



TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
INCLUDING STATEMENT OF NEED & JUSTIFICATION

EID 1-2025

CHAPTER 950

OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY

EQUITY AND INCLUSION DIVISION

FILED

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ARCHIVES DIVISION
SECRETARY OF STATE
& LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

FILING CAPTION: Removes Sunset Date and corrects hours requirement for Legacy Clause. Updates Peer Support Specialist definition.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/07/2025 THROUGH 12/26/2025

AGENCY APPROVED DATE: 06/18/2025

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NEED FOR THE RULE(S):

Currently those who meet the certification standards using the Legacy Clause certification pathway can only do so until 6/30/25. This change removes the Legacy Clause Sunset Date of 6/30/25, which removes a barrier for certification and allows for continued growth of the THW Workforce.

Additionally, current language regarding hours volunteered or worked conflicts with current program operating procedure. This would change the requirement from "January 1, 2008, to June 30, 2025" to "within the last 5 years." This aligns with current best and promising practice standards, and with feedback from the THW Commission and Subcommittees.

Lastly, the definition of Peer Support Specialists needs to be updated to remove "family member of an individual with a mental health condition to family member of an individual with a mental health condition," as this more aligns with the work Family Support Specialists and honors the fidelity of the peer model.

JUSTIFICATION OF TEMPORARY FILING:

- 1) Current rules impact staff's ability to process workforce applications and reviewing training program curricula.
- 2) This would affect program operations staff and impact the workforce
- 3) This would impact internal program operations and OHA's outcome measure goal
- 4) Clarify and Address gaps that pertain to certification pathways and allow staff to continue processing workforce applications to maintain growth of workforce

DOCUMENTS RELIED UPON, AND WHERE THEY ARE AVAILABLE:

None

RULES:

AMEND: 950-060-0010

RULE TITLE: Definitions

RULE SUMMARY: Clarifies Lived Experience

RULE TEXT:

The following definitions apply to OAR 950-060-0000 through 950-060-0160:

(1) "Authority" means the Oregon Health Authority.

(2) "Authority Approved Training Program" means an organization that provides an education in the core curriculum that meets Authority standards for one or more types of traditional health workers and is approved by the Authority to train those types of traditional health workers.

(3) "Birth Doula" means a birth companion who provides personal, nonmedical support to birthing person and their families throughout a birthing person's pregnancy, childbirth, and post-partum experience.

(4) "Birth Doula Certification Organization" is an entity recognized and approved by the Authority for training birth doulas whose educational requirements includes the core curriculum topics described in these rules.

(5) "Community-Based Organization (CBO)" means a public or private nonprofit organization that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community and engaged in meeting that community's needs in the areas of social, human, or health services.

(6) "Community Health Worker" has the meaning given that term in ORS 414.025.

(7) "Contact Hour" means an hour of classroom, group, or distance learning training. Contact hour does not include homework time, preparatory reading, or practicum.

(8) "Competencies" mean key skills and applied knowledge necessary for THWs to be effective in the work field and carry out their roles.

(9) "Equivalent Credit" means an individual fulfills the requirements of a course or combination of courses by completing a relatively comparable course or combination of courses.

(10) "Family Support Specialist" means an individual who meets qualification criteria adopted under ORS 414.665 and may be either a peer support specialist or a peer wellness specialist who, based on similar life experiences, provides support services to and has experience parenting a child who:

(a) Is a current or former consumer of mental health or addiction treatment; or

(b) Is facing or has faced difficulties in accessing education, health, and wellness services due to mental health or behavioral health barriers.

(11) "Legacy Clause for Traditional Health Workers" means an individual who has never been certified with the Authority before and gets recognition for Certification as a result of their prior training and work experience and fulfillment of all additional requirements for the Legacy clause as set forth in these rules.

(12) "Means Counseling" means the use of individual or family, in case of a child, strategies designed to reduce the access, by an individual who is at an elevated risk for suicide, to lethal means, including but not limited to firearms. Application of terms is in ORS 743A.168 and OAR 836-053-1403.

(13) "Peer Support Specialist" means an individual providing services to another individual who shares a similar life experience with the peer support specialist (addiction to addiction, mental health condition to mental health condition.. A peer support specialist shall be:

(a) A self-identified individual currently or formerly receiving addictions or mental health services;

(b) A self-identified individual in recovery from an addiction disorder who meets the abstinence requirements for recovering staff in alcohol or other drug treatment programs;

(c) A self-identified individual in recovery from problem gambling.

(14) "Peer Wellness Specialist" has the meaning given that term in ORS 414.025.

(15) "Personal Health Navigator" has the meaning given that term in ORS 414.025.

(16) "Registry" means a list maintained by the Authority of traditional health workers certified under these rules.

(17) "Safety Planning" means a process of implementation of a document developed through a collaborative process in which the provider assisted the individual and family, in case of a child, that identified strategies to prevent suicide, overdose, or psychiatric emergency when the risk is elevated or following a period of crisis. Application of terms is in ORS 743A.168 and OAR 836-053-1403.

(18) "THW Applicant" means an individual who applies to the Authority for traditional health worker certification.

(19) "Traditional Health Worker (THW)" means a community health worker, peer wellness specialist, personal health navigator, peer support specialist, or birth doula not otherwise regulated or certified by the State of Oregon.

(20) "Training Program Applicant" means an organization or entity that applies for Authority approval of its training program and curricula for any of the traditional health worker types.

(21) "Verifiable Evidence" means a pay statement, services contract, student practicum, volunteer time log, or other documentation reflecting hours worked or volunteered.

(22) "Youth Support Specialist" means an individual who meets qualification criteria adopted under ORS 414.665 and may be either a peer support specialist or a peer wellness specialist and who, based on a similar life experience, provides supportive services to an individual who:

(a) Is not older than 30 years old, and

(b) Is a current or former consumer of mental health or addiction treatment; or

(c) Is facing or has faced difficulties in accessing education, health, and wellness services due to mental health or behavioral health barriers;

STATUTORY/OTHER AUTHORITY: ORS 413.042, 414.665, ORS 414.635

STATUTES/OTHER IMPLEMENTED: 181.537, 414.665, ORS 414.635

AMEND: 950-060-0060

RULE TITLE: Application and Renewal Process for Traditional Health Worker (THW) Certification and Registry Enrollment

RULE SUMMARY: Removes the Sunset Date of 6/30/25, provides clarification on Legacy Clause, and updates Peer Support Specialist Background Check requirements.

RULE TEXT:

(1) Individuals seeking THW certification and registry enrollment shall:

(a) Be at least 18 years of age;

(b) Not be listed on the Medicaid provider exclusion list;

(c) Successfully complete all training requirements for certification in a traditional health worker category as outlined in these rules;

(d) Pass a background check as described in OAR 950-060-0070;

(e) Beginning August 31, 2018, successfully complete an Authority approved oral health training;

(f) Submit to the Authority all required documentation and a completed application on an Authority prescribed form.

(2) An individual applying for certification or renewal as a peer support specialist as that term is defined in OAR 950-060-0010 can have their background check completed by an outside entity pursuant to OAR 950-060-0070 and be verified by that entity to the Authority:

(a) The entity's certification requirements shall include all peer support specialist's certification and renewal requirements set forth in these rules;

(b) For Authority certification or renewal and entry into the registry, peer support specialists shall either:

(A) Have the outside entity submit their certification and background check information to the Authority; or

(B) Submit to the Authority all required documentation and a completed application on an Authority prescribed form.

(3) Individuals seeking THW certification and registry enrollment as a Legacy Clause for community health worker, peer wellness specialist, personal health navigator, peer support specialist, or birth doula shall:

(a) Be at least 18 years of age;

(b) Not be listed on the Medicaid provider exclusion list;

(c) Pass a background check as described in OAR 950-060-0070;

(d) Submit to the Authority all required documentation and a completed application on an Authority prescribed form including:

(A) A minimum of one letter of recommendation from any previous employer for whom THW services were provided within the last five years; and

(B) Verifiable evidence of working or volunteering in the capacity of a community health worker, peer wellness specialist, or personal health navigator for at least 3000 hours within the last five years; or

(C) Verifiable evidence of working or volunteering in the capacity of a peer support specialist for at least 2000 hours within the last five years.

(D) Verifiable evidence of attending 10 births and providing 500 hours of community work supporting birthing persons and families in the capacity of a birth doula within the last five years.

(E) Individuals applying for multiple certifications using the Legacy Clause will need to provide to the Authority all the supporting documents/evidence for each worker type or sub worker type requested.

(F) Submit a completed renewal application on an Authority prescribed form no later than six months after the expiration of the current certification period.

(4) An individual may withdraw from the application process for certification and enrollment or from the registry by submitting written notification to the Authority unless a complaint investigation or revocation proceeding is underway.

(5) Applicants shall apply for certification within three years of completing a training program to be eligible for certification and registry enrollment.

(6) Applicants denied certification because they completed a training program more than three years prior to

application may file an appeal with the Authority for an exemption.

(7) If the Authority determines that an applicant meets the requirements of this section, the Authority shall notify the applicant in writing granting the individual certification as a THW and adding the individual to the registry.

(8) Certification is valid for 36 months from the date of certification.

(9) A THW seeking certification renewal shall:

(a) Submit a completed renewal application on an Authority prescribed form no less than 30 days before the expiration of the current certification period;

(b) Pass a background check as described in OAR 950-060-0070;

(c) Provide written verification indicating that the certificate holder meets the applicable requirements for continuing education set forth in OAR 950-060-0050; and

(d) Submit verifiable evidence of completion of an oral health training;

(e) Completion of an Authority approved oral health training shall need to occur only one time;

(f) An individual applying for renewal as a THW, whose certification lapsed for more than 6 months will be required to take a competency skills test administered by the Authority or third party organizations who are approved by the Authority, in addition to providing proof of completion of the number of CEUs required for their worker type.

(10) The Authority shall remove a THW from the registry if the THW fails to renew certification within the three-year renewal period.

(11) THWs removed from the registry following certification expiration shall be denied renewal unless they file an appeal with the Authority within 60 calendar days of certification expiration and are granted an exemption.

STATUTORY/OTHER AUTHORITY: ORS 413.042, 414.665, ORS 414.635

STATUTES/OTHER IMPLEMENTED: 181.537, 414.665, ORS 414.635

AMEND: 950-060-0070

RULE TITLE: Background Check Requirements

RULE SUMMARY: Further clarification of Background Check Process for Peer Support Specialists

RULE TEXT:

(1) For all new or renewal applications for THW certification, the Authority shall:

(a) Conduct a background check in accordance with OAR 943-007-0001 and 943-007-0501, specifically incorporating and limited to OAR 407-007-0200 to 407-007-0250 and 407-007-0340 to 407-007-0370 and expressly not incorporating OAR 407-007-0275 and 407-007-0277;

(b) Consult with the Office of the Inspector General to determine if the applicant is excluded from participation in the medical assistance program.

(2) New or renewal THW applicants may be denied certification or renewal of certification based on a fitness determination that applies a weighting test for potentially disqualifying convictions or conditions.

(3) New or renewal THW applicants shall be denied certification if they are excluded from participating in the medical assistance program.

STATUTORY/OTHER AUTHORITY: ORS 413.042, 414.665, ORS 414.635

STATUTES/OTHER IMPLEMENTED: 181.537, 414.665, ORS 414.635