

SB 1534 Training Workgroup – Testing Subgroup

Background: Senate Bill 1534 passed during the 2018 Legislative Session mandates the establishment of procedures for testing homecare and personal support workers on their mastery of the skills and knowledge to be acquired through mandatory training.

SB 1534 Considerations:

- It does not specify when or how often testing is required.
- It does not specify specific skills or knowledge to be tested.
- It does not define mastery.
- It does not specify an individual must pass a test or what the outcome would be for not passing a test.
- There was not a lot of discussion about testing requirements during legislative hearings.
- There is a lot of flexibility since the bill is silent.

General Considerations:

- Using “assessment” in place of “test” is less intimidating and provides more flexibility.
- In order for a homecare or personal support worker to be eligible to work, he or she must participate in mandatory training and testing.
- “Mastery” is an overwhelming concept. For this project, mastery would be defined as achieving the learning objectives, which are based on competencies.
- Instead of a pass/fail concept, different levels of “mastery” could be acceptable based on the specific subject or competency.
- Assessments will be based on CMS Direct Service Workforce Core Competencies:
 - Communication
 - Person-centered practices
 - Evaluation and observation
 - Crisis prevention and intervention
 - Safety
 - Professionalism and ethics
 - Empowerment and advocacy
 - Health and wellness
 - Community living skills and supports
 - Community inclusion and networking

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- Cultural competency
- Education, training, and self-development
- Assessments should be based on problem solving and applying what the individual has learned to specific scenarios.
- Assessment development will need to occur once trainings are finalized and will need a dedicated workgroup that includes those with expertise in this area.

Objectives:

- A well-qualified workforce able to demonstrate the core competencies defined in the training curriculum;
- Feedback from the test can be used by the worker to better understand their strengths and areas for additional training in specific areas
- Establish and evaluate metric standards looking at:
 - Training outcomes
 - Workers' level of understanding
 - Effectiveness of training
 - Effectiveness of assessments
- Measure progress over time (individual providers, workforce, and program); who is measuring progress?
- Career development and advancement

Outstanding questions to consider:

Question	Discussion/Recommendation
Does one competency carry more weight than another in terms of scoring?	All competencies are equally important.
Is testing required for continuing education trainings?	Testing may be included for some courses but not necessarily required for all courses.
Should there be one master assessment or an assessment after each training?	Discussion: It is difficult to say definitively since the trainings have not been developed. Divided on the issue during the 10/11/18 meeting. 10/19/18: Master test may be overwhelming. Tracking multiple

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	<p>assessments may be burdensome. Suggestion: have experts in this area make a recommendation.</p>
<p>Is it necessary to incorporate return demonstration into the assessment process?</p>	<p>Cuts into training time. Skill demonstration is not feasible at this time.</p>
<p>Can individuals re-take assessments?</p>	<p>No need to re-take assessment if there are no consequences of not passing. Unable to answer until discussion about outcomes determined.</p>
<p>Will there be a limit as to how many times an individual can take an assessment before they will be required to retake the training?</p>	<p>One opportunity to test out of initial basic core training. If an individual does not pass, must take basic core training.</p>
<p>What is the outcome if someone doesn't complete an assessment by the deadline or pass the assessments?</p>	<p>Split on this issue and unable to make a decision. Risks: barrier to entering workforce; concern related to vulnerable populations and workers not passing test; potential liability if someone doesn't pass a test but continues to work; family members who are PSWs may not be able to pass the test. Testing can serve as a tool for continued learning or relearning. In Washington, testing was an issue initially. Idea of test coach (may be difficult to operationalize).</p>
<p>Will "testing out" of training be an option? If so, does this apply to everyone or only under certain circumstances? How many times can they take the test?</p>	<p>Concern: unable to establish a baseline for new workers if they do not receive basic core training.</p> <p>Streamline test. Cost-effective and decrease administrative burden.</p>

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	<p>New Employee Orientation and Refresher orientation required.</p> <p>Testing-out is an option for everyone.</p>
<p>If someone has the ability to “test out,” should certain trainings still be required?</p>	<p>New Employee Orientation or refresher orientation and continuing education.</p>
<p>Should orientation include an assessment element?</p>	<p>No. Self-evaluation. Make orientation resources available online after orientation.</p>
<p>Should we refer to initial training requirements as “basic training?”</p>	<p>Basic core training.</p>