

HB 2203 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Action Date: 04/08/25

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 6-3-0-0

Yeas: 6 - Isadore, Javadi, Munoz, Nelson, Nosse, Pham H

Nays: 3 - Diehl, Harbick, McIntire

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/18, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure implements recommendations from the Joint Task Force on Improving the Safety of Behavioral Health Workers, including requiring behavioral health employers to develop and implement a written safety plan and comprehensive safety trainings.

Detailed Summary

Definitions

- Defines "behavioral health employer" as a:
 - Residential treatment facility (RTF), residential treatment home (RTH), secure residential treatment facility (SRTF), secure residential treatment home (SRTH), sobering facility, detoxification center, halfway house, mobile crisis team, or emergency shelter.
- Defines "built environment" as a facility, vehicle, and other physical location where work is performed.
- Defines "lone worker" as an individual working without a colleague nearby or without close/direct supervision.

Behavioral Health Employers

- *Written Safety Plan*
 - Requires a behavioral health employer to develop and implement a written safety plan. Requires the safety plan to be provided to new employees upon hire and be easily accessible to all staff.
 - Specifies what a behavioral health employer must consider when developing the safety plan.
 - Specifies that the safety plan must include:
 - A policy for lone workers. Specifies what must be included in the lone worker policy.
 - A policy related to the built environment. Specifies what must be included in the built environment policy.
 - Information about required safety trainings, the timeframe in which trainings must be completed for new hires, and the frequency with which trainings must be renewed.
- *Safety Trainings*
 - Requires behavioral health employers to provide employees with comprehensive safety training, specifies what must be covered in the safety training.
 - Specifies timing of training for new hires and frequency of subsequent training updates.
 - Directs Oregon OSHA, OHA, and ODHS to develop guidance for behavioral health employers in meeting training requirements and to publish a list of approved third-party organizations that offer training curriculum. Directs Oregon OSHA, OHA, and ODHS to maintain a list of agency and department staff who can provide required safety trainings to behavioral health employers.
 - Requires behavioral health employers to maintain training records.

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- Requires trainings to be provided to workers beginning January 1, 2026.
- Requires a behavioral health employer to reinstate an employee with back pay in certain situations.
- Specifies that RTFs, RTHs, SRTFs, and SRTTHs may place reasonable limitations on a resident's access to and possession of alcohol, marijuana, and weapons, including firearms and knives.

OHA

- Directs OHA to develop through rule a program for administering noncompetitive grants to support behavioral health employers in implementing required changes to the built environment identified during the risk assessment. Directs OHA to adopt rules regarding the grant application and award processes, as well as purposes for which grant funds may be used.
- Directs OHA to expedite exceptional service rate requests submitted by behavioral health providers.
- Directs OHA to retain an actuary to model the cost of implementing safety planning and structural security requirements.
- Directs OHA to study opportunities to increase federal funding for increased staffing and structural security requirements for behavioral health employers that serve medical assistance recipients, and reimbursement options for situations where a minimum of two workers must be present. Requires OHA to submit a report to the Legislative Assembly by December 1, 2025. Sunsets provision on January 2, 2026.

Oregon OSHA

- Directs Oregon OSHA to collaborate with OHA to provide resources to support behavioral health employers in developing written safety plans, including conducting a risk assessment of the built environment, and to develop a timeline for phasing in requirements related to resources.
- Directs Oregon OSHA to establish a compliance process that includes a process for enforcing violations.

DCBS

- Directs DCBS to study options to require carriers to reimburse for mobile crisis services as covered services not subject to coinsurance, copayments, deductibles, or other out-of-pocket costs. Requires DCBS to submit a report to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to behavioral health and worker safety by December 1, 2025. Sunsets provision on January 2, 2026.

OHA, Oregon OSHA, and DCBS

- Directs OHA, Oregon OSHA, and DCBS to:
 - Review rules regarding client and worker safety. Specifies areas for issuing additional guidance.
 - Identify ways to increase coordination across the Agency/Departments when investigating incidents of violence and enforcing client and worker safety laws. Directs the Agency/Departments to solicit stakeholder feedback.
 - Develop a process for behavioral health employers to seek guidance about potentially conflicting rules regarding client and worker safety.
 - Develop compliance guidance for behavioral health employers.
 - Report findings to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to behavioral health and worker safety by August 31, 2026. Sunsets provision on January 2, 2027.
- Declares an emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The need to support the safety of Oregon's behavioral health workers
- Background on the Joint Task Force on Behavioral Health Worker Safety

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The [Joint Task Force on Improving the Safety of Behavioral Health Workers](#) (Task Force) was established by the Oregon Legislative Assembly in House Bill 4002 (2024) to address concerns in the behavioral health industry about

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workers' exposure to violence. The Task Force was directed to develop recommendations addressing employer requirements for safety plans and worker training, physical and structural security, as well as safe staffing levels. The Task Force's [final recommendations](#) addressed four areas: written safety plans and protocols; worker rights, reporting options, and trainings; support for employer changes and compliance; and staffing requirements and related payments.

House Bill 2203 A implements recommendations from the Joint Task Force on Improving the Safety of Behavioral Health Workers, including requiring behavioral health employers to develop and implement a written safety plan and comprehensive safety trainings.