

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1258

5 By: Representative L. Johnson
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For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO CREATE THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER ACT; TO
9 ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE CERTIFICATION FOR COMMUNITY
10 HEALTH WORKERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

14 TO CREATE THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER
15 ACT; AND TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE
16 CERTIFICATION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH
17 WORKERS.
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20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 17, is amended to add an additional
23 chapter to read as follows:

CHAPTER 46

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER ACT

Subchapter 1 - General Provisions

17-46-101. Title.

30 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Community Health
31 Worker Act".
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17-46-102. Definitions.

33 As used in this chapter:

34 (1) "Community health worker" means an individual who is a
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1 trusted member of or has an unusually close understanding of the community
 2 that he or she is serving as a liaison, link, or intermediary between health
 3 services or social services and the community to facilitate access to health
 4 services or social services and to improve the quality and cultural
 5 competence of the services delivered;

6 (2) "Health benefit plan" means an individual, blanket, or any
 7 group plan, policy, or contract for healthcare services issued or delivered
 8 in this state by a healthcare insurer, health maintenance organization,
 9 hospital medical service corporation, or self-insured governmental or church
 10 plan in this state;

11 (3) "Healthcare professional" means a person who is licensed,
 12 certified, or otherwise authorized by the laws of this state to administer
 13 health care in the ordinary course of the practice of his or her profession;
 14 and

15 (4) "Healthcare provider" means:

16 (A) A hospital;

17 (B) An ambulatory surgical center;

18 (C) A primary care center;

19 (D) An outpatient psychiatric center;

20 (E) A home healthcare agency;

21 (F) A skilled nursing facility; or

22 (G) An individual licensed to render covered healthcare
 23 services.

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 25 Subchapter 2 - Certifications

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 27 17-46-201. Community health worker – Certification.

28 (a) The Department of Health shall issue a certification to be a
 29 community health worker to an individual who:

30 (1) Is eighteen (18) years of age or older;

31 (2) Meets one (1) of the following requirements:

32 (A) He or she is certified as a community health worker by
 33 the Arkansas Community Health Worker Association;

34 (B) He or she has worked as a community health worker for
 35 two (2) years with one (1) in this state and successfully completes a
 36 community health worker training program consisting of one hundred twenty

1 (120) hours of core competency, including eighty (80) hours of didactic
2 training and forty (40) hours of guided field practice from a school or
3 training program approved by the department;

4 (C) He or she has worked as a community health worker for
5 one (1) year within this state and has:

6 (i) Successfully completed eighty (80) hours of
7 supplemental training that supports core competency and professional
8 development;

9 (ii) Been assigned a mentor who is a certified
10 community health worker in this state or is eligible for certification and
11 regularly accessed and communicated with the mentor at least two (2) times
12 per month during the first three (3) months of the mentorship and monthly
13 thereafter; and

14 (iii) Been assigned a supervisor who has completed
15 community health worker supervisor training and regularly accessed and
16 communicated with the supervisor at least two (2) times per week during the
17 first three (3) months of supervision and weekly for the remainder of the
18 year; or

19 (D) He or she has four (4) years of experience that
20 provides evidence of proficiency in the core competencies, with two (2) years
21 of experience being in this state; and

22 (3) Submits an application with an application fee of fifty
23 dollars (\$50.00).

24 (c)(1) A certification is valid for two (2) years after the date of
25 issuance.

26 (2) To renew a certification, a community health worker shall:

27 (A) Complete twenty (20) hours of professional
28 developmental and training related to core competencies of a community health
29 worker within the two-year period; and

30 (B) Submit a renewal application with a renewal
31 application fee as determined by the department, in consultation with the
32 Arkansas Community Health Worker Association.

33 (d) The department, in conjunction with the Division of Higher
34 Education, shall create and maintain a registry of approved community health
35 worker training programs to be made available to the public.

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1 17-46-202. Suspension, revocation, nonissuance, or nonrenewal.

2 (a) The Department of Health may suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue
 3 or renew the certification of a community health worker for:

4 (1) Securing a certification under this chapter through fraud or
 5 deceit;

6 (2) Unethical conduct, gross ignorance, or inefficiency in the
 7 conduct of his or her practice;

8 (3) Using a false name or an alias in his or her practice;

9 (4) Violating any provision of this chapter; or

10 (5) Failing to comply with any of the requirements for issuance
 11 of the certification.

12 (b) Proceedings under this section shall comply with the Arkansas
 13 Administrative Procedure Act, § 25-15-201 et seq.

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 15 Subchapter 3 - Miscellaneous Provisions

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 17 17-46-301. Scope of practice.

18 A community health worker shall perform only the following types of
 19 services:

20 (1) Providing:

21 (A) Cultural mediation among individuals, communities, and
 22 health service systems or social services systems, or both;

23 (B) Culturally appropriate health education and
 24 information;

25 (C) Care coordination, including without limitation
 26 medication compliance under a patient care plan as directed by a healthcare
 27 provider or healthcare professional;

28 (D) Case management;

29 (E) Health service system navigation or social services
 30 system navigation, or both;

31 (F) Coaching and social support; and

32 (G) Direct services that:

33 (i) In order to be performed, do not require a
 34 professional license under subtitle 3 of this title or specialized training
 35 under § 20-77-2301 et seq., such as first aid and diabetic foot checks; or

36 (ii) Are not met by a personal care attendant;

- 1 (2) Advocating for individuals and communities;
- 2 (3) Building individual and community capacity;
- 3 (4) Implementing individual and community assessments, including
 4 without limitation:
 - 5 (A) Basic home environmental assessments; and
 - 6 (B) Basic health screening and tests;
 - 7 (5) Conducting outreach, such as health literacy services; and
 - 8 (6) Participating in evaluation and research, including without
 9 limitation health education and community research activities.

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 11 17-46-302. Patient and personal data and information.

12 (a) Patient and personal data and information accessed or attained by
 13 a community health worker is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of
 14 Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq., and is confidential and
 15 privileged as otherwise required by federal law.

16 (b) If a community health worker does not maintain the confidential
 17 and privileged nature of the patient data or information, the community
 18 health worker shall be subject to any penalty under state and federal law for
 19 a breach of confidential patient data or information.

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 21 17-46-303. Community health worker compensation.

22 A community health worker certified under this chapter shall receive
 23 compensation for services provided from:

- 24 (1) The Arkansas Medicaid Program; or
- 25 (2) A health benefit plan.

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 27 17-46-304. Rules.

28 The Department of Health may promulgate rules relating to the
 29 certification and regulation of community health workers under this
 30 subchapter.

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