

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5672

As of February 18, 2025

Title: An act relating to delaying the home care aide certification requirements.

Brief Description: Delaying the home care aide certification requirements.

Sponsors: Senators Muzzall, Cleveland, Chapman, Dozier and Nobles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/18/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Health to adopt rules allowing long-term care workers additional time to become certified as the State Auditor's Office completes their 2026 Initiative 1163 performance audit and provides recommendations for the Legislature's consideration.
- Exempts long-term care workers from being required to be certified as a home care aide within 200 days of the hiring date.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Julie Tran (786-7283)

Background: Long-Term Care Workers. A long-term care worker is any person who provides paid, hands-on personal care services for older persons or persons with disabilities. The term includes individual providers of home care services, direct care workers employed by home care agencies, providers of home care services to people with developmental disabilities, direct care workers in assisted living facilities and adult family homes, and respite care providers. The term excludes employees of several types of health care and residential care facilities, as well as care providers not paid by the state or by a private agency or facility licensed to provide personal care services.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Most long-term care workers must become certified as home care aides within 200 days of being hired by Department of Health (DOH) unless an exemption applies. To become certified as a home care aide, a long-term care worker must complete 75 hours of training, pass a certification examination, and pass state and federal background checks.

Initiative 1163. Initiative 1163 (I-1163), passed by the people of Washington in 2011, increased training requirements and competency assessments for personal care aides. There are no federal requirements for training and testing personal care aides—the federal designation for Washington’s home care aides. States have broad discretion in this area, and Washington’s requirements are among the most stringent in the country.

Under the initiative, becoming certified as a home care aide requires an applicant to pass a two-part test. The knowledge portion focuses on the activities of daily living and proper treatment of clients. During the skills portion, the applicant must demonstrate correct performance of skills such as safely transitioning a client from a bed to a wheelchair and properly cleaning a catheter.

Summary of Bill: DOH must adopt rules to allow long-term care workers additional time to become certified as the Office of the State Auditor completes their biennial performance audit as a part of I-1163 on training requirements and competency assessments for home care aides and provide recommendations for the Legislature's consideration.

Long-term care workers are exempt from the requirement to become certified as a home care aide within the 200 calendar days after the hiring date.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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