drawings, specifications, construction, installation, and other activities essential to acquiring and making operational

the replacement equipment shall be included. The capital expenditure for the equipment shall be deemed to be the fair market value of the equipment or the cost of the equipment, whichever is greater. Beginning September 30, 2023, and on September 30 each year thereafter, the cost threshold amount in this subdivision shall be adjusted using the Medical Care Index component of the Consumer Price Index published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12-month period preceding the previous September 1.

- (23) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 692, s. 1.
- (24) Repealed by Session Laws 1993, c. 7, s. 2.
- (24a) Service area. – The area of the State, as defined in the State Medical Facilities Plan or in rules adopted by the Department, which receives services from a health service facility.
- (24b) Simulator. – A machine that produces high quality diagnostic radiographs and precisely reproduces the geometric relationships of megavoltage radiation therapy equipment to the patient.
- (24c) Reserved for future codification.
- (24d) Solid organ transplantation services. – The provision of surgical procedures and the interrelated medical services that accompany the surgery to remove an organ from a patient and surgically implant an organ from a donor.
- (24e) Reserved for future codification.
- (24f) **(Effective until November 21, 2025 – see note)** Specialty ambulatory surgical program. – A formal program for providing on a same-day basis surgical procedures for only the specialty areas identified on the ambulatory surgical facility's 1993 Application for Licensure as an Ambulatory Surgical Center and authorized by its certificate of need.
- (24f) **(Effective November 21, 2025 – see note)** Specialty ambulatory surgical program. – A formal program for providing on a same-day basis surgical procedures of the same surgical specialty and authorized by its certificate of need, if a certificate of need is required.
- (25) State Medical Facilities Plan. – The plan prepared by the Department of Health and Human Services and the North Carolina State Health Coordinating Council, and approved by the Governor. In preparing the Plan, the Department and the State Health Coordinating Council shall maintain a mailing list of persons who have requested notice of public hearings regarding the Plan. Not less than 15 days prior to a scheduled public hearing, the Department shall notify persons on its mailing list of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The Department shall hold at least one public hearing prior to the adoption of the proposed Plan and at least six public hearings after the adoption of the proposed Plan by the State Health Coordinating Council. The Council shall accept oral and written comments from the public concerning the Plan.
- (26) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1002, s. 9.
- (27) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 511, s. 1. (1977, 2nd Sess., c. 1182, s. 2; 1981, c. 651, ss. 1, 2; c. 1127, ss. 24-29; 1983, c. 775, s. 1; 1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1002, ss. 1-9; c. 1022, ss. 2, 3; c. 1064, s. 1; c. 1110, ss. 1, 2; 1985, c. 589, ss. 42, 43(a); c. 740, ss. 1, 2, 6; 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 1001, s. 2; 1987, c. 34; c. 511, s. 1; 1991, c. 692, s. 1; c. 701, s. 1; 1993, c. 7, s. 2; c. 376, ss. 1-4; 1997-443, s. 11A.118(a); 2000-135, ss. 1, 2; 2001-234, s. 2; 2001-242, ss. 2, 4; 2003-229, s. 13; 2003-390, ss. 1, 2; 2005-325, s. 1; 2005-346, s. 6(a)-(d); 2009-145, s. 2; 2009-462, s. 4(k); 2013-360, s. 12G.3(a); 2015-288,

s. 1; 2018-81, s. 3(a); 2019-76, s. 19; 2021-129, s. 1; 2023-7, ss. 3.1(a), 3.2(a), 3.3(a).)