

SB 1534 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Workforce

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Meeting Dates: 2/6, 2/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Human Services to collaborate with the Home Care Commission to establish minimum training standards for home care workers and personal support workers. Requires Department to provide training. Specifies that training opportunities must be tailored to different types of workers, geographically accessible in all areas of state and culturally appropriate for workers of all language abilities. Directs Department and Commission to maximize federal funding available to pay for training.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Clarifies that specific training topics listed in measure are neither mandatory nor exclusive. Adds requirement that Department strive to align training requirements with those for care providers in other long term care settings. Adds operative date of January 1, 2020. Adds requirement that HCC and department complete all steps necessary to carry out provisions relating to training standards and opportunities by operative date. Extends repeal date to December 2020, for section requiring HCC to maximize federal funding to pay for training.

BACKGROUND:

Home care workers (HCWs) provide services for seniors or adults with physical disabilities while personal support workers (PCWs) provide services to individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities or who are experiencing mental illness. The Oregon Home Care Commission (HCC) was created in 2000 via constitutional amendment to ensure the quality of home care services for seniors and people with disabilities that are funded by the Department of Human Services. The Commission's responsibilities expanded in 2011 to address the needs of persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, their family members, and PCWs.

The only requirements to work as an HCW or PCW are that the individual is 18 years of age or older and has passed a background check. There are no licensing or training requirements for HCWs or PCWs. HCC currently offers an orientation program and free training opportunities to HCWs and PCWs, but it is not statutorily mandated to do so. According to a recent HCC report addressing ways to increase the size and competency of the Oregon home care workforce, the majority of training materials are available in English only, and the frequency and geographic location of the training classes are limited.

Senate Bill 1534 requires the Department of Human Services, in collaboration with HCC, to establish standards for training HCWs and PCWs, making training opportunities more widely available, and maximizing federal funding to pay for the training.