

Mandatory Homecare and Personal Support Worker Training

Frequently Asked Questions About Senate Bill 1534

Why is training important?

Training is essential to ensure the wellbeing and safety of those receiving services and supports. Participating in training has also been shown to improve job satisfaction and those who complete training choose to remain in their careers longer. Training also provides a means for workers to learn new skills, strengthen the skills they already have, and provides an opportunity for career advancement.

Why did the State of Oregon pass new training requirements for homecare and personal support workers?

Older adults and people with disabilities can live at home and in their communities as safely and independently as possible with the support of well-trained homecare and personal support workers. The new requirements set standards for all homecare and personal support workers to make sure they have the skills, knowledge, and abilities to provide quality services and supports.

Being a homecare and personal support worker is a professional career and training is important for career development and advancement.

What is Senate Bill 1534 (SB 1534)?

Senate Bill 1534 is a bill that was passed by the Oregon Legislative Assembly in 2018. The bill directs the Department of Human Services to implement mandatory training and assessment requirements for homecare and personal support workers.

These new requirements, which will be phased in starting in 2021, are for all homecare and personal support workers who are approved to provide services and supports to individuals receiving in-home services funded through Medicaid or Oregon Project Independence.

What kind of training will be required?

SB 1534 identified several training topics that include:

- Safety and emergency measures;
- Understanding the requirements for providers paid with Medicaid funds;
- Providing person-centered care;
- Understanding how to support the physical and emotional needs of the individual who is receiving care;
- Managing medications; and
- Providing personal care and assistance with activities of daily living.

Who determines the type of training that is required?

An SB 1534 training workgroup was created to establish minimum training standards. The workgroup was made up of community partners, stakeholders, advocacy groups, the union that represents the workforce (SEIU), homecare and personal support workers, consumers, and Department of Human Services representatives. The workgroup identified many important topics to be included in orientation and core training that benefits consumers and workers.

What is an assessment?

An assessment is a tool that is used to measure what a homecare or personal support worker learned during training and whether they can apply what they learned to the work they do.

Will my employer be able to see my assessment results?

No. The information will not be posted on the Registry or provided to employers.

What is continuing education?

Training courses taken in addition to orientation and core training are considered continuing education.

What do the new training requirements mean for homecare workers? Personal support workers? Family caregivers?

Homecare and personal support workers who are compensated through Medicaid or Oregon Project Independence— even those who work solely for family members — are required to meet the new training requirements and pass an assessment.

What are the deadlines?

SB 1534 goes into effect on January 1, 2020, with the rollout of a county-by-county pilot. The goals of the pilot are to test the curriculum and logistics with a small group of workers, collect feedback, and make needed changes to provide the best possible experience for workers. Individuals who enroll as homecare and personal support workers prior to January 1, 2021 will have until June 30, 2021 to complete training requirements by participating in a seminar. If a homecare or personal support worker participates in the pilot, they will receive training credit when training becomes mandatory on January 1, 2021. Those who enroll as homecare or personal support workers on or after January 1, 2021 must complete core training requirements within 120 days of receiving their Medicaid provider number.

Where do I get information about the new requirements?

The [Oregon Home Care Commission's](#) website will serve as a resource for information about the new requirements. Specific information about training and assessments is not yet available as the programs are still under development. However, detailed information will be available before the pilot launches.

Who pays for the training?

The training is free to all homecare and personal support workers. Trainings are paid for by the Department of Human Services.

Will I be paid while I receive training?

Homecare and personal support workers will be paid when participating in required training sessions.

Those who are applying to be a homecare or personal support worker will not be paid to attend new member orientation but will be paid to attend core training and continuing education courses.

Will I be given credit for past training that I received?

No. However, if you have earned a certification through the Oregon Home Care Commission and continue to meet the certification requirements, you do not need to take additional continuing education courses other than what is required to maintain the specific certification. You may find more information about career development and certifications by visiting: <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/HCC/PSW-HCW/Pages/index.aspx>

Does it matter if I work for a facility, an agency or directly for a consumer?

The new requirements only apply to homecare and personal support workers who work directly for a consumer. Individuals who work in other settings like foster homes, group homes, residential care facilities, assisted living facilities, or nursing facilities have different requirements they must follow. The new requirements also do not apply to those working with in-home agencies or provider agencies.

Do other states require similar training programs?

Yes. Several states require core training, continuing education, and assessments. You may find information about what other states are doing by visiting PHI's website at www.phinational.org. PHI, formerly known as the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute, offers helpful information and resources about the direct-care workforce.

What happens if a consumer's employee isn't trained in time to meet the deadline?

Training schedules and course information will be available online. Workers will be able to monitor their progress and will receive reminders about upcoming deadlines. If a homecare or personal support worker does not meet the deadlines, they will most likely have to stop working for a consumer until they meet the requirements. This will be determined through the rule-making process.

How will I know if the homecare or personal support worker I'm hiring has met the training requirements?

All homecare and personal support workers who have met the training requirements will be eligible for referral on the Registry. Only those who have met the training requirements will be authorized to work by the local Aging and People with Disabilities office, Area Agency on Aging, support services brokerages, or Community Developmental Disabilities Program.