
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1872

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By House College & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Representatives Senn, Slatter, Berry, Leavitt, Santos, Sells, Simmons, Bronoske, Shewmake, Taylor, Chopp, Ramel, Callan, Riccelli, Lekanoff, Bateman, Macri, Harris-Talley, Valdez, Duerr, and Pollet)

READ FIRST TIME 01/27/22.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the care worker center to promote
2 caregiving professions; adding a new section to chapter 28C.18 RCW;
3 and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes that care
6 workers provide support to others who are not able to fully care for
7 themselves or live independently without support, fulfilling a
8 critical and essential industry. Care workers are paid to support
9 individuals in their homes, in the community, in the workplace, and
10 in classroom settings. By providing support to an individual or a
11 small group in need of care, these care workers improve the lives of
12 the recipients by attending to their specific needs, assisting them
13 with their daily tasks, and when possible, helping them to transition
14 to higher levels of independence and community engagement. Care
15 workers work with children, the elderly, people with disabilities,
16 and others with significant barriers. The legislature identifies the
17 importance of having a diverse care worker workforce that reflects
18 the diversity of the recipients receiving care as this positively
19 impacts patient care, educational outcomes, and service for
20 historically underrepresented and marginalized groups.

1 (2) The legislature also recognizes that the need for paid care
2 workers is expected to grow over the next 20 years, only adding to
3 the existing and looming crisis of workforce shortages. These jobs
4 cannot be internationally outsourced and there will always be a need
5 for care workers. Addressing language and cultural barriers in these
6 professions is a place where the state can make headway in
7 communication with, recruiting from, and meeting the unique needs of
8 diverse communities' cultures and languages.

9 (3) The legislature also recognizes that care workers are among
10 some of the lowest paid professions in the labor market. Currently,
11 these positions offer little room for economic advancement and rarely
12 offer employee benefits. Additionally, care worker schedules can be
13 unpredictable, making it difficult to supplement income with other
14 jobs or to go to school to prepare for higher paid employment
15 opportunities. Erratic schedules and low incomes can also burden
16 families and cause chaos to home and family life. This historically
17 low pay and limited access to benefits discourages many people from
18 entering and remaining in the field, which has been exacerbated by
19 the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, improvements in wages, health care
20 benefits, retirement, paid time off, workers compensation, union
21 representation, and career progression and advancement opportunities
22 are essential to attracting and retaining care workers to the field.

23 (4) It is the legislature's intent to support the career,
24 economic, and professional success of care workers in order to
25 improve health, safety, and social outcomes of the individuals
26 receiving care as well as the care workers. These care workers are
27 essential to the state's economy and the population's well-being.
28 Therefore, the legislature is establishing the care worker center.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28C.18
30 RCW to read as follows:

31 (1) The board shall establish the care worker center as a central
32 access point of knowledge, research, resources, and best practices
33 for care workers to be used by care workers, employers, career
34 counselors, education and training providers, policymakers, and
35 others.

36 (2) The care worker center shall initially focus on three
37 caregiving professions: Child care and early learning, long-term
38 care, and caregivers working with people with disabilities including
39 personal care attendants and direct service professionals. Within the

1 first two years of establishment, the board shall set up the care
2 worker center with staff, conduct an introductory marketing campaign,
3 and work with relevant state, private, labor, trade associations, and
4 community stakeholders involved with child care and early learning or
5 long-term care for people with disabilities or older adults to
6 fulfill the duties of the care worker center.

7 (3) As administrators of the care worker center, the board, in
8 consultation with care worker stakeholders and agencies holding
9 administrative authority over the various elements of workforce
10 education and training, financial aid, workforce development, and
11 occupational licensing and regulation, shall have the following
12 duties for the care worker center:

13 (a) Review labor force data on wages, benefits, health and
14 safety, educational output, staffing needs, and current and expected
15 workforce shortages for the various care worker sectors;

16 (b) Perform research and analysis on trends within Washington
17 state to provide an accurate depiction of the caregiving workforce
18 including, but not limited to, numbers and demographics of care
19 workers in each subfield, care workers' professional trajectories,
20 occupational health and safety of care workers, care worker longevity
21 on the job, the outcomes and impacts that care worker interventions
22 have on recipients of care, income and benefit trends among care
23 workers, and impacts of care worker shortages on communities,
24 families, and workplaces;

25 (c) Conduct surveys to better understand the reasons why care
26 workers remain in the occupation, why care workers leave the
27 occupation, and recommendations for increasing care worker retention;

28 (d) Maintain a searchable repository of original and existing
29 research; track policy recommendations from relevant commissions,
30 state agencies, initiatives, and others engaged in research and trend
31 analysis of caregiving; and periodically disseminate summaries of the
32 latest findings and recommendations;

33 (e) Create and launch a marketing campaign to promote and help
34 recruit people to the caregiving field, with portable document format
35 files, digital resources, and printer-friendly resources that can be
36 posted and used by worksorce centers, career navigators, education
37 and career counselors, employment coaches, employers, community
38 service organizations, libraries, tribal schools, community centers,
39 and other places potential and current workers may frequent. The

1 content must be made available in the top five most commonly spoken
2 languages in Washington state;

3 (f) Establish and provide online resources that visualize the
4 path of career ladders and necessary education or training,
5 incorporating Washington career bridge as appropriate; discuss
6 employer types and relevant union information; link to job search
7 assistance; and highlight free and low-cost services, benefits, and
8 other resources to support the well-being of care workers and their
9 families; and

10 (g) Identify similarities and differences across care worker
11 occupations, including commonalities across licensing requirements,
12 to facilitate worker mobility within and between care worker
13 professions;

14 (h) Map care worker skill sets, competencies, abilities, and
15 experiences to job progression opportunities and identify areas where
16 additional occupational licensing categories or education and
17 training credentials are needed in order to attain new opportunities,
18 including where training can be offered online, be made more
19 accessible, and where experience may count as equivalent to
20 education;

21 (i) Administer a transformation grant pilot program to promote
22 new care practice methods and ideas to transform the care worker
23 sector, develop metrics and reporting mechanisms to collect data and
24 track progress and outcomes of the transformation grants, and
25 disseminate the results and best practices to facilitate care worker
26 transformation; and

27 (j) Develop policy recommendations on the following:

28 (i) Maintaining, supporting, and increasing diversity, equity,
29 and inclusion in the care worker fields, which may include additional
30 language supports for English language learners; evidence-based
31 practices in cultural competency in education and support materials;
32 race, ethnicity, and other data that may need to be collected; and
33 exploring opportunities for career progression in care worker
34 professions;

35 (ii) Increasing recruitment and retention, which may include
36 additional methods and diverse pathways to recruit employees and
37 recommendations for workplace culture and safety, compensation, and
38 benefits; and

1 (iii) Increasing flexibility and affordability of education and
2 training, experience and educational equivalencies, licensing, and
3 credentialing for care workers.

4 (4) The board shall report to the appropriate committees of the
5 legislature in accordance with RCW 43.01.036 by September 1st of the
6 first year of each biennium, beginning with September 1, 2022, on the
7 following:

8 (a) The progress of meeting the goals of the care worker center;

9 (b) The results of the transformation grant pilot program; and

10 (c) Policy and practice recommendations based on the research and
11 data collected throughout the phases.

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