

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2019

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HOUSE BILL 772

Short Title: Access Midwives Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Fisher, Lambeth, Hurley, and Carney (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.*

Referred to: Health, if favorable, Finance, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 16, 2019

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL MIDWIVES LICENSING  
3 ACT.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 90 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Article  
6 to read:

7 "Article 10B.

8 "Certified Professional Midwives.

9 "**§ 90-178.10. Title.**

10 This Article may be cited as the "Access Midwives Act."

11 "**§ 90-178.11. Findings.**

12 The General Assembly makes the following findings:

- 13 (1) There is a need for a person to have the freedom to choose the manner, cost,  
14 attendant, and setting for giving birth.
- 15 (2) Access to prenatal care and delivery services is limited by the inadequate  
16 number of providers of maternity services, and the practice of midwifery may  
17 help to reduce this shortage.
- 18 (3) There is a need for the safe and effective delivery of newborn babies and the  
19 health, safety, and welfare of their mothers in the delivery process.
- 20 (4) In the interest of public health, the State should promote the regulation of the  
21 practice of midwifery for the purpose of protecting the health and welfare of  
22 women and infants.
- 23 (5) Midwifery is a profession in its own right, and it is not the practice of  
24 medicine.

25 "**§ 90-178.12. Definitions.**

26 The following definitions apply in this Article:

- 27 (1) AMCB. – American Midwifery Certification Board.
- 28 (2) Antepartal. – Occurring during pregnancy.
- 29 (3) Certified Nurse-Midwife (CNM). – A person approved to practice  
30 Nurse-Midwifery under Article 10A of this Chapter.
- 31 (4) Certified Professional Midwife (CPM). – A person who has obtained national  
32 certification from the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM).



- 1           (5)    Consultation. – The exchange of information and advice regarding the client's  
2           condition and indicated treatment with a licensed physician or certified nurse  
3           midwife.  
4           (6)    Council. – The North Carolina Council of Midwives, a subcommittee of the  
5           Division of Health Service Regulation.  
6           (7)    Department. – The North Carolina Department of Health and Human  
7           Services.  
8           (8)    Division. – The Division of Health Service Regulation within the Department  
9           of Health and Human Services to which the North Carolina Council of  
10          Midwives reports.  
11          (9)    Health care provider. – As defined in G.S. 90-21.11.  
12          (10)   ICM. – International Confederation of Midwives.  
13          (11)   Intrapartal. – Occurring during the process of giving birth.  
14          (12)   Licensed physician. – A physician duly licensed in this State to practice  
15          medicine under Article 1 of this Chapter.  
16          (13)   Licensee. – A Certified Professional Midwife who holds the CPM credential  
17          and is licensed to practice midwifery under this Article.  
18          (14)   Midwife. – A person who is trained to (i) give the necessary care and advice  
19          to women during pregnancy, labor, and the post-birth period, (ii) conduct  
20          normal deliveries as the midwife's own responsibility, (iii) care for the newly  
21          born infant, and (iv) is able to recognize the warning signs of abnormal  
22          conditions requiring referral to or collaboration with a licensed physician or  
23          other licensed health care provider.  
24          (15)   Midwifery. – The practice of midwifery as defined under G.S. 90-178.2(3).  
25          (16)   NACPM. – The National Association of Certified Professional Midwives.  
26          (17)   NARM. – The North American Registry of Midwives.  
27          (18)   Postpartal. – Occurring subsequent to birth.  
28          (19)   US MERA. – United States Midwifery Education, Regulation, and  
29          Association.

30    **"§ 90-178.13. License required; exemptions.**

31          (a)    On or after January 1, 2020, no person shall practice or offer to practice midwifery as  
32          defined in this Article or otherwise indicate or imply that the person is a licensed Certified  
33          Professional Midwife unless the person is currently licensed as provided in this Article.

34          (b)    The provisions of this Article do not apply to:

- 35               (1)    An individual approved to practice midwifery under Article 10A of this  
36               Chapter.  
37               (2)    A physician licensed to practice medicine under Article 1 of this Chapter when  
38               engaged in the practice of medicine as defined by law.  
39               (3)    The performance of medical acts by a physician assistant or nurse practitioner  
40               when performed in accordance with the rules of the North Carolina Medical  
41               Board.  
42               (4)    The practice of nursing by a registered nurse engaged in the practice of nursing  
43               under Article 9A of this Chapter.  
44               (5)    The rendering of childbirth assistance in an emergency situation.  
45               (6)    Individuals who are present during the birth process or assisting the certified  
46               professional midwife in the birth process, including family members or other  
47               caregivers invited by the birth mother, persons providing emergency medical  
48               care, doulas, midwifery students, or assistants who are under the supervision  
49               of a Certified Professional Midwife licensed under the provisions of this  
50               Article.

51    **"§ 90-178.14. The North Carolina Council of Midwives.**

1       (a)     Composition and Terms. – The North Carolina Council of Midwives is created. The  
2 Council shall consist of seven members who shall serve staggered terms. The Council members  
3 shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, and the  
4 initial Council members shall be appointed on or before October 1, 2019, as follows:

5           (1)     Four Certified Professional Midwives, one of whom shall serve for a term of  
6 four years, two of whom shall serve for terms of three years, and one of whom  
7 shall serve for a term of two years.

8           (2)     One licensed physician who is knowledgeable in midwifery care who shall  
9 serve for a term of four years.

10          (3)     One home birth consumer who shall serve for a term of two years.

11          (4)     One Certified Nurse-Midwife experience in out-of-hospital birth who shall  
12 serve for a term of two years.

13       Upon the expiration of the terms of the initial Council members, members shall be appointed  
14 for terms of four years and shall serve until their successors are appointed. No member may serve  
15 more than two consecutive terms.

16       (b)     Qualifications. – Each Council member shall be a resident of this State. The members  
17 who are Certified Professional Midwives shall hold current licenses from the Council and remain  
18 in good standing with the Council during their terms. The members who are other health care  
19 providers shall hold current licenses in their respective professions and remain in good standing  
20 with their respective licensing boards during their terms.

21       (c)     Vacancies. – Any vacancy shall be filled by the Secretary of the Department of Health  
22 and Human Services. Appointees to fill vacancies shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term  
23 and until their successors have been duly appointed.

24       (d)     Removal. – The Council may remove any of its members for neglect of duty,  
25 incompetence, or unprofessional conduct. If a Council member is absent from three consecutive  
26 Council meetings without excuse, that member shall be removed from office, and a new member  
27 shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. An absence  
28 shall be deemed excused if caused (i) by a health problem or condition verified in writing by a  
29 licensed physician or (ii) by an accident or similar unforeseeable tragedy or event, on or before  
30 the next Council meeting. A member subject to disciplinary proceedings in the member's capacity  
31 as a health care provider shall be disqualified from participating in the official business of the  
32 Council until the charges have been resolved.

33       (e)     Compensation. – Each member of the Council shall receive per diem and  
34 reimbursement for travel and subsistence as provided in G.S. 93B-5.

35       (f)     Officers. – The officers of the Council shall be a chair, a vice-chair, and other officers  
36 deemed necessary by the Council to carry out the purposes of this Article. All officers shall be  
37 elected annually by the Council for two-year terms and shall serve until their successors are  
38 elected and qualified. No person may serve as chair for more than five consecutive years.

39       (g)     Meetings. – The Council shall hold its first meeting within 45 days after the  
40 appointment of its members and shall hold at least two meetings each year to conduct business  
41 and to review the standards and rules previously adopted by the Council. The Council shall  
42 establish the procedures for calling, holding, and conducting regular and special meetings. A  
43 majority of Council members shall constitute a quorum.

44       (h)     Notice of Meeting; Records. – Public notice shall be given for all meetings and all  
45 meetings are open to the public. All records are available to the public. Persons wishing to obtain  
46 copies of records may request copies, in writing, from the Council.

47 **"§ 90-178.15. Powers and duties of the Council.**

48       In consultation with the Division and with guidance from the National Association of  
49 Certified Professional Midwives Standards of Practice, the Council shall have the following  
50 powers and duties:

51           (1)     Administer this Article.

- 1           (2)    Issue interpretations of this Article.
- 2           (3)    Adopt, amend, or repeal rules as may be necessary to carry out the provisions  
3           of this Article, including rules relating to the administration of medications  
4           consistent with a licensed Certified Professional Midwife's training and scope  
5           of practice.
- 6           (4)    Employ and fix compensation of personnel that the Council determines is  
7           necessary to carry into effect the provisions of this Article and incur other  
8           expenses necessary to effectuate this Article.
- 9           (5)    Examine and determine the qualifications and fitness of applicants for  
10           licensure, license renewal, and reciprocal licensure.
- 11           (6)    Issue, renew, deny, suspend, or revoke licensure and carry out any disciplinary  
12           actions authorized by this Article.
- 13           (7)    Set fees for licensure, license renewal, and other services deemed necessary  
14           to carry out the purposes of this Article.
- 15           (8)    Maintain a current list of all persons who have been licensed as Certified  
16           Professional Midwives under this Article and collect their annual statistics.
- 17           (9)    Address problems and concerns of practicing Certified Professional Midwives  
18           in order to promote safety for the citizens of this State.
- 19           (10)   Conduct investigations for the purpose of determining whether violations of  
20           this Article or grounds for disciplining Certified Professional Midwives exist.
- 21           (11)   Maintain a record of all proceedings and make available to all approved  
22           Certified Professional Midwives and other concerned parties an annual report  
23           of all Council action.
- 24           (12)   Adopt a seal containing the name of the Council for use on all official  
25           documents and reports issued by the Council.
- 26           (13)   Educate the public and other providers of maternity care about the role of the  
27           licensed midwife.

28   **"§ 90-178.16. Requirements for licensure.**

29       An applicant shall be licensed to practice as a Certified Professional Midwife under this  
30   Article if the applicant meets all of the following requirements:

- 31           (1)    Completes an application on a form approved by the Council.
- 32           (2)    Has obtained a certification from the North American Registry of Midwives  
33           (NARM) and currently holds the title of Certified Professional Midwife  
34           (CPM).
- 35           (3)    On or after December 31, 2021, and in accordance with US MERA guidelines,  
36           has graduated from or otherwise successfully completed a midwifery program  
37           or school that has either been (i) accredited by an organization recognized by  
38           the United States Department of Education, including the Midwifery  
39           Education Accreditation Council (MEAC) and Accreditation Commission for  
40           Midwifery Education (ACME), or (ii) approved by the Council.
- 41           (4)    Submits proof to the Council of current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)  
42           certification and neonatal resuscitation (NPR) certification.
- 43           (5)    Has read, understands, and agrees to practice under the guidelines set forth in  
44           this Article and any rules adopted pursuant to this Article.
- 45           (6)    Pays the required fees in accordance with G.S. 90-178.20.
- 46           (7)    On or before December 31, 2021, demonstrates successful completion of a  
47           Midwifery Bridge Certificate consisting of continuing education in  
48           emergency skills for pregnancy, birth, newborn care, and other midwifery  
49           topics addressing the ICM Core Competencies as determined by US MERA.

50   **"§ 90-178.17. Responsibilities of a licensed midwife; display of license.**

1       (a) A Certified Professional Midwife licensed under this Article shall practice according  
2 to the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM) Standards of Practice  
3 and shall have the following responsibilities:

- 4           (1) Provide care for the healthy woman who is expected to have a normal  
5 pregnancy, labor, birth, and postpartal phase in the setting of the mother's  
6 choice.
- 7           (2) Ensure that the client has signed an informed consent form. This form shall  
8 include information to inform the client of the qualifications of the licensee.
- 9           (3) Order routine antepartal or postpartal screening or laboratory analysis to be  
10 performed by a licensed laboratory or testing facility, when necessary.
- 11           (4) Develop an emergency plan to be signed by the client and placed in the client's  
12 chart. The documentation shall also include referral and transfer plans for the  
13 client in the event of an emergency.
- 14           (5) Determine the progress of labor, monitor fetal and maternal status, and when  
15 labor is well-established, be available until delivery is accomplished.
- 16           (6) Remain with the mother during the postpartal period until the conditions of  
17 the mother and newborn are stabilized.
- 18           (7) Instruct the parents regarding the requirements of newborn screening.
- 19           (8) Instruct the parents regarding the requirement of newborn hearing screening.
- 20           (9) Submit and maintain a birth certificate for each birth in accordance with the  
21 requirements of Article 4 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes.
- 22           (10) Practice in compliance with the requirements of this Article and any rules  
23 adopted pursuant to this Article.

24       (b) A midwife licensed pursuant to this Article shall display the license at all times in a  
25 conspicuous place where the licensed midwife is practicing, when applicable.

26 **"§ 90-178.18. License renewal; inactive status; lapsed license.**

27       (a) An initial license to practice as a Certified Professional Midwife shall be valid for  
28 three years. After the initial license expires, a license shall be renewed every two years. All  
29 applications for renewal shall be filed with the Council and shall be accompanied by the renewal  
30 fee in accordance with G.S. 90-178.20 and proof of current certification from NARM.  
31 Compliance with NARM recertification requirements shall include (i) remaining in good  
32 standing with NARM or AMCB, (ii) maintaining current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)  
33 and neonatal resuscitation (NPR) certifications, and (iii) completing any continuing education  
34 requirements. A license that has expired for failure to renew may be reinstated after the applicant  
35 pays any late and renewal fees as required by G.S. 90-178.20 and complies with any other rules  
36 adopted pursuant to this Article.

37       (b) Upon written request to the Council, the Council may grant a licensed midwife  
38 inactive status. While inactive, the midwife shall not practice midwifery in this State and shall  
39 not be subject to license renewal requirements established by the Council. A midwife may change  
40 the midwife's status from inactive to active by (i) submitting a written request to the Council and  
41 (ii) fulfilling the requirements for renewal described under subsection (a) of this section.

42       (c) A midwife who does not seek inactive status and allows the license to expire after a  
43 90-day grace period shall apply for a new license as prescribed in this Article.

44 **"§ 90-178.19. Reciprocity.**

45       The Council may, upon application and payment of proper fees, grant a license to an  
46 individual who resides in this State and has been licensed, certified, or registered to practice as a  
47 midwife in another jurisdiction if that jurisdiction's standards of competency are substantially  
48 equivalent to those provided in this Article in accordance with rules adopted by the Council.

49 **"§ 90-178.20. Fees.**

50       (a) All fees shall be set by the Council, in consultation with the Division, pursuant to  
51 rules adopted under this Article. All fees payable to the Council shall be deposited in the name

1 of the Council in financial institutions designated by the Council as official depositories and shall  
2 be used to pay all expenses incurred in carrying out the purposes of this Article.

3 (b) All salaries, compensation, and expenses incurred or allowed to carry out the purposes  
4 of this Article shall be paid by the Council exclusively out of the fees received by the Council as  
5 authorized by this Article or funds received from other sources. In no case shall any salary,  
6 expense, or other obligation of the Council be charged against the State treasury.

7 **"§ 90-178.21. Suspension, revocation, and refusal to renew license.**

8 (a) The Council may issue a letter of reprimand, deny, refuse to renew, suspend, or revoke  
9 an application for licensure or a license if the applicant or licensee does any of the following:

10 (1) Gives false information or withholds material information from the Council  
11 in procuring or attempting to procure a license.

12 (2) Gives false information or withholds material information from the Council  
13 during the course of an investigation conducted by the Council.

14 (3) Has been convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to a crime that indicates the  
15 person is unfit or incompetent to practice midwifery as defined in this Article  
16 or that indicates the person has deceived, defrauded, or endangered the public.

17 (4) Has a habitual substance abuse problem or mental impairment that interferes  
18 with his or her ability to provide appropriate care as established by this Article  
19 or rules adopted by the Council.

20 (5) Has demonstrated gross negligence, incompetency, or misconduct in the  
21 practice of midwifery as defined in this Article.

22 (6) Has had an application for licensure or a license to practice midwifery in  
23 another jurisdiction denied, suspended, or revoked for reasons that would be  
24 grounds for similar action in this State.

25 (7) Has willfully violated any provision of this Article or rules adopted by the  
26 Council.

27 (b) The taking of any action authorized under subsection (a) of this section may be  
28 ordered by the Council after a hearing is held in accordance with Article 3A of Chapter 150B of  
29 the General Statutes. The Council may reinstate a revoked license if it finds that the reasons for  
30 revocation no longer exist and that the person can reasonably be expected to perform the services  
31 authorized under this Article in a safe manner.

32 **"§ 90-178.22. Enjoining illegal practices; vicarious liability.**

33 (a) The Council may apply to the superior court for an order enjoining violations of this  
34 Article. Upon a showing by the Council that any person has violated this Article, the court may  
35 grant injunctive relief.

36 (b) No health care provider or medical facility shall be liable for an injury to a woman or  
37 infant arising during childbirth and resulting from an act or omission by a midwife licensed under  
38 this Article, regardless of whether the health care provider has consulted with or accepted a  
39 referral from the licensee."

40 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.