

# House Bill 3129

Sponsored by Representative NOSSE, Senator PATTERSON; Representative MARSH, Senators FREDERICK, GELSER BLOUIN, GOLDEN, TAYLOR (Pre-session filed.)

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

**Digest:** The Act creates a behavioral health workforce fund for higher learning. The Act provides for the purposes and uses of moneys in the fund. Declares an emergency and becomes law when the Governor signs it. (Flesch Readability Score: 64.4).

Establishes the Higher Education Behavioral Health Workforce Expansion Fund. Directs the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to distribute moneys from the fund to community colleges and public and private universities in this state for purposes of expanding the training, employment and retention of behavioral health professionals. Appropriates moneys to the fund.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

1  
2 Relating to the behavioral health workforce; and declaring an emergency.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1. (1) There is established in the State Treasury, separate and distinct from the**  
5 **General Fund, the Higher Education Behavioral Health Workforce Expansion Fund. All**  
6 **moneys in the Higher Education Behavioral Health Workforce Expansion Fund are contin-**  
7 **uously appropriated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for purposes of car-**  
8 **rying out section 2 of this 2025 Act.**

9 **(2) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall administer the fund established**  
10 **under subsection (1) of this section.**

11 **SECTION 2. (1) The Higher Education Behavioral Health Workforce Expansion Fund es-**  
12 **tablished under section 1 of this 2025 Act consists of:**

13 **(a) Moneys transferred to the fund by the federal government, other state agencies or**  
14 **local governments.**

15 **(b) Moneys transferred to the fund by the Legislative Assembly or the Higher Education**  
16 **Coordinating Commission.**

17 **(c) Gifts, grants and donations from public or private sources.**

18 **(d) Interest and other earnings on moneys in the fund.**

19 **(2) Moneys in the fund established under section 1 of this 2025 Act shall be used for ex-**  
20 **panding the training, employment and retention of graduate-level providers and other certi-**  
21 **fied and licensed professionals in the behavioral health care workforce who can provide**  
22 **culturally responsive behavioral health services to:**

23 **(a) Members of the federally recognized Indian tribes in this state;**

24 **(b) Persons of color;**

25 **(c) Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth;**

26 **(d) Veterans;**

27 **(e) Individuals with disabilities;**

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

- 1 (f) Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities;
- 2 (g) Individuals with limited proficiency in the English language;
- 3 (h) Individuals working in correctional facilities; and
- 4 (i) Individuals in other underserved communities.

5 (3) The commission shall distribute moneys from the fund established under section 1 of  
6 this 2025 Act to community colleges operated under ORS chapter 341, private universities in  
7 this state and the public universities listed in ORS 352.002 to implement programs at those  
8 institutions that will expand the number of professionals working in organizations that de-  
9 liver publicly funded behavioral health services.

10 (4) Funds received by colleges and universities under subsection (3) of this section may  
11 be used to:

12 (a) Hire and retain behavioral health faculty;

13 (b) Provide scholarships or stipends to students to enroll in programs that lead to a ca-  
14 reer in behavioral health;

15 (c) Pay for costs associated with expanding existing academic programs for behavioral  
16 health;

17 (d) Pay for costs, including accreditation costs, associated with developing new behavioral  
18 health programs;

19 (e) Provide bonuses and stipends for supervisors of interns in the field of behavioral  
20 health; and

21 (f) Pay for costs related to licensing or certification examination preparation in behav-  
22 ioral health.

23 (5) The commission shall distribute moneys from the fund each biennium to each insti-  
24 tution based on a distribution formula determined by the commission by rule. To assist the  
25 commission in determining the formula under this subsection, the commission shall establish  
26 an advisory group that includes representatives of:

27 (a) Public universities;

28 (b) Community colleges;

29 (c) County mental health programs; and

30 (d) Other behavioral health employers.

31 (6) To receive a scholarship or stipend under subsection (4) of this section, a student  
32 must be enrolled in a program to receive a health care certificate or license as:

33 (a) A licensed psychologist, as that term is defined in ORS 675.010;

34 (b) A clinical social worker licensed under ORS 675.530;

35 (c) A master's social worker licensed under ORS 675.533;

36 (d) A clinical social work associate certified under ORS 675.537;

37 (e) A licensed marriage and family therapist, as that term is defined in ORS 675.705;

38 (f) A licensed professional counselor, as that term is defined in ORS 675.705;

39 (g) A mental health or substance abuse treatment provider, as that term is defined in  
40 ORS 443.004; or

41 (h) Any other behavioral health provider determined by the commission by rule.

42 (7) The commission may adopt rules to administer this section.

43 **SECTION 3.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-  
44 ated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1,  
45 2025, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$17,900,000, which shall be transferred to the

1 **Higher Education Behavioral Health Workforce Expansion Fund to carry out section 2 of this**  
2 **2025 Act.**

3 **SECTION 4. This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public**  
4 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect**  
5 **on its passage.**

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