

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
2025-2026 (194th) BILL SUMMARY**

Bill No: H1127

Title: AN ACT TO INCREASE ACCESS TO NURSE-MIDWIFERY SERVICES

Sponsor(s): Rep. Marjorie C. Decker (*Cambridge*), Rep. Brandy Fluker-Reid (*Boston*)

Hearing Date: April 29, 2025

Reporting Deadline: June 28, 2025

Prior History:

2023-24 (H1069): Reported favorably; Referred to Health Care Financing; Reported favorably accompanying S607; Referred to SWM

2021-22 (H3881): Reported favorably; Referred to Health Care Financing; Ordered to a House Study

2019-20 (H1028): Ordered to a House Study

2017-18 (H552): Ordered to a House Study

Similar Matters: S697 (Crighton – Identical); H1117 (Cruz); S784 (Lovely)

CURRENT LAW:

M.G.L. c. 32A Contributory Group General or Blanket Insurance for Persons in the Service of the Commonwealth (GIC)

M.G.L. c. 112 Registration of Certain Professions and Occupations §80C Nurse-midwife; designation

A nurse-midwife who is designated by the board of registration in nursing pursuant to the provisions of § 80B: *Nursing practice; advanced practice; licensed practical nurses*, may engage in the practice of nurse-midwifery.

M.G.L. c. 175 Insurance §47E Certified nurse midwife services benefits

Blanket or general policies or accident and sickness policies which provide hospital expense and surgical expense insurance are mandated to provide coverage for certified nurse midwife services if such services would be covered if provided by any other licensed practitioner and they are within the nurse midwife's scope of practice.

M.G.L. c. 176B Medical Service Corporations (Blue Shield of MA) §4G Certified nurse midwife services benefit.

Any subscription certificate under an individual or group medical service agreement (Blue Shield policy) is mandated to provide coverage for certified nurse midwife services if such services would be covered if provided by any other licensed practitioner and they are within the nurse midwife's scope of practice.

M.G.L. c. 176G Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs)

Chapter 218 of the Acts of 1995, An Act Further Defining Childbirth and Postpartum Care Benefits §§ 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

The Group Insurance Commission (GIC), MassHealth and commercial health insurers will provide coverage for insurers prenatal care, childbirth and postpartum care, with a minimum of forty-eight hours of in-patient care following a vaginal delivery and a minimum of ninety-six hours of in-patient care following a caesarean section for a mother and her newly born child.

Any decision to shorten the minimum coverages will be made by the attending physician in consultation with the mother in accordance with rules and regulations promulgated by the department of public health relative to early discharge and post-delivery care and will include, home visits, parent education, assistance and training in breast or bottle feeding and any appropriate clinical tests.

The first home visit will be conducted by a registered nurse, physician, or certified nurse midwife and any subsequent home visit will be provided by a licensed health care provider. For the purposes of this section, attending physician includes the attending obstetrician, pediatrician, or certified nurse midwife attending the mother and newly born child.

Chapter 186 Acts of 2024, An Act promoting access to midwifery care and out-of-hospital birth options §40

MassHealth will provide coverage for services rendered by a certified nurse-midwife designated to engage in the practice of nurse-midwifery and the payment rate for a service provided by a certified nurse-midwife that is within the scope of the certified nurse-midwife's authorization to practice will be equal to the payment rate for the same service if performed by a physician. MassHealth will provide coverage for midwifery services, including prenatal care, childbirth and postpartum care, provided by a licensed certified professional midwife regardless of the site of services.

SUMMARY:

Under state law, MassHealth, Blue Shield, and blanket or general policies or accident and sickness policies which provide hospital expense and surgical expense insurance, are required to provide coverage of nurse midwife services if such services are within a nurse midwife's scope of practice and would be covered if provided by any other licensed practitioner.

This bill expands access to nurse midwife services by mandating the Group Insurance Commission, Blue Cross and HMO policies to provide coverage for services rendered by a certified nurse midwife designated to engage in the practice of nurse-midwifery by the board of registration in nursing.

In addition, the bill specifies that payers will reimburse certified nurse midwives at a rate equivalent to that paid to physicians. The bill prohibits payers from reducing physician reimbursements to comply with this directive.