

SB 1506 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

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Meeting Dates: 2/7, 2/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure extends temporary authority for pharmacists to test and provide treatment, including drug therapy, for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

Detailed Summary:

Allows a pharmacist to test and provide treatment, including drug therapy, for SARS-CoV-2, consistent with the protocols adopted by the Oregon State Board of Pharmacy (OSBP) by rule. Directs the OSBP's Public Health and Pharmacy Formulary Advisory Committee (PFAC) to review and recommend rules. Allows pharmacists to delegate technical tasks related to testing to a pharmacy technician or intern. Requires the Oregon Health Plan to reimburse pharmacists for testing and treatment. Sunsets June 30, 2026.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Scope of practice for pharmacists
- Points of access to testing and treatment
- Current prevalence of COVID-19

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 The amendment specifies that the Oregon Health Plan, health benefit plans, and Public Employee Benefit Board (PEBB) and Oregon Employee Benefit Board (OEBB) plans must reimburse pharmacists for testing and treatment for SARS-CoV-2.

Detailed Summary:

Clarifies that, pharmacists may test and then *prescribe, dispense and administer* treatment for SARS-CoV-2 consistent with rules promulgated by the Oregon Board of Pharmacy. Applies to health benefit plans issued, renewed, or extended on or after October 1, 2024.

BACKGROUND:

Pharmacists in Oregon currently may only test and treat SARS-CoV-2 under federal authority ([link](#) to Ninth Amendment to Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act). This authority is set to expire on October 1, 2024. As of February 6, 2024, 189 people in Oregon hospital beds were positive for COVID-19, four of whom were using ventilators ([link](#) to Oregon Health Authority respiratory virus data).

Previously, Oregon pharmacists were allowed to test and treat SARS-CoV-2 under protocols approved by the Oregon Board of Pharmacy and its Public Health and Pharmacy Formulary Advisory Committee (PFAC) ([link](#) to PFAC website). However, due a change in labelling for Paxlovid, Oregon pharmacists are no longer permitted within the scope of their practice to test and treat SARS-CoV-2 ([link](#) to Health and Human Services website for Paxlovid labelling information). Pharmacists in Oregon would no longer be able to test and treat SARS-CoV-2 once federal authority expires on October 1, 2024.