

## SB297 INTRODUCED



1 SB297  
2 84R5822-1  
3 By Senators Stutts, Gudger, Livingston, Givhan, Butler  
4 RFD: Healthcare  
5 First Read: 12-Feb-26



## 4 SYNOPSIS:

5           This bill would require hospitals and  
6           freestanding emergency departments to report  
7           information regarding physician availability to the  
8           Alabama Department of Public Health on a quarterly  
9           basis.

10           This bill would require the Alabama Department  
11           of Public Health to publish the information collected  
12           publicly on the department's website.

13           This bill would require hospitals to indicate  
14           whether a physician is physically present in the  
15           hospital's emergency department both physically and on  
16           the hospital's website.

17           This bill would authorize the Alabama Department  
18           of Public Health to suspend or revoke a license to  
19           operate a hospital for violations.

22                   A BILL

23                   TO BE ENTITLED

24                   AN ACT

25  
26           Relating to hospitals; to require hospitals and  
27           freestanding emergency departments to report certain staffing  
28           information to the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH);



## SB297 INTRODUCED

to require ADPH to publish the information on its website; and  
to require each hospital to publicly indicate whether a  
physician is physically present in the hospital's emergency  
department.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. (a) Each hospital and freestanding emergency  
department in this state shall report quarterly to the Alabama  
Department of Public Health the following information for each  
emergency department under the hospital or freestanding  
emergency department's operation:

(1) The total number of hours where at least one  
physician was physically present and on duty in the emergency  
department.

(2) The total number of hours where the emergency  
department was operating while a physician was not physically  
present in the emergency department.

(b) The Alabama Department of Public Health shall  
publish the information collected pursuant to subsection (a)  
on the department's website. The information shall be  
organized into a searchable, standardized format with  
facility-specific and aggregate statistics.

(c) Each hospital, both virtually on its website and  
physically in the hospital's emergency department waiting  
room, shall post or display one of the following statements,  
depending on whether a physician is physically present in the  
emergency department:

(1) If a physician is physically present, the statement  
shall read, "A physician is physically present in the



## SB297 INTRODUCED

emergency department at this time."

(2) If there is no physician physically present, the statement shall read, "A physician is not physically present in the emergency department at this time."

(d)(1) For purposes of this section, a physician shall be considered physically present if, in the emergency department, there is a licensed doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy who is on-site, immediately available for emergency patient care, and primarily responsible for clinical oversight of the department.

(2) A physician shall not be considered physically present if a physician is:

- a. Only available by telephone or telemedicine;
- b. Located off-site, including within the same hospital campus but not in the emergency department;
- c. On-call but not physically present; or
- d. Covering multiple emergency departments simultaneously.

(e) The Alabama Department of Public Health may suspend or revoke a license granted to allow operation of a hospital under Article 2, Chapter 21 of Title 22, Code of Alabama 1975, for violations of this section.

Section 2. This act shall become effective on July 1, 2026.