

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
4 FOR

5 HOUSE BILL NO. 1831

6 By: Hefner, Stinson, and Roe

7 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

8 An Act relating to community health workers; creating
9 the Oklahoma Community Health Workers Act; defining
10 terms; directing establishment of certificate; making
11 certification voluntary; listing powers of community
12 health worker; requiring and authorizing promulgation
13 of certain rules; directing establishment of certain
14 fees; affirming private employer discretion in
15 community health worker hiring; providing for
16 codification; and providing an effective date.

16 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

17 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
18 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1280 of Title 59, unless there
19 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

20 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma
21 Community Health Workers Act".

22 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
23 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1280.1 of Title 59, unless there
24 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

1 As used in the Oklahoma Community Health Workers Act:

2 1. "Certified community health worker" means a community health
3 worker to whom the State Department of Health has issued a
4 certificate to practice as a certified community health worker in
5 this state;

6 2. "Community health worker" means a frontline health worker
7 who has a shared understanding of and is a trusted member of the
8 community being served;

9 3. "Core competencies" are defined as the knowledge and skills
10 a certified community health worker is expected to demonstrate in
11 order to carry out the mission and goals of the profession as
12 defined by the Department through the promulgation of administrative
13 regulations in accordance with state guidelines; and

14 4. "Department" means the State Department of Health as
15 established to direct guidance, in collaboration with the State
16 Community Health Worker Association or Advisory Committee, in
17 relation to community health worker training, certification, and
18 recertification protocols.

19 SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
20 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1280.2 of Title 59, unless there
21 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

22 A. The State Department of Health shall establish a certificate
23 for community health workers. This certification shall be
24 voluntary.

1 B. A certified community health worker may:

2 1. Serve as a liaison between health and social services and
3 the community, including faith-based organizations, to facilitate
4 access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence
5 of service delivery;

6 2. Assist in identifying and communicating gaps in current
7 community and health care resources; and

8 3. Build individual and community capacity by increasing health
9 knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as
10 outreach, community education, coaching, mentoring, social support,
11 and advocacy, including efforts within faith-based settings.

12 SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
13 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1280.3 of Title 59, unless there
14 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

15 Eligibility to apply for voluntary certification in order to be
16 eligible to apply for community health worker certification, an
17 individual shall:

- 18 1. Be a legal United States resident;
- 19 2. Be a resident of Oklahoma;
- 20 3. Be at least eighteen (18) years of age; and
- 21 4. Provide evidence to the Department of his or her work
22 experience as a community health worker, demonstrating a minimum of
23 one thousand (1,000) practical hours and recommendation from a
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1 supervising provider, shall be considered certified under this work
2 experience pathway provision.

3 SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
4 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1280.4 of Title 59, unless there
5 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

6 A. The State Commissioner of Health shall promulgate rules to:

7 1. Adopt a set of standards for the approval of certified
8 community health workers' initial coursework or curriculum;

9 2. Establish examination administration requirements for the
10 Department or one or more designees;

11 3. Define minimum qualifications for applicants to be
12 certified; and

13 4. Establish the criteria for granting, renewing, denying,
14 suspending, and revoking a certificate to uphold health standards
15 and safety.

16 B. The Commissioner may also promulgate rules to establish
17 partnerships with faith-based organizations to enhance community
18 health outreach and service delivery, including, but not limited to:

19 1. Recognizing faith-based organizations as eligible entities
20 for community health care worker training and certification programs
21 when they meet established state standards;

22 2. Facilitating collaboration between community health care
23 workers and faith-based organizations to improve health access,
24 prevention, and health literacy efforts in underserved communities;

1 3. Supporting faith-based health initiatives through technical
2 assistance and programmatic support for community health care
3 workers working within congregations and religious institutions;

4 4. Encouraging the integration of community health care workers
5 into existing faith-based outreach programs to enhance culturally
6 competent care and strengthen trust in community health efforts.

7 C. The Commissioner shall prescribe fees for the certified
8 community health worker examination, initial certification, and
9 certification renewal.

10 SECTION 6. This act shall become effective November 1, 2025.

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