

State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H2/13/25 S3/18/25*

95th General Assembly

A Bill

Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1258

By: Representative L. Johnson

By: Senator Irvin

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER ACT; TO
ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE CERTIFICATION FOR COMMUNITY
HEALTH WORKERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER
ACT; AND TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE
CERTIFICATION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH
WORKERS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 17, is amended to add an additional
chapter to read as follows:

CHAPTER 46

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER ACT

Subchapter 1 - General Provisions

17-46-101. Title.

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

17-46-102. Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Community health worker" means an individual who is a



trusted member of or has an unusually close understanding of the community that he or she is serving as a liaison, link, or intermediary between health services or social services and the community to facilitate access to health services or social services and to improve the quality and cultural competence of the services delivered;

(2) "Health benefit plan" means an individual, blanket, or any group plan, policy, or contract for healthcare services issued or delivered in this state by a healthcare insurer, health maintenance organization, hospital medical service corporation, or self-insured governmental or church plan in this state;

(3) "Healthcare professional" means a person who is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized by the laws of this state to administer health care in the ordinary course of the practice of his or her profession; and

(4) "Healthcare provider" means:

(A) A hospital;

(B) An ambulatory surgical center;

(C) A primary care center;

(D) An outpatient psychiatric center;

(E) A home healthcare agency;

(F) A skilled nursing facility; or

(G) An individual licensed to render covered healthcare services.

Subchapter 2 - Certifications

17-46-201. Community health worker – Certification.

(a) The Department of Health shall issue a certification to be a community health worker to an individual who:

(1) Is eighteen (18) years of age or older;

(2) Meets one (1) of the following requirements:

(A) He or she is certified as a community health worker by the Arkansas Community Health Worker Association;

(B) He or she has worked as a community health worker for two (2) years with one (1) in this state and successfully completes a community health worker training program consisting of one hundred twenty

1 (120) hours of core competency, including eighty (80) hours of didactic
2 training and forty (40) hours of guided field practice from a school or
3 training program approved by the Arkansas Community Health Worker Association
4 in consultation with the department;

5 (C) He or she has worked as a community health worker for
6 one (1) year within this state and has met the following requirements as
7 outlined by the Arkansas Community Health Worker Association:

8 (i) Successfully completed eighty (80) hours of
9 supplemental training that supports core competency and professional
10 development;

11 (ii) Been assigned a mentor who is a certified
12 community health worker in this state or is eligible for certification and
13 regularly accessed and communicated with the mentor at least two (2) times
14 per month during the first three (3) months of the mentorship and monthly
15 thereafter; and

16 (iii) Been assigned a supervisor who has completed
17 community health worker supervisor training and regularly accessed and
18 communicated with the supervisor at least two (2) times per week during the
19 first three (3) months of supervision and weekly for the remainder of the
20 year; or

21 (D) He or she has four (4) years of experience that
22 provides evidence of proficiency in the core competencies, with two (2) years
23 of experience being in this state; and

24 (3) Submits an application with an application fee of fifty
25 dollars (\$50.00).

26 (c)(1) A certification is valid for two (2) years after the date of
27 issuance.

28 (2) To renew a certification, a community health worker shall:

29 (A) Complete twenty (20) hours of professional
30 developmental and training related to core competencies of a community health
31 worker within the two-year period; and

32 (B) Submit a renewal application with a renewal
33 application fee as determined by the department, in consultation with the
34 Arkansas Community Health Worker Association.

35 (d) The Arkansas Community Health Worker Association, in conjunction
36 with the Division of Higher Education, shall create and maintain a registry

1 of approved community health worker training programs to be made available to
2 the public.

3
4 17-46-202. Suspension, revocation, nonissuance, or nonrenewal.

5 (a) The Department of Health may suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue
6 or renew the certification of a community health worker for:

7 (1) Securing a certification under this chapter through fraud or
8 deceit;

9 (2) Unethical conduct, gross ignorance, or inefficiency in the
10 conduct of his or her practice;

11 (3) Using a false name or an alias in his or her practice;

12 (4) Violating any provision of this chapter; or

13 (5) Failing to comply with any of the requirements for issuance
14 of the certification.

15 (b) Proceedings under this section shall comply with the Arkansas
16 Administrative Procedure Act, § 25-15-201 et seq.

17
18 Subchapter 3 - Miscellaneous Provisions

19
20 17-46-301. Scope of practice.

21 A community health worker shall perform only the following types of
22 services:

23 (1) Providing:

24 (A) Cultural mediation among individuals, communities, and
25 health service systems or social services systems, or both;

26 (B) Culturally appropriate health education and
27 information;

28 (C) Care coordination, including without limitation
29 medication compliance under a patient care plan as directed by a healthcare
30 provider or healthcare professional;

31 (D) Case management;

32 (E) Health service system navigation or social services
33 system navigation, or both;

34 (F) Coaching and social support; and

35 (G) Direct services that:

36 (i) In order to be performed, do not require a

1 professional license under subtitle 3 of this title or specialized training
2 under § 20-77-2301 et seq., such as first aid and diabetic foot checks; or

3 (ii) Are not met by a personal care attendant;

4 (2) Advocating for individuals and communities;

5 (3) Building individual and community capacity;

6 (4) Implementing individual and community assessments, including
7 without limitation:

8 (A) Basic home environmental assessments; and

9 (B) Basic health screening and tests;

10 (5) Conducting outreach, such as health literacy services; and

11 (6) Participating in evaluation and research, including without
12 limitation health education and community research activities.

13
14 17-46-302. Patient and personal data and information.

15 (a) Patient and personal data and information accessed or attained by
16 a community health worker is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of
17 Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq., and is confidential and
18 privileged as otherwise required by federal law.

19 (b) If a community health worker does not maintain the confidential
20 and privileged nature of the patient data or information, the community
21 health worker shall be subject to any penalty under state and federal law for
22 a breach of confidential patient data or information.

23
24 17-46-303. Community health worker compensation.

25 A community health worker certified under this chapter shall receive
26 compensation for services provided from:

27 (1) The Arkansas Medicaid Program; or

28 (2) A health benefit plan.

29
30 17-46-304. Rules.

31 The Department of Health may promulgate rules relating to the
32 certification and regulation of community health workers under this
33 subchapter.

34
35 */s/L. Johnson*