

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5503

C 253 L 07

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Licensing persons who offer athletic training services.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development (originally sponsored by Senators Marr, Keiser, Brown, Brandland, Fairley, Schoesler, Berkey, Shin, Delvin, Kohl-Welles and McAuliffe).

Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development
House Committee on Health Care & Wellness
House Committee on Appropriations

Background: Currently, athletic trainers are not regulated by state statute. Athletic training licensing or regulation exists in 44 states. Generally athletic trainers must hold a bachelors degree and many hold graduate level degrees.

According to the national Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2004, there were more than 300 accredited education programs for athletic trainers.

The Department of Health (DOH) conducted a sunrise review in 1993 and again in 2002. Both reviews found that proposals to regulate athletic trainers did not meet the sunrise criteria.

Summary: Athletic trainers are created as a new health profession to be regulated by DOH. An athletic trainer must hold a license issued by DOH in order to practice athletic training.

Athletic trainers provide services relating to the prevention, immediate care, evaluation, treatment, rehabilitation, reconditioning, and management of athletic injuries. Athletic training services do not include spinal adjustment or manipulation; orthotic or prosthetic services; occupational therapy; medical diagnosis; acupuncture; or prescribing legend drugs or controlled substances; or surgery.

If a patient's condition does not improve in 15 days, the athletic trainer must refer the patient to a licensed health care provider. If the patient's condition requires more than 45 days of care, the athletic trainer must either consult a licensed health care provider or refer the patient to such a provider.

DOH has the authority to develop rules and establish licensing, examination, and renewal fees. DOH may issue a license to an applicant who has met the education, training, and examination requirements. DOH may also determine which states have credentialing requirements substantially equivalent to this state and issue licenses to individuals credentialed in those states.

An applicant for an athletic training license must have received a bachelor's degree from a four-year institution approved by DOH; pass an examination and pay a license fee as required by DOH.

DOH may discipline licensed members of the profession based on unprofessional conduct or impaired practice as governed by the Uniform Disciplinary Act. A person cannot practice or offer to practice as an athletic trainer or represent themselves or other persons to be legally able to provide services as an athletic trainer unless the person is licensed under the provisions of this act.

Exemptions from licensing requirements apply to credentialed health care providers performing services within their scope of practice; individuals employed by the federal government; students in an athletic training educational program; individuals with a limited practice in Washington for no more than 90 days per year; school teachers or coaches; and personal trainers employed by an athletic club or fitness center.

Athletic trainers are exempt from the requirement that health carriers cover every category of provider.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	39	8	
House	91	6	(House amended)
Senate	41	4	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 1, 2008