

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6597

As of January 31, 2000

Title: An act relating to improving the quality of services for persons with developmental disabilities.

Brief Description: Improving the quality of services for persons with developmental disabilities.

Sponsors: Senators Costa and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/31/2000.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Division of Developmental Disabilities currently contracts with approximately 13,000 "individual providers" who care for people with developmental disabilities in their residences. There is significant turnover in this segment of the care giving workforce. These workers are not certified.

The department contracts with agencies to provide residential services to people with developmental disabilities. The department certifies these agencies at least every two years.

Currently, employment and day programs for people with developmental disabilities are contracted through the counties in which they are located, with the county ensuring compliance with contract standards.

Summary of Bill: By June 30, 2003, the department must independently certify any provider, including individuals, with whom it contracts for direct or support services. After that date, the department must certify contracted providers annually.

Required standards for certification are described. These include requiring all direct care workers to complete 32 hours of training, unless the worker has had at least seven years of experience and the department has waived this requirement. This training must be done within six months of employment, with ten of the hours completed before starting work. Workers must have ten hours of continuing education.

The department must develop and approve training programs with input from an advisory board of stakeholders. The department may adjust rates to cover any increased costs of training and replacement staff time.

The department must review the consistency of current certification and licensing standards across the spectrum of services to the developmentally disabled and report its findings to the Legislature by December 2000.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 21, 2000.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.