
HOUSE BILL 2681

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By Representatives Cody, Robertson, Conway, Radcliff, Cairnes,
Scheuerman, Murray, Dickerson, Chopp, Mitchell and Costa

Read first time 01/16/96. Referred to Committee on Health Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to prevention of workplace violence in health care
2 settings; and adding a new chapter to Title 49 RCW.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

5 (a) Violence is an escalating problem in all health care settings
6 in this state and across the nation;

7 (b) Injuries to nurses and other health care workers are occurring
8 routinely in all health care settings. The department of labor and
9 industries reports that health care workers face the highest rate of
10 workplace violence in the state;

11 (c) The actual incidence of workplace violence in health care
12 settings is greater than documented because of failure to report or
13 failure to maintain records of incidents that are reported;

14 (d) Patients and health care personnel should be assured access to
15 health care in a safe environment; and

16 (e) Many health care settings have undertaken efforts to assure
17 that patients and workers are safe from violence, but additional
18 personnel training and appropriate safeguards are needed to prevent

1 workplace violence and minimize the risk and dangers affecting all
2 people in every health care setting.

3 (2)(a) All health care settings shall conduct a security and safety
4 assessment and, using the assessment, develop and implement by July 1,
5 1997, a workplace violence prevention plan with measures to protect
6 personnel, patients, and visitors from aggressive or violent behavior.
7 The security and safety assessment shall examine trends of aggressive
8 or violent behavior in the health care setting. The health care
9 setting must track incidents of aggressive or violent behavior for the
10 purpose of developing a workplace violence prevention plan to deter and
11 manage further aggressive or violent acts. The workplace violence
12 prevention plan shall include, but not be limited to, security
13 considerations relating to the following:

14 (i) Physical layout of the health care setting;

15 (ii) Staffing of the health care setting and security personnel
16 availability;

17 (iii) Policy and training related to appropriate responses to
18 violent acts; and

19 (iv) Adoption of security policies including, but not limited to,
20 personnel training policies designed to protect personnel, patients,
21 and visitors from aggressive or violent behavior. Persons regularly
22 assigned to provide security in a health care setting shall be trained
23 regarding the role of security in health care setting operations,
24 including the identification of aggressive and violent predicting
25 factors and the management of violent disturbances.

26 (b) In developing the workplace violence prevention plan required
27 under this section, the health care setting shall consider any
28 guidelines or standards on violence in health care settings issued by
29 the department of health, the department of social and health services,
30 the department of labor and industries, the federal occupational safety
31 and health administration, and health care setting accrediting
32 organizations.

33 (c) The health care setting's committee responsible for developing
34 the workplace violence prevention plan shall include persons with
35 expertise or experience in the following:

36 (i) The role of security in health care setting operations;

37 (ii) The organization of health care settings;

38 (iii) Protective measures, including alarms and access control;

39 (iv) The handling of disturbed patients, visitors, and employees;

- 1 (v) Identification of aggressive and violent predicting factors;
- 2 (vi) Health care setting safety and emergency preparedness; and
- 3 (vii) The rudiments of documenting and reporting crimes.

4 (3) By July 1, 1997, and thereafter on a continuing basis as
5 provided for in the workplace violence prevention plan developed under
6 subsection (2) of this section, all personnel working in the health
7 care setting, whether or not directly employed by the health care
8 setting, shall receive violence prevention education and training
9 related to the following topics:

- 10 (a) General safety procedures;
- 11 (b) Personal safety procedures;
- 12 (c) The assault cycle;
- 13 (d) Aggression and violence predicting factors;
- 14 (e) Obtaining patient history from a patient with violent behavior;
- 15 (f) Characteristics of aggressive and violent patients and victims;
- 16 (g) Verbal and physical maneuvers to diffuse and avoid violent
17 behavior;
- 18 (h) Strategies to avoid physical harm;
- 19 (i) Restraining techniques;
- 20 (j) Appropriate use of medications as chemical restraints;
- 21 (k) The rudiments of documenting and reporting crimes; and
- 22 (l) Any resources available to employees for coping with incidents
23 of violence.

24 (4) The health care settings shall report on their workplace
25 violence prevention plans to the department of labor and industries by
26 July 1, 1997, and by each July 1st thereafter. The department shall
27 compile the information from the initial health care setting reports
28 and transmit the information in a report to the appropriate committees
29 of the legislature by January 1, 1998.

30 (5) Beginning July 1, 1997, and thereafter, a health care setting
31 may not be licensed, certified, credentialed, granted operational
32 approval, or have such credentials renewed by the department of health
33 or department of social and health services unless the health care
34 setting has reported its workplace violence prevention plans with the
35 department of labor and industries for the applicable period as
36 required by this section.

37 (6) For the purposes of this section:

38 (a) "Health care setting" means entities whose two-digit standard
39 industrial classification code is "80."

1 (b) "Standard industrial classification code" means the code
2 identified in RCW 50.29.025(6)(c).

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Section 1 of this act shall constitute a new
4 chapter in Title 49 RCW.

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