

Increased License Period for Home and Community Support Services Agencies

Relating to the licensing period for home and community support services agencies (HCSSAs)



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Sen. Nathan Johnson • Senate Bill 1448 | Rep. Gina Hinojosa • House Bill 3193

The Problem

- Home and community support services agencies (HCSSAs) provide home health, hospice or personal assistance services to people in a residence or independent-living environment.
- Approximately 6,300 HCSSAs are licensed in Texas by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).
- HCSSA providers currently hold a two-year license and must receive a statutorily required inspection 18 months into the licensure period.
- House Bill 2025, enacted by the 85th Legislature, moved all other long-term care provider types to a three-year license period.
- The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires that home health agencies be surveyed every three years to get certified as Medicare and Medicaid providers. Recently, CMS announced the lapse of a moratorium on new certified home health agencies, which will ultimately increase the number of applications, surveys and investigations HHSC must conduct.

- Varied licensing and renewal time frames create significant workload challenges and inefficiencies for HHSC staff that process applications and conduct on-site surveys and complaint investigations, including allegations of abuse and neglect, in long-term care facilities and HCSSAs.

The Proposed Solution

- Increase the licensing period for HCSSAs from two years to three, making it consistent with license time frames for all other long-term care providers, as well as federally required time frames for home health agencies to get certified as a Medicare or Medicaid provider.
- In addition to providing consistency, this change will streamline and improve license and renewal processing time frames and improve the timeliness of all required surveys.
- Increased licensing time frames will also reduce the amount of paperwork and associated administrative burdens on these providers.

What happens if we don't change the statute?

With the end of the CMS moratorium and other resource challenges, HHSC is at risk of not meeting required time frames. Providers will have to wait longer for licensure and licensure renewal.

Questions, comments or concerns?

Contact Kirsten Nuckols • Kirsten.Nuckols@hhsc.state.tx.us

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Q&A

How many HCSSAs are currently licensed in Texas?

Approximately 6,300 HCSSAs in Texas are licensed by HHSC.

What other long-term care provider types have a three-year license?

All other long-term care facilities regulated by HHSC are on a three-year license, which includes:

- Nursing facilities
- Intermediate care facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities
- Prescribed pediatric extended care centers
- Assisted-living facilities
- Day activity and health services providers

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