

SB 1174 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

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Meeting Dates: 3/27, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure establishes licensure requirements for the practice of nutritionist, defines the scope of practice for nutritionists and dietitians, and prohibits people without those licenses from providing nutrition therapy, as defined, with certain exemptions.

DETAILED SUMMARY:

Establishes licensure requirements for nutritionists:

- Expands the Board of Licensed Dietitians to include licensed nutritionists.
- Directs the Health Licensing Office (HLO), in consultation with the Board of Licensed Dietitians and Nutritionists, to issue a license for the practice of nutrition.
- Specifies requirements for licensed nutritionists. Waives new licensure requirements for applicants who submit proof of requirements, or who are authorized in another state with requirements consistent with those in Oregon.
- Prohibits a person without a license from providing medical nutrition therapy or holding themselves out as a dietitian or nutritionist, with exemptions for healthcare providers within scope of practice, students/trainees, military/federal providers, and certain non-medical weight control services.

Specifies requirements for nutritionist license:

- Requires an applicant to hold a master's or doctoral degree in a specified, accredited program.
- Requires specified coursework on nutritional therapy, life sciences, and metabolism.
- Requires, within five years preceding the application, at least 1,000 hours of supervised practice, across specified practice areas. Specifies requirements for qualified supervisors and goals and methods for supervision.
- Requires successful completion of the certified nutrition specialist examination administered by the Board for Certification of Nutrition specialists.

Defines scope of practice and services provided by licensed nutritionists and dietitians:

- Defines terms including "nutrition assessment," and "medical nutrition therapy."
- Defines the scope of practice for nutritionist, including nutrition care services and medical nutrition therapy.
- Defines the scope of practice for dietitians, including medical nutrition therapy and the development and ordering of therapeutic diets.
- Specifies that both licensed nutritionists and dietitians may practice via telehealth.

Takes effect on the 91st day after sine die. Becomes operative on January 1, 2026.

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued.

REVENUE: No revenue impact.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

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- Removes provision for licensure of an applicant from with an academic degree from another country that the board determines is equivalent.
- Specifies that a dietitian may practice dietetics and that a nutritionist may practice nutrition via telehealth.
- Specifies that a person who is licensed or who applies before the effective date of the act shall remain licensed or eligible for licensure subject to the requirements in effect at the time of initial licensure or application for licensure.
- Specifies that a person licensed to practice dietetics upon the effective date of the act is not subject to any additional requirements.

BACKGROUND:

In Oregon, including Oregon, a registered dietitian (RD) must meet education, experience, and examination requirements, while “nutritionist” has no formal definition. [ORS 691.435](#). Registered dietitians may become licensed through the Oregon Board of Licensed Dietitians ([ORS 691.485](#)) but no license is required to provide nutritional counseling.

Approximately [27 states](#) provide for licenses for the title of “nutritionist.” In many states, the requirements for nutritionists are the same as for registered dietitians (see, e.g., [Delaware](#), [Florida](#)). In [Washington](#), a licensed nutritionist must meet the same requirements as registered dietitians *or* hold a master’s or doctoral degree. In states where nutritionists and registered dietitians have the same requirements, they are required to complete a degree program with approved coursework, a minimum number of hours of training, and an examination.

Senate Bill 1174 establishes licensure requirements for the practice of nutritionist, defines the scope of practice for nutritionists and dietitians, and prohibits unlicensed practices.