

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6056

As of January 25, 2024

Title: An act relating to human trafficking awareness training requirements.

Brief Description: Training requirements for human trafficking.

Sponsors: Senators Torres, Wilson, C. and Wilson, L..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Commerce: 1/25/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires a transient accommodation to provide annual training regarding human trafficking to each of its employees no later than January 1, 2025, and to new employees no later than 90 days after they begin their employment.
- Stipulates that by January 1, 2025, every operator of a transient accommodation must post certain signage regarding human trafficking awareness and implement procedures for the voluntary reporting of suspected human trafficking and for an employee policy guide on human trafficking prevention.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Staff: Susan Jones (786-7404)

Background: A person operating a transient accommodation must secure an annual operating license through the Department of Health (DOH). Transient accommodation means any facility such as a hotel, motel, condominium, resort, or any other facility or place offering three or more lodging units to travelers and transient guests.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

There are certain requirements in DOH rules regarding transient accommodations. A licensed transient accommodation must adequately supervise employees and transient accommodation premises to ensure the transient accommodation is:

- clean, safe, and sanitary;
- in good repair;
- establish policies and procedures requiring employees to maintain good personal hygiene;
- consult with DOH on any suspected imminent health hazard; and
- have a written basic emergency preparedness plan in the event of fire, power failure, transient accommodation problem, or natural or other disasters.

Emergency response training must be conducted and documented annually or more often as needed.

DOH must conduct:

- an on-site survey prior to issuing an initial transient accommodation license or reinstating an invalid license; and
- announced or unannounced on-site surveys during routine business hours and conduct complaint investigations at any time.

Summary of Bill: Legislative Findings and Intent. Legislative findings are provided regarding issue of human trafficking, its prevalence in hotels and motels, and that training can be effective in raising awareness about human trafficking. Legislative intent to rid Washington hotels and places of accommodation of human trafficking.

Required Annual Training. A transient accommodation must provide annual training regarding human trafficking to each of its employees no later than January 1, 2025, and to new employees no later than 90 days after they begin their employment. The training must include:

- the definition of human trafficking and commercial exploitation of children, and the difference between sex trafficking and labor trafficking;
- content that is culturally responsive;
- guidance specific to the public lodging sector concerning how to identify individuals who may be victims of human trafficking based on behaviors and traits of trafficking regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or class;
- guidance concerning the role of the employees in appropriately responding to suspected human trafficking; and
- the contact information of appropriate agencies, including a national human trafficking hotline telephone number and the telephone numbers of local law enforcement agencies.

Required Signage and Procedures. By January 1, 2025, every operator of a transient accommodation must:

- post, in a location conspicuous to employees, signage regarding human trafficking

- awareness, printed in an easily legible font in English and any other language spoken by at least 10 percent of the employees; and
- implement procedures for the voluntary reporting of suspected human trafficking to the national hotline or a local law enforcement agency, and a policy to act as a guide for all employees on human trafficking prevention.

Contents of the training and copies of the signage must be made available for inspection, upon request by DOH.

Compliance Required for Licenses. DOH may not renew or issue a license to an applicant without first receiving written certification from the applicant that the human trafficking training requirements regarding training, signage, and procedures for reporting have been met.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2024.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: We have large events coming in off the I-5 corridor, including those with big sporting events. When you have those large events, you see a lot of human trafficking. Hotels may not recognize the signs of human trafficking.

CON: The bill is identical to 2020 HB. The current training is short and the training has bias. We had provided language for the other bill that would have help prevent bias in training.

OTHER: Keeping people safe is at the forefront of hotels. We are testifying as other to make sure the training aligns with current training. The current training is too short and doesn't provide needed training and contains bias. They don't train hotel staff on their own risk for human trafficking. The training should be expanded.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Nikki Torres, Prime Sponsor.

CON: Emi Koyama, Coalition for Rights & Safety for People in the Sex Trade.

OTHER: Montana Miranda, Washington Hospitality Association; Sabra Boyd.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:

CON: Savannah Sly, Co-Director, New Moon Network.