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## FAQ's

### Traditional Health Workers and Certification

#### 1. Who are certified Traditional Health Workers (THW)?

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved Oregon's request to create the following five Traditional Health Worker (THW) Medicaid provider types:

1. **Community Health Worker (CHW)**– Advocates for patient and community health
2. **Personal Health Navigator (PHN)** – Assists individual and groups with positive health outcomes
3. **Peer Support Specialist** – Focus on recovery from addictions/mental health conditions
4. **Peer Wellness Specialist** – Focus on recovery from addictions/mental/physical health conditions
5. **Doula** – Assists with women's pre-natal health care

#### 2. How do you become a Medicaid Certified Traditional Health Workers?

Either the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) or the Oregon Home Care Commission (OHCC) certifies individuals who have successfully completed all required training for their worker type through an approved training program. The OHCC certifies homecare workers for two THW types: Community Health Worker (CHW) and Personal Health Navigator (PHN). The OHCC offers qualified homecare workers free training to become a Medicaid Certified THW's. Training curriculum is approved by the Tradition Health Worker Commission. Those looking to become certified as a THW with provider types Peer Support Specialist, Peer Wellness Specialist, or Doula should contact the Oregon Health Authority for information about training and certification requirements.

#### 3. What types of employment opportunities are available for THWs?

Traditional Healthcare Workers are being employed in medical centers, insurance companies, and in private practice. This is a new field, we are not aware of any existing data about salary levels, number of THWs in the country, etc. We do know that the demand is growing rapidly as we seek to provide trained professionals in this field who are highly skilled in the process of health behavior change. As we know, health behaviors account for at least 80% of the cause of chronic disease in our country. These diseases account for the largest expenditure of health care dollars. Changing these patterns is critical both to the health and vitality of every individual as well as to the transformation of our health care system.

#### 4. Why does the Oregon Home Care Commission certify Medicaid THW providers?

Through a certification process, the Commission aims to promote a standard of professional excellence and accountability for Traditional Health Workers in Oregon. There are 21,000 active homecare workers in Oregon with experience navigating and providing service within the Medicaid-system, skilled in in-home care delivery, self-selected for empathy and active community members. Having many transferrable skills and having demonstrated desirable qualities, homecare workers are often uniquely qualified to complete the training and certification process to become effective THW's as Community Health Workers and Personal Health Navigators.

#### 5. How much will I make as a THW?

We do not determine that pay. It is negotiated between you and the employer upon hire. However, we estimate the pay to be between \$15-\$21 per hour.

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## More FAQ's About Certification Classes for Homecare Workers

### What are the requirements to enroll in the Home Care Commission sponsored Traditional Health Worker certification classes?

- a. Active Medicaid Homecare or Personal Support Worker Provider Number
- b. Professional Development Recognition
- c. Current CPR/First Aid Certificate
- d. Submit Application

### What should I do if I'm not sure if I meet the application requirements?

The best way to find out if you meet the requirements is to fill out the application and send it in. As we review your full background, we will be able to best make that determination with you.

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### Who typically applies?

We have people from various backgrounds in this program. We look for people who understand the community they live in. Homecare workers who find they have a lot of different interests and want to make a positive change in their community do well in this program.

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### What is the cost of the program?

There is no cost for the certification training when provided by the OHCC. Please note that we do not provide a stipend (payment) for attending or any travel allowances.

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### Do the classes fill quickly?

Yes, class size is limited. This is why we require an application to help us select students for the program.

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### How long does the training take and what are the hours of the classes?

The course requires 96 hours of training in the classroom. Classes are generally 8 hours each day. Typically, classes are held 1-2 days per week. Therefore, it usually takes about 2 months to complete the training.

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### What course content will be covered?

Please see the Training Competencies -

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### Are there textbooks required for this program?

No, we provide all materials for you at no cost to qualified homecare workers.

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### Is there homework?

Yes, after each day of training we ask you to go home and write a short summary of what you learned that day.

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### What are classes like?

Classes are interactive. We like to see you be involved in your learning. In order to be successful, participation and contribution is needed.

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### What if I cannot attend one of the modules? Can I take that module as part of a later training?

Yes, but it is up to you make up the classes. Attendance and participation are how you earn your grade!

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### Do you have an attendance policy?

Yes, in order to receive a certificate of completion, you are required to attend each day of each module. If you anticipate that you will be missing part of any module, prior approval must be received in writing in advance of the module. We reserve the right to not award a certification if you miss significant portions of the training.

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### What is the cancellation policy?

We expect all students to attend every class, this means making arrangements to complete the series. If your employer will need to hire a substitute for you, our STEPS program has many great tools to help. To find out more, contact the STEPS Coordinator at 1-877-867-0077, option 4.

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### What kind of official recognition or documentation will I receive at the completion of the training?

You will receive a Medicaid provider certificate that is good for three years. Twenty hours of continuing education is required for renewal every 3 years.

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### Is college credit available?

Transferable College credit may be available at an addition cost. Your trainer will be able to provide additional information.

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### How do I get more information about THW work, training, and certification?

Call toll-free 1-877-880-8071 option 1 or email [OHCC.CHW@state.or.us](mailto:OHCC.CHW@state.or.us)

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