



Oregon

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SB 397 (2017) Update to Legislature: March 2018



Oregon has made great strides toward a more integrated delivery system for providing health and human services to Oregonians, but one of the barriers that remains to integration is information sharing between programs, agencies, and providers. In response, Legislators passed SB 397 during the 2017 Session. SB 397 contained multiple provisions, but the first section directed the Department of Human Services (DHS) to convene and provide support to a work group focused on creating a standard client confidentiality release form to be used by entities that provide social services. With a common release of information form, health and human service agencies and providers can achieve a more streamlined information sharing process that results in better coordination of services and timely provision of those services to individuals and families.

DHS convened the first SB 397 workgroup meeting on February 1, 2018, with the following entities sending representatives:

- Oregon Department of Corrections
- Oregon Housing and Community Services
- Oregon Employment Department
- Oregon Health Authority
- Oregon Department of Education
- Oregon Department of Justice
- Oregon Youth Authority
- Oregon Department of Human Services
- Multnomah County

There were a few entities that were invited but were unable to attend the first meeting: Oregon Health & Sciences University, Oregon State Police, and Oregon Law Center. Additionally, workgroup participants said future meetings should include a representative from the Oregon School Boards Association and from Disability Rights Oregon. DHS will work on finding representatives from those two groups to join the SB 397 workgroup.

Current Release of Information Forms Reviewed

The workgroup reviewed two release of information forms that are either currently being used by DHS or are planned to be used. The first, form MSC 2099 (attached), is the current release of information form used by both DHS and Oregon Health Authority. Workgroup participants generally agreed that the 2099 form contained the required elements of a common release form, but the form wasn't particularly user-friendly and frequently resulted in requests for "all information" or "all documents" and then having clients or staff overwhelmed with the amount of information released.

The second form, which is really two forms, is the release of information and employment services referral form (both attached) that the Office of Developmental Disabilities Services and the Vocational Rehabilitation programs at DHS and the Department of Education have agreed to pilot as part of the *Lane v. Brown* settlement. Workgroup participants thought the release of information and employment services referral forms were more user-friendly and liked several details, such as including a drop-down menu for the type of information or documents to be released so that clients can be more specific in the information they want released. DHS received suggested edits from the workgroup and is incorporating many of those into the forms before the pilot begins. The pilot for using the release of information and employment services referral forms is expected to start in March 2018.

Next Steps

- DHS' Office of Developmental Disabilities Services and Vocational Rehabilitation programs and the Department of Education will pilot their release of information and employment services referral forms starting in March.
- Workgroup members are gathering data about what information is necessary to share to initiate or enhance service delivery, and what federal or state laws or regulations govern the sharing of that information—DHS is collecting this information to help finalize a common release form and it is expected to help the Department of Justice with its work required in SB 397.
- Workgroup members are also reviewing what is the most common type of information or document requested from their agencies so that a drop-down menu (such as the one found in the DHS/Department of Education employment services referral form) can be included in a common release form.

- The SB 397 workgroup will meet again in April, the timing is dependent upon when the DHS/Department of Education pilot will have enough information to provide feedback to the group.

Conclusion

Work is progressing on a common release of information form, and DHS expects to have a final form ready to be used by July 2018. One area that continues to be a struggle for the various agencies and entities that provide social services is the idea that each entity needs to have its own release of information form with its own branding. DHS will continue to work with the SB 397 workgroup participants and with the Governor's Office to address this concern so that we don't have a common release form but each agency and provider is still using its own form.