

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

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

3 POLICY COMMITTEE  
4 RECOMMENDATION

5 FOR

6 HOUSE BILL NO. 1831

7 By: Hefner, Stinson, and Roe

8 POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

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

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

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

22 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma  
23 Community Health Workers Act".  
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1 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1280.1 of Title 59, unless there  
3 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 As used in the Oklahoma Community Health Workers Act:

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

9 2. "Community health worker" means a frontline health worker  
10 who has a shared understanding of and is a trusted member of the  
11 community being served;

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

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

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

1 A. The State Department of Health shall establish a certificate  
2 for community health workers. This certification shall be  
3 voluntary.

4 B. A certified community health worker may:

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

9 2. Assist in identifying and communicating gaps in current  
10 community and health care resources; and

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

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

18 Eligibility to apply for voluntary certification in order to be  
19 eligible to apply for community health worker certification, an  
20 individual shall:

- 21 1. Be a legal United States resident;
- 22 2. Be a resident of Oklahoma;
- 23 3. Be at least eighteen (18) years of age; and

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1           4. Individuals who have provided evidence to the Department of  
2 work experience as a community health worker, demonstrating a  
3 minimum of one thousand (1,000) practical hours and recommendation  
4 from a supervising provider, shall be considered certified under  
5 this work experience pathway provision.

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

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

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

12           2. Establish examination administration requirements for the  
13 Department or one or more designees;

14           3. Define minimum qualifications for applicants to be  
15 certified; and

16           4. Establish the criteria for granting, renewing, denying,  
17 suspending, and revoking a certificate to uphold health standards  
18 and safety.

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

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

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

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

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

10        C. The Commissioner shall prescribe fees for the certified  
11 community health worker examination, initial certification, and  
12 certification renewal.

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

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