
SENATE BILL 6643

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By Senators Prentice, Heavey, Fairley, Kohl and Fraser

Read first time 01/22/96. Referred to Committee on Labor, Commerce & Trade.

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) Based on an analysis of workers' compensation claims, the
8 department of labor and industries reports that health care workers
9 face the highest rate of workplace violence in Washington state;

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

13 (d) Patients, visitors, and health care personnel should be assured
14 a safe and secure environment in health care settings; and

15 (e) Many health care settings have undertaken efforts to assure
16 that patients and workers are safe from violence, but additional
17 personnel training and appropriate safeguards are needed to prevent
18 workplace violence and minimize the risk and dangers affecting all
19 people in every health care setting.

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

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

13 (ii) Staffing of the health care setting and security personnel
14 availability; and

15 (iii) Adoption of security policies including, but not limited to,
16 personnel training policies designed to protect personnel, patients,
17 and visitors from threatening or violent behavior. Persons regularly
18 assigned to provide security in a health care setting shall be trained
19 regarding the role of security in health care setting operations,
20 including the identification of threatening and violent predicting
21 factors, management of threatening or violent disturbances, and
22 appropriate responses to threatening or violent acts.

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

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

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

34 (ii) The organization of health care settings;

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

36 (iv) The handling of threatening or violent patients, visitors, and
37 employees;

38 (v) Identification of threatening and violent predicting factors;

39 (vi) Health care setting safety and emergency preparedness; and

1 (vii) The rudiments of documenting and reporting crimes.

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

8 (a) General safety procedures;

9 (b) Personal safety procedures;

10 (c) The assault cycle;

11 (d) Threat and violence predicting factors;

12 (e) Obtaining patient history from a patient with violent behavior;

13 (f) Characteristics of threatening and violent patients and
14 victims;

15 (g) Verbal and physical maneuvers to diffuse and avoid violent
16 behavior;

17 (h) Strategies to avoid physical harm;

18 (i) Restraining techniques;

19 (j) Appropriate use of medications as chemical restraints;

20 (k) The rudiments of documenting and reporting incidents;

21 (l) Any resources available to employees for coping with incidents
22 of violence; and

23 (m) The health care setting's workplace violence prevention plan.

24 (4) The health care settings shall report on their workplace
25 violence prevention plans to the department of health by July 1, 1997,
26 and by each July 1st thereafter. The department shall compile the
27 information from the initial health care setting reports and transmit
28 the information in a report to the appropriate committees of the
29 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 health for the applicable period in accordance with this
36 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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