

Healthcare Workplace Violence Legislation Will Impact Care at Home Providers

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Care at home providers are covered in this legislation
- Legislation mandates OSHA national standard for employers
- Increased training & logistical burden

On April 1, 2025, the [“Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act”](#) was reintroduced in Congress. If passed, this bill would have significant implications for providers across the care continuum – including home care, home health, and hospice organizations.

Who Is Covered? The bill applies broadly to employers in health care and social services. This includes:

- Home health agencies
- Home care providers (including non-medical/private duty care)
- Hospice agencies
- Social service organizations

Importantly, the bill’s protections extend to all settings where care is delivered – not just hospitals or clinics. That means homes, assisted living communities, and other community-based settings are included.

What Would Be Required? If enacted, the law would direct the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue a national standard requiring covered employers to:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive workplace violence prevention plan, tailored to the risks in each specific setting.
2. Involve frontline workers in developing the plan, including risk assessment and mitigation strategies.
3. Provide annual training on identifying, reporting, and responding to incidents of workplace violence.
4. Maintain a workplace violence incident log and make it available upon request.
5. Prohibit retaliation against employees who report violent incidents.

What Does This Mean for Home-Based Providers? While workplace violence is often associated with hospitals or emergency rooms, home-based providers face unique risks due to the isolated nature of the work. Caregivers often enter unfamiliar environments without immediate backup or security support.

For home care, home health, and hospice agencies, this legislation would require:

- Formal workplace violence prevention programs, even for small, non-medical home care agencies.
- Site-specific risk assessments for client homes.
- Protocols for de-escalation, withdrawal from unsafe environments, and incident follow-up.
- Training for all field staff and office personnel.

Potential Concerns for Providers: While the bill aims to improve safety, providers – especially smaller or community-based agencies – should be aware of several potential challenges:

- **Administrative burden:** Agencies would need to develop, document, and maintain detailed workplace violence prevention plans and logs, which may require new staff or consultants.
- **Field staff engagement:** The requirement to involve frontline caregivers in risk assessment and safety planning could be logistically difficult, especially in decentralized home care models.
- **Training logistics:** Annual, setting-specific training for all staff, including those working remotely or with high turnover, could require new systems or external training resources.
- **Enforcement risk:** Once OSHA issues its standard, providers may face penalties for noncompliance, making proactive preparation essential.
- **Customized risk planning:** Agencies will need to assess risks in individual client homes and potentially revise protocols as client circumstances change.

These burdens are manageable with the right support, but they could significantly impact operations if not addressed early. Planning ahead will be critical.

Why This Matters: Violence against health care workers has surged in recent years, with many incidents going unreported. For in-home care professionals, the risk is amplified by working alone, at odd hours, and often with limited information about the client or household.

This legislation acknowledges that reality and seeks to create consistent standards to protect workers. Though some agencies already have safety protocols in place, this bill would make them mandatory and enforceable under federal law.

Next Steps for Providers: If your organization hasn't already developed a comprehensive workplace violence prevention program, now is the time to start planning:

- Conduct a gap assessment of current safety policies.
- Begin engaging caregivers and field staff in safety planning.
- Monitor the bill's progress and prepare for potential OSHA rulemaking.

We will continue to track this legislation and provide updates to help you stay informed and compliant.

Want help developing your workplace violence prevention plan? We're here to support you with [practical tools, policy templates, and workforce training resources](#).