

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1877

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Health Care & Wellness

**Title:** An act relating to expired certifications for certain health professions.

**Brief Description:** Addressing expired certifications for certain health professions.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Chambers, Gilday, Jacobsen, Simmons, Corry, Graham, Dolan, Riccelli, Eslick, Lekanoff and Wicks.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Health Care & Wellness: 1/17/22, 1/26/22 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Codifies and modifies requirements for the reissuance of expired certificates for home care aides.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Bateman, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bronoske, Davis, Harris, Macri, Maycumber, Riccelli, Rude, Simmons, Stonier, Tharinger and Ybarra.

**Staff:** Emily Poole (786-7106).

**Background:**

Home Care Aide Certification.

A long-term care worker is any person who provides paid, hands-on personal care services for older persons or persons with disabilities. The term includes individual providers of

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home care services, direct care workers employed by home care agencies, providers of home care services to people with developmental disabilities, direct care workers in assisted living facilities and adult family homes, and respite care providers. The term excludes employees of several types of health care and residential care facilities, as well as care providers not paid by the state or a private agency or facility licensed by the state.

Long-term care workers must become certified as home care aides by the Department of Health (DOH) unless an exemption applies. To become certified, a long-term care worker must complete training, pass a certification examination, and pass state and federal background checks. Certified home care aides must complete 12 hours of annual continuing education.

#### Reissuance of Expired Certificates.

The DOH has uniform rules for the initial issuance, renewal, and reissuance of credentials for all health professions, including certificates for home care aides. Home care aide certificates must be renewed once a year in order to maintain active status. If a certificate expires, a person must take certain steps to return to active status:

- If the certificate has been expired for one year or less, a person must pay required fees, provide any required documentation, and, for home care aide certificates, show compliance with continuing education requirements for the current year.
- If the certificate has been expired for more than one year, but less than three years, in addition to the requirements above, a person must also complete an abbreviated application form and provide written declarations regarding any disqualifying or disciplinary actions taken against the person. Individuals seeking to reinstate an expired home care aide certificate must also show compliance with continuing education requirements for the two most recent years.
- If the certificate has been expired for three years or more, in addition to the requirements for certificates expired for less than three years, a person seeking to reinstate a home care aide certificate must repeat the training and examination required for initial certification.

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#### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

A home care aide certificate that has been expired for five years or less may be reinstated if the person holding the expired certificate completes an abbreviated application form, pays any necessary fees, and provides written declarations regarding any disqualifying or disciplinary actions taken against the person. There are no continuing education or other competency requirements for home care aide certificates expired for five years or less.

In addition to the above requirements, a home care aide certificate that has been expired for more than five years may be reinstated if the person holding the expired certificate demonstrates competence to the standards established by the Department of Health (DOH) and meets other requirements established by the DOH.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill removes the procedures for the reissuance of expired certificates for certified nursing assistants.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 10, 2022.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Caregiving is an industry with high turnover, and caregivers do not have the same job consistency as other professions. This bill would lower the threshold to make it easier for caregivers to step back into the workforce. This bill would provide more flexibility and have a positive impact on hospitals, nursing homes, and home care availability.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Kelly Chambers, prime sponsor.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.