
HOUSE BILL 1926

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representatives Timmons and Schmick

1 AN ACT Relating to training and testing of home care aides;
2 amending RCW 18.88B.021 and 18.88B.031; adding new sections to
3 chapter 18.88B RCW; and making appropriations.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 18.88B
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 By September 1, 2026, the department shall prepare a report in
7 compliance with RCW 43.01.036 on home care aide certification testing
8 and make a recommendation to the legislature on moving home care aide
9 certification testing to approved home care aide training programs.
10 The report must include:

11 (1) A review of the home care aide knowledge and skills tests to
12 ensure the test is aligned with learning outcomes and objectives in
13 the department of social and health services basic training
14 curriculum and is available in localized languages;

15 (2) A survey that includes stakeholder engagement with training
16 entities contracted with the department of social and health
17 services, including an entity that is already providing benefits to
18 no fewer than 20,000 long-term care workers in the state of
19 Washington and has at least five years of experience in administering
20 benefits to that workforce, and facility and community-based
21 instructors to determine additional training program hours required
22 for administering skills and knowledge tests; and

1 (3) A review of all home care aide application-related materials
2 and processes utilized by consumers, with recommendations to simplify
3 and further develop these materials and methods as necessary to
4 improve consumer ease of use.

5 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.88B.021 and 2023 c 424 s 2 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (1) (~~Beginning January 7, 2012, except~~) Except as provided in
8 RCW 18.88B.041, any person hired as a long-term care worker must be
9 certified as a home care aide as provided in (~~this chapter within~~
10 ~~200 calendar days after the date of hire~~) rules established by the
11 department in consultation with the department of social and health
12 services. A long-term care worker who is not currently certified or
13 eligible to reactivate an expired credential shall receive a new date
14 of hire when beginning work with either a new employer or returning
15 to a former employer after prior employment has ended.

16 (2)(a) No person may practice or, by use of any title or
17 description, represent himself or herself as a certified home care
18 aide without being certified as provided in this chapter.

19 (b) This section does not prohibit a person: (i) From practicing
20 a profession for which the person has been issued a license or which
21 is specifically authorized under this state's laws; or (ii) who is
22 exempt from certification under RCW 18.88B.041 from providing
23 services as a long-term care worker.

24 (c) In consultation with consumer and worker representatives, the
25 department shall, by January 1, 2013, establish by rule a single
26 scope of practice that encompasses both long-term care workers who
27 are certified home care aides and long-term care workers who are
28 exempted from certification under RCW 18.88B.041.

29 (3) If a pandemic, natural disaster, or other declared state of
30 emergency impacts the ability of long-term care workers to complete
31 certification as required by this section, the department may adopt
32 rules to allow long-term care workers additional time to become
33 certified.

34 (a) Rules adopted under this subsection (3) are effective until
35 the termination of the pandemic, natural disaster, or other declared
36 state of emergency or until the department determines that additional
37 time for long-term care workers to become certified is no longer
38 necessary, whichever is later. Once the department determines a rule

1 adopted under this subsection (3) is no longer necessary, it must
2 repeal the rule under RCW 34.05.353.

3 (b) Within 12 months of the termination of the pandemic, natural
4 disaster, or other declared state of emergency, the department shall
5 conduct a review of certification compliance with subsection (1) of
6 this section and rules adopted under this subsection (3) and provide
7 the legislature with a report.

8 (4) The department shall adopt rules to implement this section.

9 **Sec. 3.** RCW 18.88B.031 and 2023 c 323 s 2 are each amended to
10 read as follows:

11 (1) Except as provided in RCW 18.88B.041 and subject to the other
12 requirements of this chapter, to be certified as a home care aide, a
13 long-term care worker must successfully complete the training
14 required under RCW 74.39A.074(1) and a certification examination. Any
15 long-term care worker failing to make the required grade for the
16 examination may not be certified as a home care aide.

17 (2) The department, in consultation with consumer and worker
18 representatives, shall develop a home care aide certification
19 examination to evaluate whether an applicant possesses the skills and
20 knowledge necessary to practice competently.

21 (3) The examination or series of examinations shall include both
22 a skills demonstration and a written or oral knowledge test. The
23 department shall establish rules governing the number of times and
24 under what circumstances individuals who have failed the examination
25 may sit for the examination, including whether any intermediate
26 remedial steps should be required. The skills demonstration, the
27 knowledge test, or both, may be administered throughout training, on
28 the last day of training, or after a student's formal training. An
29 applicant may apply to take the examination during or after training.
30 An applicant may not sit for any part of the examination prior to
31 completing the part of the training associated with that part of the
32 examination. The examination or series of examinations may be
33 conducted at local training or testing sites around the state. For
34 the purpose of reducing the travel time for applicants, the
35 department shall explore alternative testing options such as remote
36 testing.

37 (4) (a) All examinations shall be conducted by fair and wholly
38 impartial methods. All examinations shall be available to be
39 administered in the preferred language for the applicant taking the

1 examination. The certification examination shall be administered and
2 evaluated by:

3 (i) The department;

4 (ii) A contractor to the department that is not an employer of
5 long-term care workers unless the employer is a department of social
6 and health services approved instructor and has met the department
7 standards for administering the examination; or

8 (iii) A high school or community college that has met department
9 standards for administering the examination.

10 (b) The department shall conduct an annual evaluation of the
11 examination results of applicants who complete the examination in (~~a~~
12 ~~language other than English~~) all languages. If the department finds
13 that applicants taking the examination in a particular language fail
14 at a disproportionately higher rate than other examination takers,
15 the department shall conduct a review of the translation to ensure
16 that it is accurate and understandable.

17 (5) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
18 specific purpose, home care aide testing shall be available in
19 qualified facility and community-based home care aide training
20 programs by July 1, 2028, with testing conducted by facility and
21 community trainers contracted with the department of social and
22 health services or a training partnership affiliate.

23 (6) The department shall adopt rules to implement this section.

24 (7) For purposes of this section, "training partnership
25 affiliate" means a Washington nonprofit corporation that will
26 contract with the department of social and health services or its
27 designee to provide home care aide testing required under this
28 chapter.

29 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 18.88B
30 RCW to read as follows:

31 (1) If the department has any contracts for personal care
32 services with any individual providers represented by an exclusive
33 bargaining representative, all home care aide testing required under
34 this chapter for those individual providers must be provided by a
35 training partnership affiliate.

36 (2) For purposes of this section, "training partnership
37 affiliate" means a Washington nonprofit corporation that will
38 contract with the department of social and health services or its

1 designee to provide home care aide testing required under this
2 chapter.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The sum of \$2,000,000, or as much
4 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year
5 ending June 30, 2026, from the general fund to a training partnership
6 affiliate for the purposes of the implementation of this act.

7 (2) The sum of \$4,500,000, or as much thereof as may be
8 necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027,
9 from the general fund to a training partnership affiliate for the
10 purposes of the implementation of this act.

11 (3) For purposes of this section, "training partnership
12 affiliate" means a Washington nonprofit corporation that will
13 contract with the department of social and health services or its
14 designee to provide home care aide testing required under chapter
15 18.88B RCW.

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