

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1608
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Health & Human Services
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is important, for several reasons, that a patient have a medical examination to rule out physical issues that may be impacting the brain before admitting the patient to a mental health facility.

Firstly, some physical conditions can mimic mental health disorders, making it difficult to accurately diagnose and treat the underlying problem without a proper examination. For example, thyroid disorders, brain tumors, and other medical conditions can cause symptoms that resemble mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, or psychosis.

Secondly, some physical conditions can actually cause or contribute to mental health problems. For instance, head injuries, infections, and certain medications can impact brain function and result in cognitive, emotional, or behavioral changes.

Thirdly, treating a physical condition may alleviate or improve mental health symptoms, and therefore it is important to identify and address any underlying physical issues before solely relying on mental health treatments.

Although evidence suggests that physical in-person exams are essential to rule out underlying conditions, there have been reported cases where patients have been admitted to mental health facilities without receiving an in-person medical examination first. S.B. 1608 seeks to prevent this from happening by requiring that a medical examination be in-person before admission to a mental health facility.

As proposed, S.B. 1608 amends current law relating to physical examination requirements for patients admitted to an inpatient mental health facility.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 575, Health and Safety Code, by adding Section 575.004, as follows:

Sec. 575.004. IN-PERSON PHYSICAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS. Requires the facility administrator of an inpatient mental health facility to ensure a physical examination or assessment of a patient admitted to the facility that is required to be conducted on the patient's admission is conducted in person.

SECTION 2. Makes application of Section 575.004, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2025.