

Committee on Public Health
Bill Summary

Bill No. H2362
Title: *An Act relative to chaperones for medical exams.*
Sponsor: Representatives Jennifer Balinsky Armini and Natalie M. Higgins
Committee: Public Health
Hearing Date: June 23, 2025
Similar Matters: S1491
Prior History: New file
Reporting Deadline: August 22, 2025

Current Law:

- **M.G.L. Chapter 111** pertains to public health.

Summary:

This bill adds a new section to M.G.L. Chapter 111 that requires health care providers to offer a trained chaperone during genital, rectal, and breast examinations. It also sets guidelines regarding the qualifications of chaperones, documentation requirements, and exceptions in emergency situations.

This bill amends M.G.L. Chapter 111 by adding a new section, 249.

Section 249:

Subsection (a) requires health care providers to offer a trained chaperone to be present for all: (i) genital and rectal examinations, regardless of the patient's gender; and (ii) breast examinations for patients identifying as female.

Subsection (b) allows patients to choose to accept or decline the presence of a chaperone during their examination. A healthcare provider must ensure a chaperone is available prior to any breast, genital, or rectal examination and must act in accordance with the patient's preference.

Subsection (c) specifies that chaperones must not be friends or relatives of the patient or the healthcare provider, and they must be licensed by the board of registration in medicine.

Subsection (d) prohibits a chaperone from engaging in any actions that would obstruct or distract from observing the medical provider's conduct during the examination.

Subsection (e) requires the presence or absence of a chaperone to be documented in a patient's chart for all breast, genital, and rectal examinations.

Subsection (f) allows a patient to decline the presence of a chaperone for a breast, genital, and rectal examination. If declined, the examiner may: (i) postpone the breast, genital, or rectal examination if deemed in the patient's best interest; or (ii) perform the examination and document the patient's consent to proceed without a chaperone.

Subsection (g) does not require a health care provider to offer a chaperone when the patient needs immediate examination due to a medical emergency.

Subsection (i) does not require a health care provider to provide a chaperone if one is already present during the medical examination.