

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

H.B. 447
Mar 30, 2021
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH40263-MG-32

Short Title: The Jeff Rieg Law/Patients Religious Rights. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Kidwell.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT PROTECTING THE RELIGIOUS RIGHTS OF HOSPITAL PATIENTS BY
3 PRESERVING THEIR RIGHT TO RECEIVE VISITS BY CLERGY MEMBERS DURING
4 HOSPITAL STAYS THAT OCCUR DURING A DECLARED DISASTER OR
5 EMERGENCY.
6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:
7 **SECTION 1.** Part 2 of Article 5 of Chapter 131E of the General Statutes is amended
8 by adding a new section to read:
9 "**§ 131E-84.05. Patient visitation by clergy, including during declared disasters or**
10 **emergencies.**
11 Notwithstanding G.S. 131E-84, Chapter 166A of the General Statutes, or any other provision
12 of law to the contrary, each hospital licensed under this Article shall allow a clergy member to
13 visit any patient admitted to the hospital who requests or consents to be visited by a clergy
14 member during the patient's hospital stay, including a hospital stay that occurs during a declared
15 disaster or emergency. A hospital may require a visiting clergy member to submit to health
16 screenings necessary to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, and, notwithstanding anything
17 to the contrary in this section, a hospital may restrict a visiting clergy member who does not pass
18 a health screening requirement or who has tested positive for an infectious disease. A hospital
19 may require a visiting clergy member to adhere to infection control procedures, including
20 wearing personal protective equipment, as long as the infection control procedures do not
21 interfere with the religious beliefs of the patient or the visiting clergy member."
22 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective October 1, 2021.

