

Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAA) in the United States and SC

SUPPORT of Senate Bill 624 and House Bill 4253

- Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAs) can practice in 16 States, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Territory of Guam, and any Veteran Affairs facility in all 50 States.
 - SC, NC, GA, FL, AL, KY, OH, IN, MI, WI, VT, MO, OK, CO, NM, and TX
- Each jurisdiction practices at a 1:4 (1 Anesthesiologist to 4 CAAs) supervision ratio, **EXCEPT SOUTH CAROLINA (1:2)** and New Mexico (1:3). Our neighboring states of North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida all allow a 1:4 supervision ration. CRNAs practice at a 1:4 supervision ratio in all 50 States.
- Certified anesthesiologist assistants have been licensed to practice in South Carolina since 2001. CAAs currently practice in Charleston (Trident and St Francis), Myrtle Beach (Grand Strand Regional, Carolina Bone and Joint), Greenville (Prisma), Rock Hill (Piedmont), Beaufort (Beaufort Memorial), and Hilton Head (Hilton Head Hospital). The 1:2 supervision ratio has prevented hospitals from hiring additional CAAs.
- **Recognized by the Federal Government:** The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recognizes both Certified AAs (CAAs) and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) as non-physician anesthesia providers. Similarly, commercial insurance payers make no distinction between the two anesthetist types with regard to payments for services provided under medical direction by a physician anesthesiologist.
 - A CAA, as defined in § 410.69(b) of the Federal Register, “who is under the supervision of an anesthesiologist who is immediately available if needed.
 - A CRNA, as defined in § 410.69(b) of the Federal Register, “who is under the supervision of the operating practitioner or of an anesthesiologist who is immediately available if needed”.
- CAAs are regulated by the South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners. The Board is in support of this change and has previously recommended to the General Assembly an increase in the supervision ratio.
 - Removal of Section 40-47-1240 (8) concerning the licensure of CAAs is also necessary as we are the only medical professionals in the state required to appear before the board for licensure.
- The scope of CAA clinical practice is the same as that of nurse anesthetists on the Anesthesia Care Team (ACT).
- AAs train and work under the supervision of physician anesthesiologists who retain responsibility for the immediate care of the patient. The care team model expands the medical treatment provided by the physician anesthesiologist and equips the medical facility to serve patients more effectively and efficiently, especially in rural parts of the state. The South Carolina Society of Anesthesiologists is supportive of this legislation.
- **SUPPORT:** We would greatly appreciate your **support of Senate Bill 624 and House Bill 4253** that will increase the supervision ratio in Section 40-47-1250 of the South Carolina Anesthesiologist’s Assistants Practice Act, to a ratio of **1:4** and the removal of Section 40-47-1240 (8).
- **WHY:** Not only is this a restraint of trade and parity issue, there is an inordinate need for anesthesia providers throughout the state of South Carolina. This need can be proven by the amount of job opportunities available for anesthesia providers.
- For more information, please do not hesitate to contact the South Carolina Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants President Koty Price (President.SCAAA@gmail.com) or visit SC-AAA.org or the American Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants webpage at www.anesthetist.org