

SB 537 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

Action Date: 04/03/25

Action: Without recommendation as to passage and request referral to Rules.

Vote: 4-1-0-0

Yeas: 4 - Campos, Hayden, Patterson, Reynolds

Nays: 1 - Linthicum

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: Revenue impact issued

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Meeting Dates: 3/20, 4/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure creates workplace violence prevention requirements in health care settings, directs the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) to track incidents of workplace violence, establishes a grant program within the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to support prevention efforts, and requires certain health care settings to take action to protect workers.

Detailed Summary:

Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care Employers (Section 1-15)

- Establishes new requirements to be included in DCBS rules related to health care employer safety committees.
 - Requires safety committees established at health care employers to have equal representation of employees, management, and when relevant, union representatives.
 - Requires health care employers to allow labor union representatives to attend safety meetings as non-voting members.
 - Creates procedures for investigating, collecting, and reporting on health care workplace violence incidents.
- Adds requirements to workplace violence prevention programs.
 - Defines home health agency, home hospice program, and workplace violence.
 - Requires health care employers to consult workplace safety committee when conducting safety assessments, developing workplace violence prevention programs, giving annual trainings, measuring incidence of workplace violence and near misses, analyzing the root causes of workplace violence, creating a plan to address workplace violence, and issuing findings on the implementation of security considerations.
 - Requires health care employers to implement workplace violence prevention and response plans and sets minimum standards of the plan.
 - Requires health care employers to provide each employee with a written copy of the workplace violence prevention and response plan and for all new employees to receive a copy of the plan within 30 days of hire.
- Creates reporting requirements for health care employers and DCBS.
 - Requires health care employers to compile data on workplace violence incidents involving assaults, near-miss incidents, and verbal abuse.
 - Directs health care employers to submit a report to DCBS by February 1 of each year.
 - Directs DCBS to submit a consolidated report of the reports received to the Legislative Assembly by December 31 of each year.
 - Directs DCBS to study the impact of workplace on the employees of health care employers every four years and submit a report to the Legislative Assembly on outcomes, beginning September 15, 2029.

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- Directs OHA to administer a grant program.
 - Creates the Health Care Facility Workplace Violence Prevention Effort Fund at the State Treasury and continuously appropriates money from the fund to OHA.
 - Directs OHA to develop and administer a grant program for eligible home health agencies, home hospice programs, and hospitals to fund workplace violence prevention efforts.
 - Directs OHA to begin administering grant funds no later than April 1, 2026.
 - Allocates money from the General Fund to OHA to administer the grant program.

Safety Requirements for Health Care Settings (Section 15-19)

- Requires health care facilities to post signage to inform the public about circumstances when causing physical injury to another person is a crime.
- Prohibits hospitals, home health agencies, and hospice programs from requiring staff's last name to be included on a badge except when required by federal rule or regulation.
- Requires the implementation of electronic health record or visual flagging systems to indicate if a person poses potential threat of violence or disruptive behavior.

Worker Safety in Home Health Care Settings (Section 20-21)

- Requires home health service entities to gather information during initial client intake to identify and assess any potential safety-related risks posed to staff.
- Directs home health service entities to provide workplace training to all home health care workers, to conduct monthly safety assessments, to provide staff with identifying information for their new clients, to create systems for safety check ins, equip staff with emergency alert devices, and to create policies and procedures to manage safety concerns.

Becomes operative January 1, 2026. Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Workplace violence prevention approaches.
- Impact of the measure.

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Nationally, health care workers make up 10 percent of the workforce and 48 percent of the nonfatal injuries due to workplace violence ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), 2025). Risk factors for workplace violence in health care settings include caring for patients with high acuity of need, environmental barriers limiting appropriate response to violent incidents, and organizational factors such as lack of staff training.

Senate Bill 537 creates workplace violence prevention requirements in health care settings, directs the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services to track data regarding incidents of workplace violence, establishes a grant program within the Oregon Health Authority to support workplace violence prevention efforts, and requires certain health care settings to take action to protect workers from safety risks.