

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

BILL NUMBER: SB 1271
 AUTHOR: Reyes
 BILL DATE: May 14, 2026, Amended
 SUBJECT: Midwifery: Workforce Data: Availability to be a Clinical Preceptorship
 SPONSOR: Women's Foundation California, Solis Policy Institute

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT LEGISLATION

Requires the Medical Board of California (Board) to request information about a licensed midwife's (LM) eligibility, availability, and capacity to serve as a clinical preceptor, including information about their clinical practice setting and barriers to serving as a preceptor. Requires the Board to provide this data to the California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) on a quarterly basis and requires HCAI to prepare a report to the Legislature by January 1, 2029.

BACKGROUND

LMs are licensed and regulated by the Board (see [Business and Professions Code \(BPC\) sections 2505 to 2523](#)). Certified nurse-midwives are licensed and regulated by the California Board of Registered Nursing (see [BPC sections 2746 to 2746.8](#)).

[BPC section 502](#) requires the various healing arts boards within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to request the following demographic information from its licensees at the time of renewal:

- Anticipated year of retirement.
- Area of practice or specialty.
- City, county, and ZIP Code of practice.
- Date of birth.
- Educational background and the highest level attained at time of licensure or registration.
- Gender or gender identity.
- Hours spent in direct patient care, including telehealth hours as a subcategory, training, research, and administration.
- Languages spoken.
- National Provider Identifier, or NPI (this must be provided, if the licensee has one, pursuant to [BPC section 850.2](#)).
- Race or ethnicity.
- Type of employer or classification of primary practice site among the types of practice sites specified by the board, including, but not limited to, clinic, hospital, managed care organization, or private practice.
- Work hours.

- Sexual orientation.
- Disability status.

These demographic questions are available to be answered by licensees online through Breeze (a paper-based survey is not available) and Board licensees may fill out the survey at any time. As Breeze is currently configured, licensees are prompted to fill out the survey at the time of initial licensure and if they have not submitted it within six months prior to submitting their renewal application. Except for NPI, licensees may decline to answer the above questions when completing the survey.

The [HCAI](#) “is committed to expanding equitable access to health care for all Californians—ensuring every community has the health workforce they need, safe and reliable health care facilities, and health information that can help make care more effective and affordable.” The HCAI has four key health program areas related to [facilities](#), [workforce](#), [affordability](#), and [data collection and analysis](#).

The collected data is [available to the HCAI](#) and used to analyze issues related to workforce shortage, equity, and distribution in order to inform state policy. Furthermore, certain information about the licensee (e.g., LM school graduation date/location) is posted on their profile page on the Board’s website.

Currently, there are no [Board-approved schools](#) located in California that meet the educational requirements for LM licensure in this state. Distance learning options may be available to California residents from the Board-approved schools. As of April 1, 2026, there are [510 LMs](#) with a current and active license from the Board.

ANALYSIS

According to the author’s fact sheet:

“Midwife preceptors are experienced providers who play a critical role in training and mentoring aspiring LMs—bridging academic learning with hands-on clinical experience. Despite preceptorship being a required step for licensure, there is a severe lack of available preceptors and limited methods to find them. As a result, students are left to independently navigate a broken system, often relying on out of state programs to complete their credentials. These structural barriers further limit access to the profession and rural communities from receiving quality specialized care.

Ensuring robust, comprehensive data on LMs is a critical step toward building a sustainable, diverse, and accessible midwifery workforce that can meet California’s growing perinatal health needs.”

SB 1271 would require the Board to update the survey offered to LMs at the time of initial licensure and renewal to request the following information:

- The licensed midwife’s eligibility to serve as a clinical preceptor for student midwives enrolled in a midwifery education program approved by the Medical Board of California, including whether they have met the minimum requirements to become a clinical preceptor. If they indicate that they are eligible, they shall also be asked the following:
 - Whether they are currently available, or anticipate becoming available within the next two years, to serve as a clinical preceptor for student midwives.
 - The primary practice setting or settings in which they would offer to serve as a clinical preceptor, including, but not limited to, home births, freestanding birth centers, hospital-based or integrated maternity settings, rural or frontier community settings, or federally qualified health centers.
 - The maximum number of student midwives that they can supervise concurrently, the California counties that they currently practice and would be available for clinical preceptorship.

An LM who states that they are not currently available to serve as a clinical preceptor shall be asked the primary reason(s) for their unavailability.

The bill states that an LM shall not be required to provide the requested information and shall not be subject to discipline for not providing this information. The Board would be required to maintain the confidentiality of the information collected and only release it to the public in an aggregate form that cannot identify an individual. The Board, however, would be required to provide the HCAI on a quarterly basis with the individual LM data collected for the purpose of statewide midwifery workforce planning, analysis, and public reporting.

The HCAI shall maintain the confidentiality of the data collected and only release it in aggregate form that cannot be used to identify an individual LM. The bill also requires the HCAI to provide a report to the Legislature on their findings by January 1, 2029.

Implementation Concerns

If enacted, this would take effect January 1, 2027. The bill relies upon the license renewal process to collect this data which is challenged by the fact that LMs (like other Board licensees) renew their license once every two years. Further, the Board allows licensees to renew up to 180 days prior to the expiration of their license; therefore, some LMs could renew their license in Fall 2026, shortly before the survey is updated). Additionally, Board staff would require time to develop and deploy the updated survey (in conjunction with the DCA and the HCAI) and HCAI would require time to review the data and complete the report.

Furthermore, due to previously scheduled information technology projects, Board staff within the Information Services Branch may not be able to complete the programming work proposed by SB 1271, including any appropriate collaboration with the bill sponsors related to the wording of the survey, before the required implementation date of January 1, 2027.

Options to Address Time Considerations

LMs may fill out the survey at any time (not only at the time of initial licensure or license renewal); therefore, to help speed up the collection of data, the Board could contact LMs via email in early 2027 (after the survey has been updated) to request that they fill it out as soon as possible. Similar requests could be made by the sponsors of SB 1271 and other organizations in contact with the LM community.

Consideration of a Board Position

The goals of the bill are laudable, and consideration should be given towards the implementation issues identified above so that this proposal accomplishes its goals.

Board staff recommend that the Board adopt a position of Support, if Amended, to allow the Board until April 1, 2027, to update the LM survey, and direct the staff to email LMs upon implementation of the updated survey to increase the pace of data collection.

FISCAL: Minor and absorbable costs associated with updating the language of the LM survey and communicating to LMs encouraging them to complete the survey.

SUPPORT: Around-Birth Collective, INC
 BIPOC Student Midwives Fund
 Black Women Birthing Justice
 California Latinas For Reproductive Justice
 California Women’s Law Center
 Girls Talk Organization

OPPOSITION: None identified.

POSITION: Recommendation: Support, if Amended

ATTACHMENT: [SB 1271, Reyes. Midwifery: Workforce Data: Availability to be a Clinical Preceptorship.](#)
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