

HB 3412 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Business and Labor

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Meeting Dates: 3/15, 3/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows physician assistants to provide compensable medical services and authorize payment of temporary disability benefits under same rules as nurse practitioners for workers' compensation claims.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Role of physicians assistant in providing access to health care, particularly in rural Oregon
- Ability of physician assistant to practice at top of license
- Modernize way that physicians assistants provide care to injured workers in workers compensation system
- Removing barriers to care for injured workers

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Aligns physicians assistant with nurse practitioners authority for when provider is not member of managed care organization and when medical treatment may be provided to to a worker enrolled in the managed care organization.

Clarifies definitions to align physicians assistant with nurse practitioners for purposes of workers' compensation claims.

BACKGROUND:

Workers' compensation insurance provides medical treatment and lost wages to employees or their dependents in the case of employment-related accidents or illnesses. Oregon employers are required to carry workers' compensation insurance or be self-insured.

Oregon employers are required to carry workers' compensation insurance or be self-insured. Almost all Oregon employees are covered by workers' compensation, but employees are eligible for benefits regardless of whether their employers are in compliance with the law. The law specifies the types of employees who are not required to have workers' compensation insurance coverage, including certain corporate officers, partners, and family-member business owners, as well as independent contractors. Employers can purchase insurance from the State Accident Insurance Fund (SAIF) Corporation (a publicly owned nonprofit company), from a private insurance company, or be self-insured.

The Workers' Compensation Division (Division) is a part of the Department of Consumer and Business Services (Department). The Division administers Oregon's workers' compensation system. Additionally, the Workers' Compensation Management Labor Advisory Committee (MLAC) reviews key components of the workers' compensation system, such as advising the Department about any proposed changes to the Workers' Benefit Fund. The Workers' Benefit Fund provides benefits for a number of programs, such as return-to-work programs.