

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5312

C 377 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Providing for the prevention of workplace violence in health care settings.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Costa, Deccio, Winsley, Wojahn, Thibaudeau and Kohl-Welles).

Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on Commerce & Labor

Background: Studies show that violence in the workplace is a significant cause of injury and death. For some groups, violence on the job is reportedly the leading cause of workplace mortality. Concern exists that health care facilities in particular are experiencing increasing amounts of workplace violence.

Summary: By July 1, 2000, and based on a formal security and safety assessment, all health care settings must develop and implement a plan to prevent and protect employees from violence at the setting. In developing such plans, consideration must be given to any relevant guidelines or standards issued by government agencies or private accrediting organizations. The Department of Labor and Industries, Department of Health, and Department of Social and Health Services are required to assist employers in developing and implementing these plans.

By July 1, 2001, and on a regular basis thereafter, each health care setting is to provide violence prevention training to all its employees, as appropriate to the particular setting and to the duties and responsibilities of the particular employee being trained.

Beginning no later than July 1, 2000, each health care setting must keep a record of any violent act against an employee, a patient, or a visitor occurring at the setting. Records must be kept for at least five years, and must be available to the Department of Labor and Industries upon request.

A health care setting failing to comply with the requirements of the act is subject to citation from the Department of Labor and Industries under the state Industrial Safety and Health Act.

Health care setting— is defined to include hospitals, home health, hospice, and home care agencies, mental health evaluation and treatment facilities, and community mental health programs.

The Department of Labor and Industries must allow flexibility in recognition of the unique circumstances in which home health, hospice, and home care agencies operate when enforcing the act as to these settings.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	0	
House	92	4	(House amended)
Senate	45	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 25, 1999