

SB 1534 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Business and Labor

Prepared By: Jan Nordlund, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/26

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to collaborate with the Home Care Commission to establish training standards and procedures for testing home care workers and personal support workers. Requires DHS to provide training that is geographically accessible in all areas of state, culturally appropriate for workers of all language abilities, and considers the needs of each worker type. Requires DHS to strive to align training requirements with those for care providers in other long term care settings. Specifies that, for purposes of collective bargaining, personal support workers may not be considered an employee of the State of Oregon, an area agency, a support services brokerage, or other public agency unless statutory exceptions apply. Establishes operative date of January 1, 2020. Directs DHS and Commission to maximize federal funding available to pay for training until provision is repealed on December 31, 2020.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

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

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. The Commission currently offers an orientation program and free training opportunities to HCWs and PCWs, but is not statutorily mandated to do so. In a recent report addressing ways to increase the size and competency of the home care workforce, the Commission found that the majority of training materials are available in English only and that the frequency and geographic location of training classes are limited.

Senate Bill 1534-A requires DHS, in collaboration with the Commission, to establish minimum standards for training HCWs and PCWs and making training opportunities more widely available. The Commission is required, in cooperation with DHS, to maximize federal funding to pay for the training.