
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6987

AN ACT CONCERNING CLOSURES AND EVACUATIONS OF RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES AND NURSING HOMES.

SUMMARY

This bill requires all Medicaid certified nursing facilities, Medicare certified skilled nursing facilities, nursing homes, and residential care homes to consider a resident's closeness to family and known support networks when, as required by existing law, they help residents find a new appropriate placement when leaving or being transferred from the facility (§ 1).

The bill instructs the social services and public health commissioners and the state ombudsman to assemble a working group to look at residential care home evacuation procedures and if residential care homes should be required to take part in a mutual aid digital platform that includes solutions for emergency management.

The bill also requires:

1. nursing homes and residential care homes to maintain insurance coverage for the loss or damage of personal property under certain conditions and
2. the public health commissioner to create and maintain a database to accurately track bed availability in nursing homes and residential care homes.

Lastly, the bill adds to the circumstances when nursing homes generally must ignore their waiting list when admitting residents who are transferring from another nursing home.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except when otherwise noted below.

WORKING GROUP

The bill requires the social services and public health commissioners and the state ombudsman to convene a working group to examine (1) residential care home evacuation procedures and (2) if residential care homes should be required to use a mutual aid digital platform that supports the risk management needs of health care organizations, which includes dedicated solutions for:

1. emergency management,
2. inspections,
3. testing and maintenance management, and
4. health care coalition and inspections management.

The working group must include at least two people representing residential care homes and submit a report to the Aging, Human Services, and Public Health committees, by January 1, 2026, that contains the group's findings and recommendations.

INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR LOST OR DAMAGED PERSONAL PROPERTY

Under the bill, all nursing homes and residential care homes must maintain insurance coverage for the loss or damage of their residents' personal property if it is a result of an evacuation or closure of the facility. The bill does not specify a coverage amount, but it must be sufficient to replace the residents' property.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

DATABASE FOR TRACKING BED AVAILABILITY AT CERTAIN FACILITIES

The bill requires the public health commissioner to develop and maintain a database by January 1, 2026, that accurately tracks bed availability in nursing homes and residential care homes. The database must be accessible to these facilities or any entity that the commissioner chooses.

WAITING LIST EXEMPTION

Existing law generally requires Medicaid-certified nursing homes to (1) admit residents on a first-come, first-served basis, regardless of their payment source and (2) keep waiting lists of and admit applicants in the order they are received, with certain exceptions (e.g., under certain conditions, when an applicant directly transfers from a home that is closing).

Under the bill, a nursing home generally must disregard its waiting list and admit an applicant who seeks to transfer from a nursing home that (1) has filed a certificate of need (CON) request (but before the social services commissioner makes a decision) and (2) has 10 residents or less, if the social services and public health commissioners and the ombudsman agree that the CON subject will have a significant impact on that nursing home's residents.

But under the bill, nursing homes are not required to admit these applicants under certain circumstances, such as when the nursing home determines that the applicant (1) does not have a payor source because they have been denied Medicaid eligibility or (2) does not require a nursing home level of care according to law. The same exceptions apply under existing law for certain other transfers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

COMMITTEE ACTION

Aging Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 14 Nay 0 (03/06/2025)