



Support HB 2327

Improving Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness & Response

Background

Long term care serves among Oregon's most vulnerable populations including seniors and people living with disabilities, many of whom access these services through Medicaid or Medicare. Long term care workers, residents, and providers have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic because seniors are extraordinarily vulnerable to COVID-19. **People over 85 years-old are 630x more likely to be hospitalized or die from the virus than their younger counterparts.** The pandemic revealed critical gaps in emergency preparedness and response within the sector. HB 2397-3 addresses those gaps by taking the lessons learned over the last year to help ensure seniors and people with disabilities are protected during future declared emergencies such as pandemics, wildfires and more.

What HB 2327-3 Does

- **Establishes the Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Team (Team) to help coordination and collaboration between state agencies, long term care providers, caregivers, consumers and other stakeholders.** By bringing together experts that understand the unique challenges and needs of long term care, we can plan for future emergencies and convene to act nimbly, providing adequate and timely guidance before emergencies occur. The Team is an advisory body to ODHS and will also apply rural health and a health equity lenses to its recommendations.
- **Promotes the mental and emotional wellbeing of residents in long term care communities.** Ensures that resident social isolation prevention is prioritized in emergency planning and response.
- **Ensures that the state and long term care providers have adequate PPE reserves to ensure workers and residents stay safe and healthy.** Access to PPE was and remains a critical challenge for long term care settings and will be needed even after the pandemic is over.
- **Ensures long term care providers have access to technical assistance and training for infectious disease control and in responding to emergencies.** Creating opportunities for ODHS to offer technical assistance to providers, especially for infection prevention and control, will help employers know how to apply rules and guidance properly.
- **Creates rulemaking and official guidance within ODHS in collaboration with OHA grounding the work of the Team in meaningful action.**



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