

REPRESENTATIVE JUBILEE UNDERWOOD

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE - HOUSE DISTRICT 27

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SPONSOR STATEMENT

House Bill 244

“An Act relating to certified nurse aide training; and providing for an effective date.”

House Bill 244 strengthens Alaska’s certified nurse aide (CNA) training standards by ensuring that required regulations include clear, comprehensive competencies necessary to provide safe, respectful, and effective care.

Certified nurse aides are frontline caregivers in hospitals, assisted living homes, long-term care facilities, and home health settings. They work directly with some of our most vulnerable Alaskans — including seniors and individuals living with cognitive impairments. While Alaska already requires CNA certification and training, HB 244 ensures that specific core competencies are expressly included in regulation.

HB 244 amends AS 08.68.331 to require that CNA training regulations include instruction and demonstrated competency in:

- Providing safe and competent care
- Forming relationships and communicating effectively with clients
- Recognizing and responding to emotional, social, and mental health needs
- Supporting client independence and promoting client rights
- Observing, monitoring, and reporting changes in client condition
- Using problem-solving approaches in caregiving
- Preserving respect, dignity, values, and choice
- Communicating with and caring for individuals with Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and other cognitive impairments
- Understanding dementia-related behaviors and assisting with activities of daily living

By placing these minimum training components in statute, HB 244 ensures that CNA training programs consistently prepare caregivers to meet the real-world needs of Alaska’s aging and medically complex population. The bill does not alter certification authority or create new licensing categories; rather, it clarifies and strengthens the content that must be included in CNA training regulations.

HB 244 helps ensure that certified nurse aides across Alaska are equipped with both the technical and interpersonal skills necessary to deliver high-quality, person-centered care. This is a practical step toward improving caregiving standards and supporting the dignity and well-being of those who rely on CNA services.