

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 57th Legislature (2020)

HOUSE BILL 3449

By: McEntire

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to public health; creating the Oklahoma Community Health Worker Act; defining terms; providing for powers and duties of State Department of Health to establish and maintain certification of community health worker training curriculum; authorizing Department to promulgate certain rules; directing the Department to promulgate certain rules; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

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

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1275 of Title 59, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

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

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1276 of Title 59, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

As used in the Oklahoma Community Health Worker Act:

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

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

8            a. This trusted relationship enables the community health  
9 worker to:

10            (1) serve as a liaison between health and social  
11 services and the community to facilitate access  
12 to services and improve the quality and cultural  
13 competence of service delivery,

14            (2) assist in identifying and communicating gaps in  
15 current community and health care resources, and

16            (3) build individual and community capacity by  
17 increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency  
18 through a range of activities such as outreach,  
19 community education, coaching, mentoring, social  
20 support, and advocacy.

21            b. At a minimum, a community health worker shall be  
22 competent in the following:

23            (1) communication,

24            (2) interpersonal skills,

- (3) service coordination,
- (4) individual and community development,
- (5) individual and community advocacy,
- (6) basic teaching skills,
- (7) organizational skills,
- (8) general knowledge of health care, and
- (9) cultural humility; and

3. "Department" means the State Department of Health.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1277 of Title 59, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The State Department of Health in coordination with the Oklahoma Public Health Association shall have the following powers and duties with regard to establishing and maintaining certification of community health worker training curriculum:

1. To evaluate and certify all community health worker education, training, competency programs and curriculum in accordance with specifications and procedures approved by the Department;

2. To prescribe, by rule, the scope of practice and the core competencies of certified community health workers, including skills and areas of knowledge that are essential to bring about expanded health and wellness in diverse communities and to reduce health disparities;

1        3. To describe and define reasonable and necessary minimum  
2 qualifications, including education and training requirements, for  
3 certified community health workers;

4        4. To adopt standards and requirements for the approval or  
5 acceptance of continuing education courses and competency programs  
6 for the renewal of a certificate; and

7        5. To establish the criteria for granting, denying, suspending  
8 and revoking a certificate in order to protect the health and safety  
9 of the public.

10       B. The Department may promulgate rules:

11       1. That are necessary for the proper administration and  
12 enforcement of the Oklahoma Community Health Worker Act;

13       2. That allows for reciprocity agreements, including with the  
14 Indian Health Service, Tribal Health Systems and Urban Indian  
15 Clinics; and

16       3. That allow those currently serving in the capacity of a  
17 community health worker to continue providing services without  
18 certification.

19       C. The Department shall prescribe fees for certification of  
20 community health worker education, training and competency programs  
21 curriculum.

22       SECTION 4.       NEW LAW       A new section of law to be codified  
23 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1278 of Title 59, unless there  
24 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

1       A. The State Department of Health shall promulgate rules to  
2 offer voluntary certification for community health workers that  
3 complete a competency program and receive education and training  
4 through one of the certified curriculum programs.

5       B. The Department shall establish the criteria for granting,  
6 denying, suspending and revoking a certificate in order to protect  
7 the health and safety of the public.

8       C. The Department shall adopt rules that prescribe fees for the  
9 voluntary certification of community health workers.

10       SECTION 5. This act shall become effective November 1, 2020.

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