
Postsecondary Education & Workforce Committee

HB 1926

Brief Description: Regarding training and testing of home care aides.

Sponsors: Representatives Timmons, Schmick, Pollet, Shavers and Macri.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the time frame for home care aides to become certified and instead requires the Department of Health to adopt rules to establish a certification time frame.
- Requires the home care aide examination to be conducted at training sites in addition to testing sites.
- Requires, subject to appropriation, that home care aide testing be available in qualified facility and community-based home care aide training programs by July 1, 2028, and conducted by facility and community trainers.
- Requires individual providers represented by an exclusive bargaining representative to receive testing by a training partner affiliate.

Hearing Date: 2/18/25

Staff: Elizabeth Allison (786-7129).

Background:

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 home care

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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 75 hours of training, pass a certification examination, and pass state and federal background checks. The long-term care worker must be certified within 200 calendar days of the date of hire.

The DOH in consultation with consumer and worker representatives, must develop the examination to evaluate whether an applicant possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to practice competently. The examination may be conducted at local testing sites around the state.

The DOH must conduct an annual evaluation of the examination results of applicants who complete the examination in a language other than English. If the DOH finds that applicants taking the examination in a particular language fail at a disproportionately higher rate, the DOH must conduct a review of the translation to ensure that it is accurate and understandable.

Summary of Bill:

The requirement that long-term care workers must be certified as a home care aide within 200 days of the date of hire is removed. The DOH is instead directed to consult with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to establish by rule the timeline for certification.

The examination may be conducted at a local training or testing site around the state.

The DOH is required to conduct the annual evaluation of examination results of applicants who complete the examination in all languages.

Subject to appropriation, home care aide testing must be available in qualified facility and community-based home care aide training programs by July 1, 2028. Testing must be conducted by facility and community trainers contracted with the DSHS or a training partner affiliate.

If the DOH has any contracts for personal care services with any individual providers who are represented by an exclusive bargaining representative, all required home care aide testing for those individual providers must be provided by a training partner affiliate.

A training partner affiliate is a Washington nonprofit corporation that will contract with the DSHS or its designee to provide the required home care aide testing.

Appropriation: The sum of \$2 million for fiscal year 2025 and \$4.5 million for fiscal year

2026.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 14, 2025.

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