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Illinois Empowers Certified Nurse-Midwives in Expanding Access to Maternity Care



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The Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing (ISAPN) proudly announces the signing of **House Bill 2688** into law by Governor J.B. Pritzker on **August 15, 2025**. The enactment of this law marks a pivotal moment in the advancement of maternal health and the empowerment of nursing professionals across Illinois with the enactment of **Public Act 104-0244** (formerly House Bill 2688). This transformative legislation amends the Illinois Nurse Practice Act to significantly enhance the scope of practice for Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), breaking down barriers in maternity care delivery and bolstering patient access, especially in underserved communities.

Under the new law, **CNMs who are APRNs** may now provide out-of-hospital birth services in licensed birth centers **without a written collaborative agreement**, provided they hold clinical privileges granted by the center's clinical director. In addition, CNMs may offer out-of-hospital birth services under a written collaborative agreement with another APRN who has full practice authority, but only in federally designated primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas (with a score of 12 or higher) or in recognized maternity care deserts.

The law clarifies that **physicians are not automatically liable** for the actions of APRNs under written collaborative agreements, unless there is reason to believe the APRN was incompetent or engaged in willful and wanton misconduct. In the case of home births, physicians are likewise protected from liability unless directly involved in the care provided.

ISAPN celebrates this legislative victory as a meaningful step forward in addressing Illinois' maternal health crisis. Many communities continue to face limited access to maternity services, and this expansion of nurse-midwife authority ensures that more families will benefit from compassionate, evidence-based care delivered by highly trained professionals.

"This law strengthens access to safe, patient-centered maternity care, especially in underserved regions of Illinois," said ISAPN leadership. "It reflects the state's trust in nurse-midwives and advanced practice registered nurses to practice to the full extent of their education and training, improving equity and outcomes for families across Illinois."

The Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing remains committed to working alongside state agencies, licensed birth centers, and community health leaders to support implementation of the law before its effective date of **January 1, 2026**.

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