

# SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE, No. 2996

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 19, 2026

The Senate Judiciary Committee reports favorably a Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 2996.

This substitute bill exempts advanced practice nurses from existing joint protocol requirements with a collaborating physician when:

1) the advanced practice nurse has more than 5,000 hours of licensed, active, advanced nursing practice in a role with the applicable population focus;

2) the advanced practice nurse is providing primary health care or behavioral health care;

3) the advanced practice nurse is not providing health care services in the area of general obstetrics;

4) the advanced practice nurse is not providing elective aesthetic or cosmetic services; and

5) the advanced practice nurse, to the extent the advanced practice nurse is providing behavioral health care services, takes appropriate action to facilitate the timely referral, transfer, or admission to a higher level of care in the event the advanced practice nurse determines, based upon clinical judgment, that a patient requires such level of care. The determination shall be based upon a documented clinical assessment.

An advanced practice nurse who meets these exemption criteria may order medications and devices, subject to the conditions outlined in the bill.

The bill provides that any State law or regulation that requires the signature or similar endorsement of a physician will be deemed to require the same of an APN, to the extent consistent with an APN's scope of practice.

The bill revises certain sections of law to provide that certain rules or regulations promulgated under those sections of law are not to be more restrictive than the provisions of P.L.1991, c.377 (C.45:11-45 et al.).

The bill provides that the New Jersey Board of Nursing will have the power and duty to limit, restrict, deny, suspend or revoke an advanced practice nurse's licensure, or prescriptive or dispensing authority. The board may take disciplinary action for: prescribing, dispensing, administering, or distributing medications in an unsafe

manner; prescribing or distributing medications outside the advanced practice nurse's role or population focus; or prescribing, ordering, procuring, administering, dispensing and furnishing over the counter, legend and controlled substances outside the applicable State and federal laws or regulations.

This bill is to take effect immediately, except that notwithstanding any provision of the bill to the contrary, an advanced practice nurse authorized to prescribe, authorize, or order medications and devices without a joint protocol pursuant to Executive Order No. 13 (2026) is authorized to: (1) if the advanced practice nurse would have 5,000 hours of licensed, active, advanced nursing practice within 12 months of the effective date of the bill, continue practicing without a joint protocol; or (2) if the advanced practice nurse would have less than 5,000 hours of licensed, active, advanced nursing practice within 12 months of the effective date of the bill, continue practicing without a joint protocol for a period of six months after the effective date of the bill, after which the advanced practice nurse is required to establish a joint protocol with a collaborating physician pursuant to the provisions of current law and any hours of licensed, active, advanced nursing practice without a joint protocol is be counted towards the requirements for practice without a joint protocol with a collaborating physician. Executive Order No. 13 (2026) extends the COVID-19 State of Emergency for 45 days, until April 2, 2026. The State of Emergency, among other things, directly and through waivers issued pursuant to its authority, waived existing practice restrictions for advanced practice nurses, including these collaborative agreement and supervision requirements.