

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1848

C 60 L 07

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Requiring the department of social and health services and the health care authority to enter into data-sharing agreements with Oregon and Idaho agencies.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Curtis, Cody, Hinkle, Condotta, Orcutt, Fromhold, Moeller and Campbell).

House Committee on Health Care & Wellness
Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care

Background:

Medical assistance is available to low-income state residents from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), primarily through the Medicaid program. It is also available through the Basic Health Plan (BHP), a state-sponsored program administered by the Health Care Authority (Authority) to provide subsidized health insurance coverage to low-income state residents who are not eligible for Medicare or institutionalized at the time of enrollment. Among other requirements, an enrollee in the BHP must be a Washington resident. To prove residency, Authority rules require applicants to provide documentation that displays both the applicant's name and address, such as utility bills or rent receipts. If the applicant does not have a physical residence, he or she may submit a signed statement from a person who is providing temporary shelter. In practice, the Authority accepts driver's licenses, voter registration cards, car registrations, mortgage statements, benefits statements from the DSHS, or labels on federal income tax returns.

Authority rules allow it to require additional information for purposes of establishing or verifying eligibility. The rules do not explicitly address providing proof of the applicant's identity.

By statute, state general assistance applicants, including those applying for Medicaid or other state medical assistance programs, generally must be state residents and U.S. citizens or lawfully admitted aliens. Although specific requirements vary for medical assistance programs that are funded only by state funds, most programs require proof of residency and identity. The DSHS policies allow applicants to use any proof that is accurate and consistent. As examples, residency may be shown by rental agreements or statements from a landlord, mortgage papers, or utility bills. Identity may be proven by such records as driver's licenses or state identification cards, birth certificates, passports, school records, or alien registration cards.

Summary:

The DSHS and the Authority must enter into data-sharing agreements with the appropriate agencies in Oregon and Idaho to assure the valid residency of applicants for health care services in Washington. The agreements must include appropriate safeguards related to confidential information.

The agencies must report on the status of data-sharing agreements to the Legislature by November 30, 2007.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0
Senate	48	0

Effective: July 22, 2007