
ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5179

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2018 Regular Session

State of Washington **65th Legislature** **2017 Regular Session**

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Bailey, Keiser, Palumbo, Hasegawa, and Conway)

READ FIRST TIME 02/24/17.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring coverage for hearing instruments
2 under public employee and medicaid programs; adding a new section to
3 chapter 41.05 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 74.09 RCW; and
4 creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 41.05
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) Subject to appropriation, a health plan offered to employees
9 and their covered dependents under this chapter issued or renewed on
10 or after January 1, 2019, must include coverage for hearing
11 instruments. Coverage must include a new hearing instrument every
12 five years and services and supplies such as the initial assessment,
13 fitting, adjustment, and auditory training.

14 (2) The hearing instrument must be recommended by a licensed
15 audiologist, hearing aid specialist, or a licensed physician or
16 osteopathic physician who specializes in otolaryngology and dispensed
17 by a licensed audiologist, hearing aid specialist, or a licensed
18 physician or osteopathic physician who specializes in otolaryngology.

19 (3) For the purposes of this section, "hearing instrument" and
20 "hearing aid specialist" have the same meaning as defined in RCW
21 18.35.010.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.09
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 (1) The medical assistance coverage offered under this chapter
4 issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2019, must include coverage
5 for hearing instruments when medically necessary. Coverage must
6 include a new hearing instrument every five years, a new hearing
7 instrument when alterations to the existing hearing instrument cannot
8 meet the needs of the patient, and services and supplies such as the
9 initial assessment, fitting, adjustment, and auditory training.

10 (2) The hearing instrument must be recommended by a licensed
11 audiologist, hearing aid specialist, or a licensed physician or
12 osteopathic physician who specializes in otolaryngology and dispensed
13 by a licensed audiologist, hearing aid specialist, or a licensed
14 physician or osteopathic physician who specializes in otolaryngology.

15 (3) For purposes of this section, "hearing instrument" and
16 "hearing aid specialist" have the same meaning as defined in RCW
17 18.35.010.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** If specific funding for the purposes of
19 section 2 of this act, referencing section 2 of this act by bill or
20 chapter number and section number, is not provided by June 30, 2018,
21 in the omnibus appropriations act, section 2 of this act is null and
22 void.

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