

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H.F. 1904
Version: As introduced

DATE: March 10, 2014

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Subject: Spoken language healthcare interpreters

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Overview

This bill establishes a healthcare interpreter registry and certain qualifications for interpreters to be included on the roster and the registry. It authorizes the commissioner to receive and review applications, take action on the applications, impose disciplinary action, and appoint an advisory council. It establishes application and renewal fees for healthcare interpreters who meet the qualifications to be listed on the roster or the registry.

Section

1 Interpreter services quality initiative. Amends § 144.058 by creating new subdivisions.

Subd. 1. Healthcare interpreter services registry. Updates the term “health care” to “healthcare.”

Subd. 2. Definitions. Defines certain credentials, certifications, and credentialing organizations and terms used in this section.

Subd. 3. Roster and registry requirements. Paragraph (a) requires the roster and registry to ensure qualified language services are available to individuals with limited English proficiency.

Paragraph (b) provides that spoken language healthcare interpreters must be listed in the roster or registry in order to receive medical assistance reimbursement for their services.

Subd. 4. Spoken language interpreter practice and ethics. Practices of interpreters include accurate and complete interpreting, explaining the role of the

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interpreter, and managing the flow of communication. Ethical requirements include adherence to the interpreter's code of ethics and adherence to legal requirements to ensure patient confidentiality.

Subd. 6. Minimum qualification for roster. Provides that applicants must be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or equivalent, undergo a criminal background check, and affirm in writing that the applicant has read the code of ethics.

Subd. 7. Minimum qualifications for registry. Requires all applicants to meet roster qualifications and pass a test of spoken language proficiency in English and each other working language, pass an interpreting skills test, and complete at least 40 hours of interpreter training. Requires an applicant to provide proof of national certification. Requires the registry to maintain certain credentialing information pertaining to each interpreter that is accessible to the public.

Subd. 8. Continuing education requirements for the registry. Requires interpreters who do not have credentials issued by specified organizations to complete a minimum of six hours of continuing education annually in order to remain on the registry.

Subd. 9. Applications for roster or registry. Paragraph (a) lists the information that must be included in the application form. Requires an applicant to sign a release authorizing the commissioner to obtain criminal history data.

Paragraph (b) requires the applicant to submit specified fees.

Paragraph (c) requires applicants to submit evidence of compliance with subdivisions 7 and 8.

Paragraph (d) requires the applicant to sign a release authorizing the commissioner to obtain the applicant's records in this or any state in which the applicant has engaged in interpreting services.

Paragraph (e) authorizes the commissioner to request additional information from the applicant.

Subd. 10. Action on applications for the roster or registry. Requires the commissioner to determine whether an applicant meets the qualifications to be included on the roster or the registry. Allows the commissioner to investigate the validity of the information submitted by the applicant. Requires the commissioner to notify the applicant of the action taken on the application.

Subd. 11. Change of name and address. Requires the interpreter to notify the commissioner within 30 days of any change in name or address. Provides that a name change must be accompanied by a marriage license or court order.

Subd. 12. Procedures. Paragraph (a) exempts the commissioner from rulemaking related to specified tests and examinations.

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Paragraph (b) requires the commissioner to establish written internal operating procedures for acting on applications, granting status on the roster or registry, investigating complaints, and imposing enforcement actions.

Paragraph (c) instructs the commissioner to publish specified information on the department's Web site.

Subd. 13. Administrative expenditures. Authorizes the commissioner to use the roster receipt balance in the state government special revenue fund to cover expenditures for implementing the roster and registry that are not covered by the initial application fees.

Subd. 14. Fees. Lists the fees to be paid by interpreters listed on the roster and registry. Instructs the commissioner to use the fees to ensure patients have access to accurate and ethical interpreters.

Subd. 15. Roster or registry renewal. Requires an applicant to biennially complete a renewal application, submit the renewal fee, and submit additional information requested by the commissioner.

Requires the applicant to provide proof of compliance with continuing education requirements.

Subd. 16. Late fee. Requires an applicant to pay the late fee if the renewal application is submitted after the renewal deadline.

Subd. 17. Renewal notice. Instructs the commissioner to mail the renewal notice approximately 60 days before the expiration date. This notice must contain the application and notice of fees for renewal.

Subd. 18. Reporting continuing education contact hours. Establishes the requirements for information that must be reported when verifying compliance with continuing education requirements.

Subd. 19. Auditing continuing education reports. Allows the commissioner to audit continuing education reports. Requires the interpreter to make certain information available to the commissioner to verify compliance with continuing education requirements.

Subd. 20. Advisory council for spoken language interpreters. Paragraph (a) instructs the commissioner to appoint a nine-member advisory council.

Paragraph (b) requires appointments to comply with section 15.0597, have equal gender distribution, and be representative of Greater Minnesota and the metro area.

Paragraph (c) requires membership terms to comply with section 214.09, subdivision 2.

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Paragraph (d) lists the duties of the advisory council.

Paragraph (e) provides that the council does not expire.

Subd. 21. Prohibited conduct. Lists the grounds for denial of an application or imposition of disciplinary or corrective action.

Subd. 22. Investigation of complaints. Requires the commissioner to comply with the procedures in 214.10 when initiating an investigation and investigating complaints.

Subd. 23. Authority to contract with health professional services program. Authorizes the commissioner to contract with the HPSP to provide services to spoken language healthcare interpreters.