

# BILL NO. 44 OF 2025

## A BILL

### FOR AN ACT TO REPEAL THE REGISTRATION OF SKILLED PROFESSIONALS ACT 2016 AND FOR RELATED MATTERS

ENACTED by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji—

#### *Short title and commencement*

**1.—**(1) This Act may be cited as the Registration of Skilled Professionals (Repeal) Act 2025.

(2) This Act comes into force on a date or dates appointed by the Minister by notice in the Gazette.

#### *Interpretation*

**2.** In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

“Committee” means the Skilled Professionals Evaluation Committee established under section 4 of the repealed Act;

“professional body” means an association or body within a profession, whether or not established by a written law, which is responsible for the registration or licensing of individuals in a profession in Fiji;

“repealed Act” means the Registration of Skilled Professionals Act 2016; and

“skilled professional” has the same meaning as provided under section 2 of the repealed Act.

*Repeal*

3. The Registration of Skilled Professionals Act 2016 is repealed.

*Revocation*

4. The Registration of Skilled Professionals Regulations 2016 is revoked.

*Savings and transitional*

5.—(1) At the commencement of this Act, any asset of the Committee must be transferred to the Office of the Prime Minister.

(2) Any application approved by the Committee prior to the commencement of this Act remains valid until the relevant licence, permit or form of approval expires or is cancelled or revoked.

(3) Any application—

- (a) to be registered or licensed as a skilled professional which is not processed by the Committee at the commencement of this Act must be referred to the relevant professional body; and
- (b) for a permit to enter, work or reside in Fiji which is not processed by the Committee at the commencement of this Act must be referred to the Ministry responsible for immigration.

(4) Any fee paid for an application which is not processed at the commencement of this Act, must be transferred to the relevant professional body or the Ministry responsible for immigration, and any remaining amount must be reimbursed to the applicant.

(5) At the commencement of this Act—

- (a) any application to be registered or licensed as a professional, or for a renewal or extension thereof must be made to the relevant professional body; and
- (b) any application for a permit to enter, work or reside in Fiji must be made to the Ministry responsible for immigration in accordance with the Immigration Act 2003.

(6) Any appeal lodged against a decision of the Committee to the Prime Minister which is not processed at the commencement of this Act must be referred to the relevant professional body or the Ministry responsible for immigration, as applicable.

*Office of the Attorney-General  
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Suva*

*December 2025*

## **REGISTRATION OF SKILLED PROFESSIONALS (REPEAL) BILL 2025**

### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Bill and is intended only to indicate its general effect)*

#### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Registration of Skilled Professionals (Repeal) Bill 2025 (**‘Bill’**) seeks to repeal the Registration of Skilled Professionals Act 2016 (**‘Act’**) to ensure that the registration and licensing of skilled professionals are done by relevant professional bodies and work permits are processed by the Ministry responsible for immigration.
- 1.2 While the Skilled Professionals Evaluation Committee (**‘SPEC’**) initially provided a streamlined pathway for skilled professionals to work in Fiji, its operation has encountered challenges such as capacity constraints of the secretariat and criticism from professional bodies and Government agencies regarding its broad and overlapping authority.
- 1.3 Professional bodies including Fiji Pharmaceutical Society, Fiji Pharmacists Profession Board and Fiji Medical Association have contended that directives by the SPEC bypass established professional registration processes, undermining their statutory roles and creating duplication across regulatory frameworks.
- 1.4 The original intent of the Act, which was to accelerate the registration of critical foreign professionals, has been largely overtaken by sector-specific reforms and improved co-ordination among relevant ministries and professional bodies.

#### **2.0 CLAUSES**

- 2.1 Clause 1 of the Bill provides for the short title and commencement. If passed by Parliament, the repealing legislation will come into force on a date or dates appointed by the Minister by notice in the Gazette.
- 2.2 Clause 2 of the Bill sets out definitions of the terms used throughout the Bill.
- 2.3 Clause 3 of the Bill repeals the Act.

4

2.4 Clause 4 of the Bill revokes the Registration of Skilled Professionals Regulations 2016 made under the Act.

2.5 Clause 5 of the Bill provides for savings and transitional provisions necessary as a result of the repeal.

### **3.0 MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

3.1 The repealing legislation comes under the responsibility of the Prime Minister.

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