

RCW 18.71A.020 Rules fixing qualifications and restricting practice—Applications—Discipline—Payment of funds.

(1) The commission shall adopt rules fixing the qualifications and the educational and training requirements for licensure as a physician assistant or for those enrolled in any physician assistant training program. The requirements shall include completion of an accredited physician assistant training program approved by the commission and within one year successfully take and pass an examination approved by the commission, if the examination tests subjects substantially equivalent to the curriculum of an accredited physician assistant training program. An interim permit may be granted by the department of health for one year provided the applicant meets all other requirements. Physician assistants licensed by the board of medical examiners, or the commission as of July 1, 1999, shall continue to be licensed.

(2) (a) The commission shall adopt rules governing the extent to which:

(i) Physician assistant students may practice medicine during training; and

(ii) Physician assistants may practice after successful completion of a physician assistant training course.

(b) Such rules shall provide:

(i) That the practice of a physician assistant shall be limited to the performance of those services for which he or she is trained; and

(ii) That each physician assistant shall practice medicine only under the terms of one or more collaboration agreements, each signed by the physician assistant and one or more physicians licensed in this state or the physician assistant's employer. A collaboration agreement may be signed electronically using a method for electronic signatures approved by the commission.

(3) Applicants for licensure shall file an application with the commission on a form prepared by the secretary with the approval of the commission, detailing the education, training, and experience of the physician assistant and such other information as the commission may require. The application shall be accompanied by a fee determined by the secretary as provided in RCW 43.70.250 and 43.70.280. A surcharge of \$70 per year shall be charged on each license renewal or issuance of a new license to be collected by the department and deposited into the impaired physician account for physician assistant participation in the physician health program. Each applicant shall furnish proof satisfactory to the commission of the following:

(a) That the applicant has completed an accredited physician assistant program approved by the commission and is eligible to take the examination approved by the commission;

(b) That the applicant is of good moral character; and

(c) That the applicant is physically and mentally capable of practicing medicine as a physician assistant with reasonable skill and safety. The commission may require an applicant to submit to such examination or examinations as it deems necessary to determine an applicant's physical or mental capability, or both, to safely practice as a physician assistant.

(4) (a) The commission may approve, deny, or take other disciplinary action upon the application for license as provided in the Uniform Disciplinary Act, chapter 18.130 RCW.

(b) The license shall be renewed as determined under RCW 43.70.250 and 43.70.280. The commission shall request licensees to submit information about their current professional practice at the time of license renewal and licensees must provide the information requested. This information may include practice setting, medical specialty, or other relevant data determined by the commission.

(5) All funds in the impaired physician account shall be paid to the contract entity within sixty days of deposit. [2024 c 62 s 3; 2024 c 15 s 3; 2020 c 80 s 3; 2019 c 55 s 6; 2015 c 252 s 9; 2011 c 178 s 2; 2009 c 98 s 2; 1999 c 127 s 1; 1998 c 132 s 14; 1996 c 191 s 57; 1994 sp.s. c 9 s 319; 1993 c 28 s 5; 1992 c 28 s 2; 1990 c 196 s 2; 1971 ex.s. c 30 s 2.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2024 c 15 s 3 and by 2024 c 62 s 3, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Intent—2024 c 62: "From March 2020 through October 2022, physician assistants were permitted under the governor's proclamation 20-32 to work without a delegation agreement signed by a supervising physician. During the public health emergency, physician assistants provided safe and efficient care, expanding access to necessary services and procedures statewide. There continues to be a great need for additional providers in primary care and specialty areas, especially in medically underserved and rural communities. Therefore, the legislature intends to authorize physician assistants to enter into collaborative practice with physicians to provide team-based care and enhance access to health care for the people of the state." [2024 c 62 s 1.]

Effective date—2024 c 62 ss 1-8, 10-18, 20-26, 28, and 30-32: See note following RCW 18.71A.010.

Findings—2024 c 15: See note following RCW 18.71.310.

Effective date—2020 c 80 ss 1-10 and 60: See note following RCW 18.71A.010.

Intent—2020 c 80: See note following RCW 18.71A.010.

Intent—2015 c 252: See note following RCW 70.112.010.

Finding—Intent—Severability—1998 c 132: See notes following RCW 18.71.0195.

Severability—Headings and captions not law—Effective date—1994 sp.s. c 9: See RCW 18.79.900 through 18.79.902.